

QUEENSLAND RSL NEWS

WAVES OF WELLNESS

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LESSONS AS MENTAL HEALTH THERAPY



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WELLBEING COORDINATION CENTRE



RSL
Queensland

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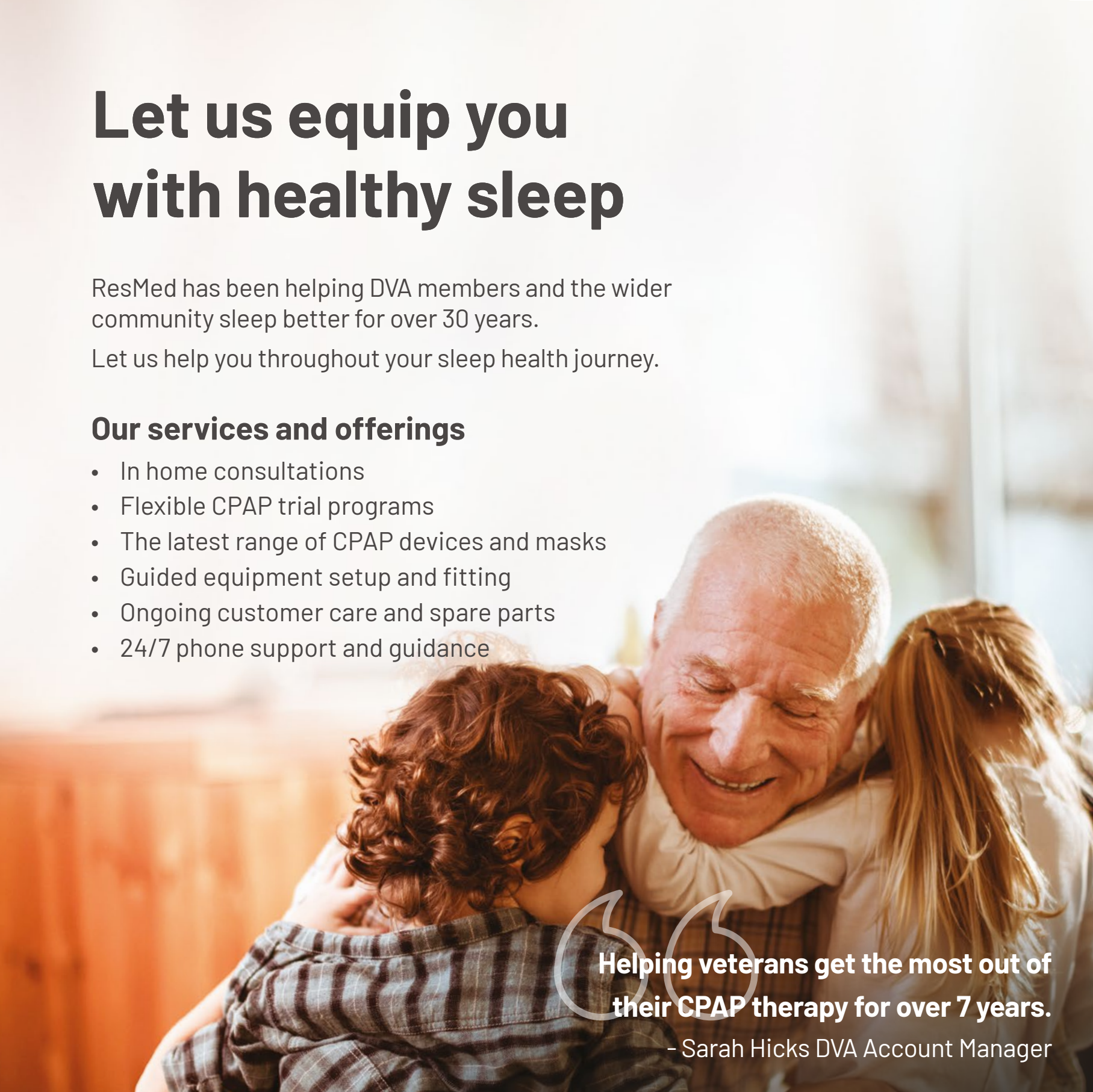
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Please note: This publication may contain images of deceased Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.



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Front Cover

Waves of Wellness Surfing Experience participants enjoy a group discussion with mental health therapists on the beach before heading out into the water.

25th anniversary of Australian service in Timor-Leste

THIS year marks the 25th anniversary of the beginning of Australian service in Timor-Leste (formerly East Timor), which ultimately spanned 14 years and multiple operations. One of the most significant, and challenging, chapters in this was the deployment of the International Force East Timor (INTERFET), famously commanded by Major General Peter Cosgrove.

Because of their professionalism, the soldiers, sailors and aviators of INTERFET were able to seamlessly transition from a typical Saturday – off duty for most – to being on the ground in Timor-Leste barely a week later.

Because they had the attitude that they would chance their arm at anything, they confidently and competently tackled anything that came their way.

Because they showed heartfelt compassion for the impoverished, long-suffering children, men and women of Timor-Leste, they took them into their hearts. And so, they helped win the key struggle in these sort of operations – the fight for the hearts and minds of the people.

Because of the sum total of their achievements, INTERFET was an outstandingly successful military operation.

Because of their success, Australia grew a little more

confident with its place in the world. It is, and rightly so, common for those who served in Timor-Leste all those years ago to declare with pride that they served with INTERFET. RSL Queensland salutes you and your efforts.

MY GOALS FOR THE NEXT THREE YEARS

I was honoured to be re-elected as State President by delegates at the recent State Congress on 22 June. Thank you for entrusting me with the responsibility of overseeing the Queensland Branch of one of our nation's most iconic organisations.

During my address to members at Congress, I gave an overview of the overarching priorities I have for the coming three years of my appointment. I would like to share them with you.

The first is to continue **aligning our leadership tone with the nobility of our purpose**. This is a duty that has no end. I believe that people stay in an organisation if they are both made to feel welcome and given a fair go. And from where I stand, the substantial majority of Sub Branches are doing an outstanding job in attracting and retaining members.

In the past two years, our membership numbers have grown by more than 2,000. This suggests to me that,

collectively, we are doing something right. It is a momentum that I wish to continue.

The second goal is to continue to use **care, commemoration and camaraderie** as the focus for what we do and to cement it as our narrative. While I'm very happy with the traction these objectives are getting, I believe it will take another few years before they become firmly embedded in the broader community's understanding of our work.

For me, the measure of success is how a veteran (who is not an RSL member) answers the question, "What comes to mind when you first think of the RSL?". When they answer "care, commemoration and camaraderie", that's what success looks like for me.

My third goal is to develop a **more accurate narrative around who we are as veterans**.

While Australians appreciate and respect our service, a narrative has begun to develop that the very same service has damaged us. It's a narrative that can have an impact on how we see ourselves and it's a narrative that is having practical outcomes.

In recent years, four different employers have spoken to me about veterans who were, by the measures the employer themselves had

set, suitable for the job they had applied for. But in each case the employer – none had previous experience with veterans – was hesitant to employ the veteran. They were concerned that employing them might be a business liability.

I believe we need a more accurate narrative that says something like:

We are a group of well trained and skilled Australians who believe in the values that our nation cherishes: mateship, selflessness, courage and humour.

We do have some of our mates who need support, and we see it is our sworn obligation to help them, but we as a group aren't broken.

We are a group who society can continue to rely on – a group who continue to contribute to our communities and to our country.

I look forward to talking with you more about this over the coming months and years.



**RSL Queensland
State President
Major General
Stephen Day DSC AM**

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Forecasting our *next three years*

I **WOULD** like to thank delegates for attending and contributing to our recent RSL Queensland State Congress. The theme of camaraderie was clearly evident on the day, and our membership continues to thrive thanks to our combined efforts in preserving RSL Queensland's past and building its future.

I spoke to delegates at Congress about our plans for the next three years, and showed how this plan will deliver key steps to realise the 2030 Strategy. Below is a snapshot of the next three years.

LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS - 2025

Next year we will invest more in our services, support the League in Queensland, work collaboratively with our RSL State Branch partners, and evolve our Art Union brand to reflect both its history and its exciting future potential. This brand will become further embedded as we move through 2025.

ENHANCING OUR OFFERINGS - 2026

We will understand where we can deliver impact that both aligns with the outcomes of the Royal Commission and enhances our services at State Branch and out in the League. Building upon the rebrand of the Art Union will enable us to grow the Art Union's value proposition to our customers.

SHARING THE BENEFITS - 2027

This year will enable us to realise the funding

sustainability from our Art Union investment and further support veterans and their families. The goal is to make it easier to access services through a range of channels, while engaging a community of support for veterans and their families to come together on the journey.

The above timeline and focus areas will support the realisation of our strategic goals:

1. Strengthen our connections to veterans and the community:

Our 2030 Strategy, focused on the pillars of care, commemoration and camaraderie, guides our message that the League exists to help provide assistance, recognition and connection. By staying true to our core values, we can continue to tell our story to those who may benefit from what we offer. This messaging will be shared across our digital channels, printed publications and engagements with the broader veteran and family ecosystem.

2. Serve the holistic needs of veterans:

There has been increased support provided to those in service and through their transition period, including on base and through our investment in research and digital products, such as RSL Be:Well and Go Beyond, which are available on our website.

Importantly, we are continuing to ensure that our services are sustainable

“Our 2030 Strategy, focused on the pillars of care, commemoration and camaraderie, guides our message that the League exists to help provide assistance, recognition and connection. By staying true to our core values, we can continue to tell our story to those who may benefit from what we offer.”

and decentralised, where possible. An example of this can be seen in our increasing investment in regional Veteran & Family Wellbeing Centres.

3. Secure RSL Queensland's commercial capacity and assets:

At State Congress I discussed some of the initiatives we are undertaking in our commercial operations. Ensuring that we diversify our revenue will enable us to sustain our unprecedented levels of support.

Our Investment Committee will continue to advise on suitable allocation of capital for sustainability. The financial assets portfolio is an example of the investments we are currently undertaking. Capital will be prioritised in line with sustaining our outcomes in support of our 2030 Strategy.

4. Enable RSL Queensland and its ecosystem to achieve its mission:

We recognise that we are better when we work collaboratively – both within the League and with other

ex-service organisations that are well governed and have a positive impact on veterans and their families. By working together with our communities, medical and professional services, and government, we can make it easier for veterans and their families to access a wide range of support. Our goal is to place veterans and their families at the centre of what we do at all times.

The League in Queensland is moving in a positive direction, and I look forward to continuing our contribution to ensuring that we offer commemoration to all, camaraderie to veterans and their families, and care for those who are vulnerable.



Robert Skoda
Chief Executive Officer
RSL Queensland

A GLEAMING TRIBUTE HONOURS
OUR ANZAC HEROES

LEST WE FORGET MEN'S RING



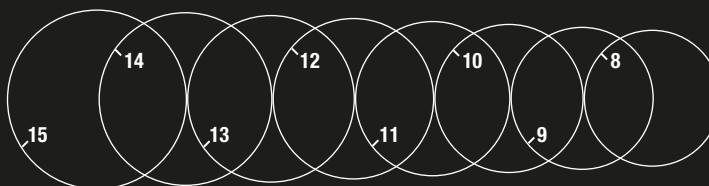
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We will remember them

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MAIL BOX

UNDERSTANDING MY GRANDFATHER'S WWI EXPERIENCE

I was fortunate to receive a copy of *The First Ashore* by Peter Burgess and wish to thank you and say how much I enjoyed reading this book. So many of these men had difficult lives before enlisting in WWI, had the horrors of Gallipoli and the Western Front to face and then suffered bad health and trauma upon returning home. My grandfather, Claude Herbert Bowker (service number 47, 9th Battalion) served at Gallipoli and later in France. Reading these stories has provided a deeper understanding of just how difficult and traumatic life was for all these men. We owe them a huge debt of gratitude. May they all rest in peace. With grateful thanks,

Rose Hay

CORRECTION TO LAST POST

Our sincere apologies for an error in the Last Post in Ed 2 2024. The following member was accidentally included and we can confirm that he is alive and well: Brian Anderson (service number R56903). This was due to incorrect information we received, and we are sorry for any distress this caused.

CAPTION CORRECTION

We would like to provide a correction to the caption of the front cover image of *Queensland RSL News* Ed 2 2024. It should have read "Kooralbyn RSL Sub Branch President Brian McInnis, right, with Kooralbyn International School student and trumpet player Typhoon le Garde at the Kooralbyn ANZAC Day Dawn Service."

NEWS

KING'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS LIST 2024

THE recent King's Birthday 2024 Honours List acknowledged the significant contribution to the community of 737 individuals, including 493 recipients of the General Division of the Order of Australia and 162 recipients of Meritorious awards. This year, 78 Queenslanders were recognised for their significant contribution to their communities across the state including three RSL Queensland members who were awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in the General Division:

- **Kevin James Hughes BM**, Macleay Island RSL Sub Branch member was recognised for his service to the community through a range of organisations.
- **John Harold Honeycombe**, Ayr RSL Sub Branch member was recognised for his service to the community of North Queensland through a range of organisations.
- **Lance Richard Haslewood**, Woodford RSL Sub Branch Life Subscriber was recognised for his service to veterans and their families, and to the community. It is an outstanding achievement to be acknowledged for your service to the community, veterans and their families. Thank you for your continued commitment. ←



ESO FORUM FOCUSES ON CROSS-SECTOR COLLABORATION

IN May, RSL Queensland and Legacy Brisbane hosted the first Queensland Ex-Service Organisation (ESO) Forum for 2024. The Forum saw more than 90 people from 45 organisations come together for a day of sector-wide collaboration on key

issues and topics, including government relations and policy updates that impact the veteran and Defence community.

This is a critical time for veteran legislative matters, so the focus of the Forum was on the veteran legislative reform

and a forward look on key political dates for 2024.

Attendees heard from RSL Queensland, Legacy Brisbane, Queensland Assistant Minister for Justice and Veterans' Affairs Jimmy Sullivan MP, Queensland Shadow Assistant Minister for Veterans James

Lister MP, the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA), and Gallipoli Medical Research. The updates placed a focus on supporting the more than 160,000 veterans that call Queensland home, with an emphasis on veteran health and wellbeing. ←

INTERFET 25th ANNIVERSARY

— 20 September 2024 —

BENY
I LOVE YOU
MILITARY
INTERFEET
DONAT FOREVER
THANK YOU VERY
MUCH INTERFEET
MY DARLING

INTERFET member
Sergeant Martin
Ryan shakes hands
with a local boy in
East Timor, 1999.
Photographed by
Sergeant Gary
Ramage. Sourced
from Department
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25TH ANNIVERSARY OF AUSTRALIAN SERVICE IN TIMOR-LESTE

TO mark the 25th anniversary of Australian service in Timor-Leste, the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) will be holding a National Commemorative Service at the Australian Peacekeeping Memorial in Canberra on 20 September 2024 from 9:30am.

Australian service in Timor-Leste spanned from 1999 to 2013 and encompassed Australian Defence Force and Australian Federal Police personnel, as well as civilians. This anniversary provides the opportunity to honour and remember the service of all Australian men and women

who served in Timor-Leste, and the sacrifice of their families.

Tragically, six Australians lost their lives while deployed, or as a result of their service, in Timor-Leste.

DVA is encouraging those planning to attend the service on 20 September to register

via dva.gov.au. Although a formal ticket or attendance pass will not be required to enter the service, the registration process ensures that adequate arrangements can be put in place by DVA. The service will also be broadcast nationally on ABC TV. ➔

LIFE MEMBER AND MERITORIOUS AWARDS



Thomas McGee OAM

GREENBANK RSL SUB BRANCH

Congratulations to Greenbank RSL Sub Branch Deputy President Thomas McGee OAM, right, who was recently presented with the Meritorious Service Medal (the highest award given to a member). Thomas has been a member continuously for a period of at least 30 years and during that period has given at least 25 years of outstanding service to the League. The MSM is granted by National Congress and was presented to Thomas at the Sub Branch's AGM on 24 March by South Eastern District President Kerry Gallagher AM, left, and Greenbank Sub Branch Stewart Rae. ◀

Brian Liang

BULIMBA DISTRICT RSL SUB BRANCH

Bulimba District RSL Sub Branch member Brian Liang was recently awarded Life Membership in recognition of his 37 years with RSL Queensland. Brian has been a loyal, hard worker in three different Sub Branches over the years and is a well-respected member of the community.

He is credited with helping save ANZAC Day services in Bulimba in 2015, when Colmsie RSL Sub Branch and Morningside Services Club closed. Its popularity has since grown from 15 veterans marching and 200 people attending in 2015 to more than 60 veterans marching and around 10,000 people participating in 2024.

Brian, pictured in front, was presented with the award at the monthly Bulimba District Sub Branch meeting, which was attended by, from left, Stuart Darrow, Norm Love, Councillor for Morningside Lucy Collier, Secretary Andrew Dennis, Allan Deeth, President Brian Daley and Trevor Wheate. ◀



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A person is seen from behind, riding a wave on a surfboard. They are wearing a blue long-sleeved shirt with a purple and white graphic on the back that reads 'WOW WAVES of WELLNESS Foundation'. The background shows a cloudy sky and the ocean. The text 'LEARNING TO RIDE LIFE'S' is overlaid in large white letters.

LEARNING TO RIDE LIFE'S

A man in a green and orange wetsuit is shown from the waist up, looking out towards the ocean. The background features a dramatic sky with dark, heavy clouds and a glimpse of the blue ocean surface. The word "WAVES" is superimposed in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters across the middle of the image.

WAVES

*Combining surfing lessons with therapy,
Waves of Wellness is helping veterans ride the waves
of mental health – with life-changing results.*

 *Belinda Crossman*



ABOVE: Air Force veteran Nick Gurowski, centre, chats with other participants of the surf program before they head out into the surf.

RIGHT: Co-designed with veterans, Waves of Wellness includes a group discussion with mental health therapists on the beach, followed by a surfing lesson and practice in the water.

After eight surfing lessons, Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) veteran Nick Gurowski can't wait to ride the next wave.

"I've never had a bad day out on the water," he says.

"Getting out there, hitting the waves – even if I stack it, which I do plenty of times – I always walk away happy. The whole group walks away with a smile. It's been really enjoyable, and I want to keep doing it."

Nick found his new passion through the Waves of Wellness Surfing Experience (WOWSE) – a free, eight-week, evidence-based program that delivers surfing lessons as mental health therapy.

For Nick, who was medically discharged after a decade in the RAAF, the program has been a welcome high after some challenging lows.

"I had difficulty with my transition from Defence. Getting medically discharged was not the way I wanted to go, so I had a lot of

misplaced anger. I isolated myself a bit and found it hard to reconnect," he shares.

"This is the first time I reconnected with people I didn't know but who had a similar history to me. It's really helped build mateship and get me outdoors and seeing people again."

SURFING AS THERAPY

National charity Waves of Wellness (WOW) Foundation runs veteran-specific WOWSE sessions at multiple locations in Queensland and New South Wales, thanks to support from RSL Queensland.

"Waves of Wellness aims to build mental health literacy skills and



“We’re removing the sterile clinical setting; the natural outdoor environment is an amazing place to have these beautiful conversations, connect and provide the therapy that people don’t even realise they’re receiving.”

give people the chance to cope with the mental health challenges that we can all experience,” WOW CEO and co-founder Joel Pilgrim explains.

“Our program has been available to veterans since 2018. It’s been really special to see veterans from all walks of life come and get so much out of the program, whether they’re dealing with a range of mental health challenges or PTSD [post-traumatic stress disorder] specifically.

“For veterans who might not respond to mainstream mental health support, this is an opportunity for them to get the support they very much deserve and need, in a non-threatening way. We’re removing the sterile clinical setting; the natural outdoor environment is an amazing place to have these beautiful conversations, connect and provide the therapy that people don’t even realise they’re receiving.

“The support that we’ve received from RSL Queensland is huge. It means we can provide these programs in places that really need our support. Funding is always a challenge, and to have the backing

of RSL Queensland means the world to us.”

Co-designed with veterans, each WOWSE session includes a group discussion with mental health therapists on the beach, followed by a surfing lesson and practice in the water.

For those who take part, the benefits have been profound.

“Many veterans have said this program has saved their life,” Joel says. “We’ve been able to get to them at just the right time and provide the support and the coping strategies to get them back on track. That’s what makes us so passionate about the work we do.”

Nick describes his experience with the program as “fantastic”.

“I’ve always walked away with a smile and my day has gone better because of it. I think with the environment we’re in, the experience of getting out on the

sand, going for a surf, talking about a day or a week or the last few years since transition, it’s been mentally and physically really good for me.

“I felt very supported from the start. The instructors have been fantastic; I’ve learned so much in eight weeks and I want to carry that on.”

THE POWER OF MINDFULNESS AND CONNECTION

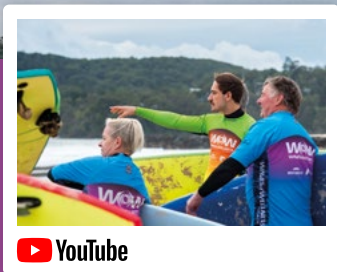
According to Joel – a former practising mental health occupational therapist and long-time surfer – mindfulness plays a key role in the WOWSE and its success.

“Being out in nature is really beneficial for our mental health,” he explains.

“Being able to ground in the present moment and not drift off into the past or the future is



ABOVE: Waves of Wellness CEO and co-founder Joel Pilgrim, left, with Air Force veteran and program participant Nick Gurowski.



YouTube



SCAN TO WATCH VIDEO

ABOVE: Veteran participant Nick Gurowski practising his surfing skills.

RIGHT: Veteran participant Nick Gurowski, centre, with Waves of Wellness Surfing Experience Facilitator Paul Kony, left, and CEO and co-founder Joel Pilgrim.

OPPOSITE PAGE: After a surf session, participants say the whole group walks away with a smile.

really important for people dealing with PTSD, whose fight or flight response can be very quickly activated.

"Mindfulness and meditation – which are a big part of the program – keep them in the present moment and bring them into that meditative state."

Building connection is an equally important – and powerful – part of the program.

"When veterans join the program, they often think their experiences are in isolation. But when they start talking, it becomes apparent that people have been through very similar experiences," Joel says.

"By building a trusting, supportive and laidback environment in natural surroundings, it's a really beautiful space for people to let their guard down. It's almost like you see a weight lifted off the veteran's shoulders when they sit down

in the sand and realise they belong here."

Nick agrees.

"It's been really eye-opening to hear other people's experiences and transition stories, and it's helped me on my own journey," he says.

"It was initially quite hard to talk openly. But as we started to evolve and go surfing with each other and have the typical banter that comes

with being ex-military, the sharing has opened up as well. It's evolved over the program, and it's helped me with my communication, especially at home, and life is just happier because of it."

"GIVE IT A GO"

According to Paul Kony – a WOW Sunshine Coast program facilitator and one of Nick's instructors – surfing is much more than just a



“When veterans join the program, they often think their experiences are in isolation. But when they start talking, it becomes apparent that people have been through very similar experiences.”

way to have fun, socialise and keep fit. It teaches lessons that anyone can apply to life.

“Surfing is a great analogy for life, whether it’s going out there one day and having a good surf, or having that resilience to keep going out there, keep paddling and keep going for more waves,” Paul says.

“We talk about getting stuck in the rip and how we can solve those kinds of problems, and how it’s okay to put your hand up for help.”

It’s wisdom that Nick will carry forward, among many other benefits.

“I’ve found a new passion. I’ve got a goal to aim towards and I’ve got a couple of mates that I’ll walk away with. It’s been fantastic,” he says.

“I’d say to any other veterans who are thinking about joining the program, give it a go. Commit for eight weeks. At worst, you’re going to go out for a swim, catch some nice waves and learn a new skill. You may walk away with a new passion, or you may not, but I guarantee you won’t walk away unhappy.”



LEARN MORE: The veterans' Waves of Wellness Surfing Experience (WOWSE) is open to current and ex-serving Defence personnel of all ages. It is one of many free Peer-Led Programs offered by RSL Queensland and its partners. Learn more at rslqld.org/find-help/waves-of-wellness

A man and a woman are kneeling on a grassy field. The man, on the left, has a beard and is wearing a dark blue polo shirt with a name tag that says "Justin" and a colorful paw print logo. The woman, on the right, is wearing a black V-neck shirt and has a tattoo on her left arm. Between them is a tan-colored dog with its tongue out, wearing a black collar. The background shows green trees and a cloudy sky.

HAPPY PAWS HAPPY HEARTS

**BUILDING DEFENCE
FAMILY BONDS**



happy paws
happy hearts

The unique Happy Paws Happy Hearts program helps veterans, their families, and rescue animals bring out the best in each other.

 **Belinda Crossman**



Once a week for 10 weeks, a small group of veterans and their families get together at the RSPCA

in Brisbane.

Strangers at first, they're quick to become friends, chatting and laughing amidst a flurry of barks and wagging tails.

The group is taking part in Happy Paws Happy Hearts' Defence Families program, training rescue animals to help them get adopted. In doing so, participants also strengthen their own connections, communication skills and self-confidence.

When Army veteran (now Reservist) Eloise heard about the program through her local RSL Sub Branch, she knew she had to join.

"I thought that is for me; I absolutely love rescue animals," Eloise says. "At the time, I had two of my own, so it ticked that box for me. The fact that it was Defence families really appealed to me as well. Although I do really appreciate being in touch with other veterans, I also appreciate meeting the veteran support network as well."

Eloise served with the Intelligence Corps from 2017 to 2021, when she transitioned to the Reserves.



"I feel very fortunate to have had a relatively easy transition back into civilian life," she says.

"I felt like I had constant social touchpoints, but I understand that for some people it is more of a challenge.

"You've gone from a system where you are surrounded by people. You work with your team day in, day out, so when you transition out and suddenly that is lacking in your life, it is a very challenging thing for somebody to go through."

BUILDING CONNECTION AND TRUST

Social isolation is one of the key concerns that national not-for-profit Happy Paws Happy Hearts (HPHH) aims to address.

"The other concern is animals in shelters all over Australia that are also facing social isolation," HPHH Partnerships Training Specialist Justin Palazzo-Orr explains.

"We started working with older Australians and then moved into working with people living

with disabilities, veterans, first responders, and injured workers."

The HPHH Defence Families Program is a seasonal 10-week program designed specifically for veterans, current serving Defence members, and their families. It's funded by RSL Queensland, so there's no cost to participants.

While particularly beneficial for those feeling socially isolated or wanting to improve their family connection, the program welcomes veterans and families of all kinds.

"I was really hoping to get to know some other Defence families, and I was lucky to do so," Eloise says.

"I really enjoyed seeing mostly families, but particularly the children engaging with animals. I don't have children myself, so it was really nice to be in that space with them. It was incredibly supportive.

"The whole time just felt like I was becoming a part of that community. That felt really special."

Held over weekly two-hour sessions, the program works

ABOVE: Happy Paws Happy Hearts Partnerships Training Specialist Justin Palazzo-Orr, program participant and Army veteran (now Reservist) Eloise, holding Delta the dog on a leash, and RSL Queensland Partnerships Officer (in the Veteran Services team) Rachel Jarvis

OPPOSITE PAGE: Happy Paws Happy Hearts Partnerships Training Specialist Justin Palazzo-Orr and program participant and Army veteran (now Reservist) Eloise.



“Everything we do is about connection and trust, whether that’s between a human and an animal or humans and humans.”

one, family members are sitting at complete opposite sides of the room and then as they go through, they’re getting closer and closer, and then in the last week they’re sitting on the same couch together. For me, there’s no joy greater than seeing those family connections.

“We also see families keeping that time that they put aside for the Defence Families program to do something together after the program’s over.”

The program’s relaxed, inclusive and engaging atmosphere appealed to Eloise, who enjoys that it’s *“for Defence, but not about Defence”*.

“It need not to be about the Defence experience,” Justin adds.

ABOVE: Past participants of the Happy Paws Happy Hearts program.

RIGHT: The program helps veterans, their families and rescue animals bring out the best in each other.

alongside the RSPCA to connect participants with shelter animals.

“We work with a whole range of animals. It can be dogs, cats, kittens, puppies, goats, sheep, alpacas, snakes... Whatever animals the RSPCA is looking after, we get them involved in the program – as long as people are comfortable working with them, of

course,” Justin says.

“Everything we do is about connection and trust, whether that’s between a human and an animal or humans and humans.”

A WIN-WIN FOR ALL INVOLVED

“We see some amazing results. We’ve had times where in week





"It's a way for them to come together and just focus on kittens and puppies and having a good time."

CHANGING PEOPLE'S AND ANIMALS' LIVES

The program hasn't just built Eloise's social network and dog handling skills. It's also benefited her emotionally – especially when she needed it most.

"During the program, I got to have lots of doggy cuddles, which I really loved, and when I went home it gave me a new appreciation for my own dogs. I didn't know it was possible to love them more.

"Sadly, we lost one of my rescue dogs right in the middle of the program, which was a real blow. Being able to go back to the program to see other animals almost felt like a legacy for my own dog."

The experience inspired Eloise to become an RSPCA volunteer.

"Now I volunteer every week, and it's something I look forward to. I wouldn't have known that was an avenue I could have pursued without going to Happy Paws, so

I'm incredibly grateful for that."

"When Eloise came in, she was pretty shy and reserved," Justin recalls. "Then she came out of her shell more and more. And then she found her love for volunteering, which is absolutely fantastic."

A VETERAN'S BEST FRIEND

For anyone in the veteran or Defence community, Eloise can't recommend Happy Paws Happy Hearts highly enough.

"I think animals can provide that social connection, the emotional support that sometimes humans can't, especially if you're feeling socially isolated yourself, which can be a common challenge for veterans," she says.

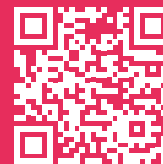
"Animals never let you down. Animals are just always there when you need them, always happy to see you.

"I would definitely recommend involvement with a rescue animal organisation as a great way to foster connections with people, and I encourage everybody to take advantage of the programs supported by RSL Queensland." ←

ABOVE: By connecting them with rescue animals, Happy Paws Happy Hearts brings together veterans and their families.



YouTube



SCAN TO WATCH VIDEO




Learn more: Happy Paws Happy Hearts' Defence Families Program is one of many programs offered by RSL Queensland and its partners. Learn more at rslqld.org/find-help/happy-paws-happy-hearts



NEW DOCUMENTARY SHINES A LIGHT ON AUSTRALIAN SERVICE

*Veterans and their families are invited to watch GLAAS
Inc.'s Let the Light Shine, released in May 2024.*

 Courtney Adams

ABOUT THE FILM

Let the Light Shine is a 30-minute documentary that takes a deep-dive into the representation of war and remembrance through the medium of glass.

The film explores the social, cultural and historical themes from five stained glass works representing Australia's involvement in conflicts spanning the Boer War to the war in Afghanistan.

The documentary was funded by the Department of Veterans' Affairs' Saluting Their Service and the United Nations' International Year of Glass 2022 grants programs, and produced by GLAAS Inc., a not-for-profit arts organisation

operating to support Australia's glass art and architecture industry.

RSL Queensland spoke with Dr Bronwyn Hughes OAM, President of GLAAS Inc., to discuss the significance of Australian commemorative glass, and how *Let the Light Shine* came to the big screen.

THE HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF STAINED GLASS

Dr Hughes has forged her career as an expert in Australian glass art over more than four decades. In recent years she has dedicated her research to surveying Australian commemorative stained glass artworks.

"I love calling stained glass 'documents of history' because you can learn so much about your own country from it and what's gone on in these hidden corners of war that we don't hear about," Dr Hughes says.

"Stained glass is a very good medium for conveying the idea of commemoration, especially when it's in a church; the luminosity and colour in them gets everybody in, whether they are religious or not. However, I am also interested in secular settings like the Australian War Memorial, where the idea of the Saint in a church is transported into figures of serving officers and men."

Dr Hughes conceptualised *Let the Light Shine* with photographer

Inside the St. Augustine's Church in Hamilton, which features in the documentary.



ABOVE: The Honourable Dame Quentin Bryce AD CVO was interviewed for the documentary about a stained glass window that memorialises the moment she presented the Victoria Cross to Kaye Baird, the mother of the late Corporal Cameron Baird VC MG.

INSET (TOP): Pictured inside St. Augustine's Church in Hamilton are, from left, Dame Quentin Bryce AD CVO, GLAAS Inc. President Dr Bronwyn Hughes OAM and Kaye Baird.

INSET (BOTTOM): Dame Quentin Bryce AD CVO, left, speaks with Kaye and Doug Baird, parents of Corporal Cameron Baird VC MG, who lost his life during operations in Afghanistan in 2013.

Vlad Bunyevich while the two worked together on an exhibition for the Shrine of Remembrance in 2008. The documentary is the result of years of hard work, promising viewers a fascinating tale of courage, conflict and civic pride.

"In this documentary, we try to bring together the various themes of how commemoration has changed over the course of more than a century of war, and how iconography changes with the changing Australian society.

"Stained glass had never been shown as part of the commemorative story, although it is quite an important part of it. There are hidden stories within the glass, about the service and sacrifice of the men and women in the windows."

The next step was to choose which works to include in the film. With more than 500 pieces identified by Dr Hughes in Victoria alone, it may be surprising to hear that the pieces almost "chose themselves". The highlighted works include:

- a window commemorating Private John Charlton, who served in the Boer War (Shrine of Remembrance, Victoria)
- a window honouring First Nations service men from World War I (Raukkan, South Australia)
- a window honouring the 58th/59th Battalion's service in Bougainville during World War II (Mordialloc, Victoria)
- a laminated glass panel

- installation printed with 80 photographs chosen by veterans of the Vietnam War (Seymour, Victoria)
- a window representing the Victoria Cross being awarded to the parents of Corporal Cameron Baird, who served in the War in Afghanistan (Brisbane, Queensland).

RSL Queensland proudly assisted filming the Victoria Cross window in Brisbane, facilitating interviews





LEFT: St. Augustine's Church in Hamilton, which features the 'Mother's Window', draws a connection between the suffering of Mary and other women, including those in war. The panel on the bottom left represents the Victoria Cross medal being presented. The window was installed to mark the centenary of the Australian landing at Gallipoli during World War I, hence the dates of 1915 and 2015. It also refers to Queensland through the inclusion of the state's floral emblem, a Cooktown Orchid, in the panel on the bottom right. The window designer Christopher John explains the evolution of the design in the documentary.

INSET: Close-up of the panel on the bottom left of the Mother's Window, which depicts the Victoria Cross being presented by the Honourable Dame Quentin Bryce AD CVO, then Governor-General, to Kaye Baird, the mother of Corporal Cameron Baird VC MG.

with the people who inspired the artwork.

"RSL Queensland was so wonderful in helping us film. We are so glad that they came on board and were able to get Dame Quentin Bryce to come along and speak with the parents of Cameron Baird, who's the subject of the window," Dr Hughes says.

MEMORIALISING VALOUR AND COURAGE

Corporal Cameron Baird VC MG lost his life during operations in Afghanistan in 2013. His Victoria Cross was awarded by the Honourable Dame Quentin Bryce AD CVO, then Governor-General, to his mother Kaye Baird on 18 February 2014. It was this moment that has been memorialised in stained glass in St. Augustine's Church, Hamilton.

"It's lovely to be back here talking about this beautiful memorial

to courage, love and bravery – the finest human values and principles," Dame Bryce says in her interview for the documentary.

"When I look at the window... there's so much that touches my heart. I think the hands in particular are symbolic of the bonds that women share, the solidarity of sisterhood.

"It's a beautiful image, the two hands. Of course, to hold a Victoria Cross in your hand is a very special thing. To think of its history and look at its colour and what it signifies and the whole simplicity of it too... I feel very honoured that it's my hand and Kaye's – a day that all Australians will remember.

"It's art and beauty and very

powerful symbolism that we see. It will provoke storytelling that will inspire generations and be told again and again."

The window is especially significant for Kaye and Doug Baird. For Kaye, the window represents the significance of maternal bonds and the Victoria Cross. For Doug, it's a reminder to continue his son's story.

"The two hands in the window, to me, symbolise two mothers," Kaye says.

"When Dame Quentin handed over the Victoria Cross to us, that was a real special moment and that was her hand on top of my hand, explaining what it all meant. She was acknowledging the feelings between two mothers."

"Cameron gave his life for his country, for his unit, for his fellow soldier. The Victoria Cross is one of those awards that opens doors, and we try and use it the best way we can in the most positive way we can.

That is to continue the story, continue the legacy. We try to do that as we think Cameron would want us to: with honesty and integrity," Doug adds.

"Cameron always said it's better to give than it is to receive. His motto going through life was to be the best person you possibly can, with whatever you've got. That's what we try to do in life. It's an absolute honour to be able to do that." ←



To organise a free viewing of *Let the Light Shine* through your local RSL Sub Branch, email **Lynne Dore** via pldore@iprimus.com.au



FOR BUNDABERG VETERANS

Three dedicated RSL Sub Branch volunteers are giving back to veterans, one lawn at a time.

“Some people can’t physically go into their yards anymore and keep them to a reasonable standard. We’re not perfect either, but when we leave you can certainly see that we’ve been there, and that we’re appreciated.”

 **Courtney Adams**

LAYING THE TURF

About two years ago, Bundaberg RSL Sub Branch identified a crucial service gap for veterans in the area.

“Veterans with a DVA Gold Card can qualify for yard maintenance services, but there was a gap for veterans going through the DVA claims process or those in hospital,” Bundaberg RSL Sub Branch Secretary Dannielle Brearley says.

“So, the Sub Branch President at the time decided to start up a mowing group. We purchased the mowing equipment, got the trailer together, and it’s taken off.”

Since launching, the mowing program has grown to be much loved by the veterans whose yards are transformed.

“Our volunteers take time out of their day during the summer months, slogging it out in the heat. Our boys do it because these are fellow veterans and volunteers



themselves,” Dannielle says.

“It’s a free service, but I would say 99.9% of the time our volunteers come back with a donation from each of the individuals they’ve mowed for, or they’ve been provided tea and some nice home-baked goodies.”

Aside from maintaining local yards and the local Veterans Support Centre grounds, the mowing program also serves as a

tool to build camaraderie among the veteran community.

“The best thing about the program is that it’s an informal welfare check on those veterans,” Dannielle says.

“The volunteers receive a lot of positive feedback for their people skills. The veterans love that interaction; it shows that we’re here to cater to their needs and provide for them where needed.”



RAY'S OF SUNSHINE

The Bundaberg RSL Sub Branch mowing program services three to nine lawns at any time, thanks to a group of three dedicated volunteers. One of those volunteers is Army veteran and Sub Branch member Malcolm Jeffrey.

"When I joined the Sub Branch, they asked for volunteers to do lawn mowing and yard maintenance, so I put my hand up," Malcolm says.

"I've got a volunteer mentality. When I was working, my wife and I used to volunteer on cattle stations out west. We've always done volunteer work, so this was a natural progression.

"There are three of us who are mowing at the moment. We're all well past retirement age and we look after yards for people who cannot look after it themselves. It's a service we feel quite happy providing."

For fellow volunteer, Army veteran and Sub Branch member Paul Sullivan, the interaction he has with other veterans through the program makes all the hard work worth it.

"I look forward to assisting other veterans in maintaining their gardens. It gives me a sense of fulfilment and purpose," Paul says.

"Some people can't physically go into their yards anymore and keep them to a reasonable standard. We're not perfect either, but when we leave you can certainly see that we've been there, and that we're appreciated.

"We speak to veterans, have a friendly chat and sometimes share a cool drink. We can also have a bit of an informal welfare check and report back if we think they need extra assistance."

A GROWING NEED

Heather Mackenzie-Scott's yard has been on the receiving end of Bundaberg RSL Sub Branch's mowing program. She finds the service hugely beneficial.

"Bundaberg RSL Sub Branch is very supportive. From the time the volunteers started the mowing group, I asked to go on the program. There was a year-long waiting list but when they arrived, they were absolutely fantastic," Heather says.

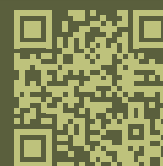
"Even when it has been raining here for nearly two weeks and the grass is really thick, they don't shirk their responsibilities; they come in to mow and whipper-snip and have a chat."

As demand for the mowing program continues to grow in Bundaberg, Heather would like to see more volunteers like Malcolm and Paul in veterans' yards.

"Sometimes volunteers in Sub Branches outside of big metropolitan areas get forgotten. I've seen people come and go,



YouTube



SCAN TO WATCH VIDEO

but Malcolm and Paul are stayers; they've been doing it for that long," Heather says.

"These volunteers are absolutely wonderful and they treat you really well. I think every veteran should get involved in their local Sub Branch." ←

OPPOSITE PAGE: Bundaberg Veteran Mowing Group volunteers Paul Sullivan, left, and Malcolm Jeffrey, right, kindly donate their time to mow lawns for couples such as Don and Noelene Porch, centre.

ABOVE LEFT: Bundaberg Veteran Mowing Group volunteer Paul Sullivan says the interaction he has with other veterans through the program makes all the hard work worthwhile.

ABOVE: Malcolm Jeffrey is very happy to volunteer his services for the mowing group.



The Bundaberg RSL Sub Branch mowing program runs one day per week in summer and one day per fortnight in winter. For more information, visit rslqld.org/about-us/bundaberg-sub-branch-inc





CAMARADERIE

Camaraderie on display at State Congress

Camaraderie was the theme of the 2024 RSL Queensland State Congress, which saw delegates from 10 Districts and 177 Sub Branches around Queensland come together on Saturday 22 June at the Royal International Convention Centre, Brisbane.



he event was an opportunity for delegates to hear from a range of RSL Queensland leaders, share their views on camaraderie within their Sub Branches, contribute at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and enjoy networking opportunities.

Throughout the day, delegates heard from Australia's Repatriation Commissioner Kahlil Fegan DSC AM; Queensland Assistant Minister for Justice and Veterans' Affairs Jimmy Sullivan MP; and Queensland Shadow Assistant Minister for Defence Industry, Veterans, Higher Education and Research James Lister MP.

ENCOURAGING CAMARADERIE ACROSS THE LEAGUE

RSL Queensland State Secretary Iain Carty CSM presented on the topic of camaraderie and shared a proposed definition with those gathered: "Camaraderie within our Sub Branch is a shared feeling of trust and friendship between all our members, volunteers and veterans, who work together respectfully to support each other and promote the Objects of the League."

Iain then introduced representatives from

three Sub Branches, who spoke about what camaraderie looks like for them. Warwick O'Neill from Yarraman RSL Sub Branch talked about how moving into larger headquarters and relocating the community's key monument has helped grow his Sub Branch's membership.

Ed Dahlheimer shared how Gladstone RSL Sub Branch demonstrates and encourages camaraderie – including through its recently opened Veteran Drop-in Centre – and the impact this has on its members and the wider community.

John Edwards from Marian RSL Sub Branch gave a moving presentation about how much it meant to his Sub Branch when RSL Queensland stepped in and replaced football jerseys that were stolen just days before their ANZAC Day charity match.

"The efforts of all involved enriched our ANZAC Day commemorations and strengthened the bonds of unity and respect within our community and the ranks of the RSL," John said.

"When we get involved in our communities and foster camaraderie, it is returned to our veterans twofold."



01



05



(01) RSL Queensland Team Leader – Wellbeing, Sian McDonald, speaks with Peter Tsakassiris from Maroochy RSL Sub Branch at the State Congress booths; (02) Yarraman RSL Sub Branch President Warwick O'Neill is pictured presenting to delegates, with State Secretary Iain Carty CSM, Marian RSL Sub Branch President John Edwards, and Gladstone RSL Sub Branch President Ed Dahlheimer seated on stage; (03) Chatting during the event were, from left, Proserpine RSL Sub Branch delegate Brad Starr, RSL Queensland Board Member Commander Fiona Southwood and Rollingstone RSL Sub Branch delegate Darrell Spann; (04) Marian RSL Sub Branch President John Edwards, left, presents a framed ANZAC Day jersey to RSL Queensland State President Stephen Day DSC AM, with State Secretary Iain Carty CSM watching on; (05) Pictured at the event were, from left, North Gold Coast RSL Sub Branch Secretary Melanie Annand, Gold Coast Assistant District Secretary Sarah Ewart, North Gold Coast RSL Sub Branch President Kenneth Golden OAM, Gold Coast District Secretary Angeli Dabon and Beenleigh and District RSL Sub Branch President David Draper.



STATE PRESIDENT RE-APPOINTED

During the AGM, members re-appointed Stephen Day DSC AM as State President for the next three years.

"As a member-based organisation, our State Congress and AGM are a key part of our democratic process, helping us build and maintain trust within the organisation, and Saturday's event was no different," Stephen says.

"Thank you to all Sub Branch and District representatives who contributed to the day. We look forward to continuing our efforts to provide care, commemoration and camaraderie to veterans and their families."

At the gala dinner in the evening, guests were honoured to hear from Lieutenant General Mark Evans AO DSC (Retd), who spoke on his involvement in INTERFET and the significance of this year's 25th anniversary of Australian service in Timor-Leste.

Next year's State Congress will be held on Saturday 21 June 2025. ←



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06



04



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(01) Rockhampton RSL Sub Branch delegate Brett Breadsell speaks with another event attendee; (02) RSL Queensland State President Stephen Day DSC AM, centre, speaks with Proserpine RSL Sub Branch delegate Brad Starr, left, and Mount Isa RSL Sub Branch delegate Jim Nuttall; (03) Pictured at the gala dinner, from left, guest speaker Lieutenant General Mark Evans AO DSC (Retd), Head of League Development John Hardgrave, and Executive General Manager, Commercial & Investments Tracey Bishop; (04) Pittsworth RSL Sub Branch President Allan Petersen and his family walking into the opening ceremony; (05) Lieutenant General Mark Evans AO DSC (Retd) spoke at the gala dinner about his involvement in INTERFET; (06) RSL Queensland Board of Directors, from left, Chris Hamilton, State Council Chair Garry Player, Ash Naughton, Nic Gould, Tony Orchard, Fiona Southwood, State Vice President Bill Whitburn OAM, State Deputy President Wendy Taylor, and State President Stephen Day DSC AM, with Company Secretary Hayley Stephens (at the microphone).





01



02

(01) State Congress delegates enjoying camaraderie; (02) Delegates and their partners dressed up for a gala dinner in the evening following State Congress; (03) RSL Queensland State Secretary Iain Carty CSM speaking at the podium, with, seated from left, Company Secretary Hayley Stephens, State Vice President Bill Whitburn OAM, State Deputy President Wendy Taylor and State President Stephen Day DSC AM also on stage; (04) RSL Queensland State Secretary Iain Carty CSM, right, led a panel discussion between, from left, Pine Rivers District RSL Sub Branch President Margaret Lord, Sandgate RSL Sub Branch Deputy President John Anderson, St Helens RSL Sub Branch Secretary Barbara Farren-Price, Thuringowa RSL Sub Branch President Jeremy Browne and Mareeba RSL Sub Branch President Paul Aggett.



03




04

SERVING COUNTRY AND COMMUNITY

A full-page background image of a soldier in camouflage gear running through a field with a rifle. The soldier is in the foreground, slightly to the left, moving towards the right. He is wearing a green and brown camouflage uniform and carrying a rifle. The background is a natural, somewhat overgrown landscape with trees and bushes.

"It's one of the proudest periods in my life." 2024 Indigenous Veterans' Ceremony keynote speaker Paul Walker reflects on his Army career, and the past and future of Indigenous service.

 **Belinda Crossman**

PAUL is a proud Australian Army veteran with a strong Indigenous identity. A Waanyi man on his mother's side, he has deep connections to the Gulf of Carpentaria. He's also forged significant ties to his current home of Cairns (Gimuy), which hosted the Indigenous Veterans' Ceremony on 25 May 2024.

"I was really honoured to be involved," Paul says.

Paul Walker joined the Army aged 20 and "loved" his time serving.



ABOVE: Paul served with the Peace Monitoring Group in Bougainville in 1998.

BELOW: Pictured at the Cairns Cenotaph with Paul Walker (far left) are (L-R) Uncle Phillip Bowie and Auntie Frances Ah-Mat Visini, both Elders serving with the Navy Indigenous Development Program, and Iain Carty CSM, RSL Queensland's State Secretary.

FOREVER A VETERAN

It was in Cairns that Paul, aged 20, signed up to join the Army.

He served as a 'bear' – or electronic warfare (EW) operator – in the Royal Australian Signals Corps from 1996 to 2003. Based primarily at 7th Signals Regiment EW, he served with the Peace Monitoring Group in Bougainville in 1998 before joining the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) in 2000.

"It was a very action-packed

seven years of service," he reflects. "I learned five specialist languages in that time, and I became para-qualified to support the 3rd Parachute Battalion and the likes of the 4th Commando Regiment, which was awesome."

Paul "loved" his time in the Army, and the camaraderie that came with it – "I made a lot of friends that are like family to me today" – and feels his service means more to him now than ever. "I now realise the significance of my service. It's one

of the proudest periods in my life, because I will forever be a veteran of the Australian Army."

COMPELLED TO SERVE

Since leaving Defence, Paul has continued to serve his community in many capacities: volunteering with disaster relief, as a mental health speaker, and in his current roles as Cairns RSL Sub Branch Treasurer and the Far North Queensland representative of the Australian Peacekeeper and Peacemaker Veterans' Association.

"The military demands a certain work ethic and culture of you and it's hard to drop that pace. Now I'm not getting that from the military, I'm putting that dedication and effort into the veteran and broader community," he says.

"It's a big part of my identity. It's like a calling; I feel compelled to be a part of something. Volunteering is such a good thing. It's good for your mental health; it's good for your sense of wellbeing."

MENTORING THE NEXT GENERATION

Another highlight of Paul's work is speaking at commemorative events and to younger generations





of service personnel, including the North West Mobile Force (commonly known as NORFORCE) and graduates of the Navy Indigenous Development Program (NIDP).

He readily shares his positive experiences – and his past struggles – to encourage the Defence members of today and tomorrow.

"I talk about believing in yourself and just how good it is, what they're going into," he says.

"I talk about having to push through a lot of hurdles as a young person, with little guidance really.

"I had a bit of a tough upbringing. I went to seven different high schools, kind of bounced around from town to town, couch surfing and all that. Persevering through school was all I knew how to do, and I eventually got a half-decent report card to join the Army.

"So, I talk about the hurdles that you might go through in life, that you're not the only one, and you can get through this."

ACKNOWLEDGING WHERE WE'VE COME FROM

As well as being grateful for his time in service, and excited for aspiring and current serving members' future, Paul says it's important not to lose sight of history.

"Indigenous service dates right back to the Boer War, World War I

and right through World War II," he says.

"I think it's important to constructively, compassionately and very respectfully acknowledge where we've come from:

including the 1967 referendum to acknowledge Indigenous people as citizens, and the unfortunate stories of returned Indigenous service people not being allowed in pubs with their mates, or not being afforded land grants like others who'd done the same service.

"In saying this, it's been great from my personal perspective. Having joined the military in the 1990s, I feel that this decade has had so much more opportunity with these Indigenous development programs.

"This decade is better than the decade before that, which was better than the decade before that. Things have improved so much.

I think we're heading in the right direction and it's great to be part of.

"We acknowledge the generations before us, and I'm coming to that stage where I can impart those experiences and knowledge onto my children.



They've spoken to me about maybe joining Defence one day and I tell them all the good stories and how it's a great opportunity to do something positive, and an honour to serve your country."

A MESSAGE OF INCLUSION

One message Paul addressed during the 2024 Indigenous Veterans' Ceremony was that of inclusion.

"It's not a separate thing all on its own. We're acknowledging a small group as a collective – and the struggles they had – but also the courage, determination and victories that we've all shared as a nation," he says.

"At the end of the day, we're all Australians. The Indigenous Veterans' Ceremony is a very positive occasion and I can't speak highly enough of it; it is very relevant, and I hope we continue to do it for a long time into the future." ←

ABOVE LEFT: Paul with local villagers in Balibo, where he served as part of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) in 2000

ABOVE: Paul and his family at the 2024 Cairns Esplanade ANZAC Day Dawn Service. His wife wore the WWI medals of a relative who served with the Australian Light Horse.



INDIGENOUS VETERANS' CEREMONY : The annual Indigenous Veterans' Ceremony recognises all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who have served in Australia's armed forces. This year's ceremony was held at the Cairns Esplanade Cenotaph on 25 May.

LIVING



DINING



KITCHEN



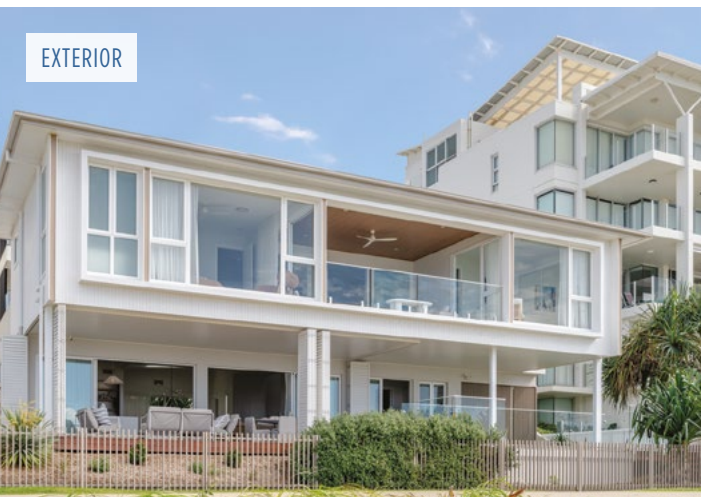
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\$7.4 MILLION GOLD COAST APARTMENT COMPLEX WINNER

CONGRATULATIONS to Jacob* from the Gold Coast – winner of RSL Art Union 415: A \$7.4 million Gold Coast apartment complex.

Jacob* is feeling the thrill of winning – multiplied by five apartments! As the holder of ticket 00052719 in RSL Art Union Draw 415, Jacob was overjoyed when we changed his life with the news.

He now has the freedom of a dream life. Five exceptional Gold Coast apartments, including a penthouse with incredible ocean views, all steps from the sand and rolling waves.

But now Jacob* has a big decision to make. Should he live in the two-storey penthouse and still have four apartments left to rent

or sell? All the options are there, with an instant \$7.4 million property portfolio and up to \$254,800 estimated rental income a year.

“You have to be joking me – unbelievable! Thank you so much. It’s such a good cause with great prizes,” Jacob responded.

As a \$50 ticket book buyer, Jacob also wins

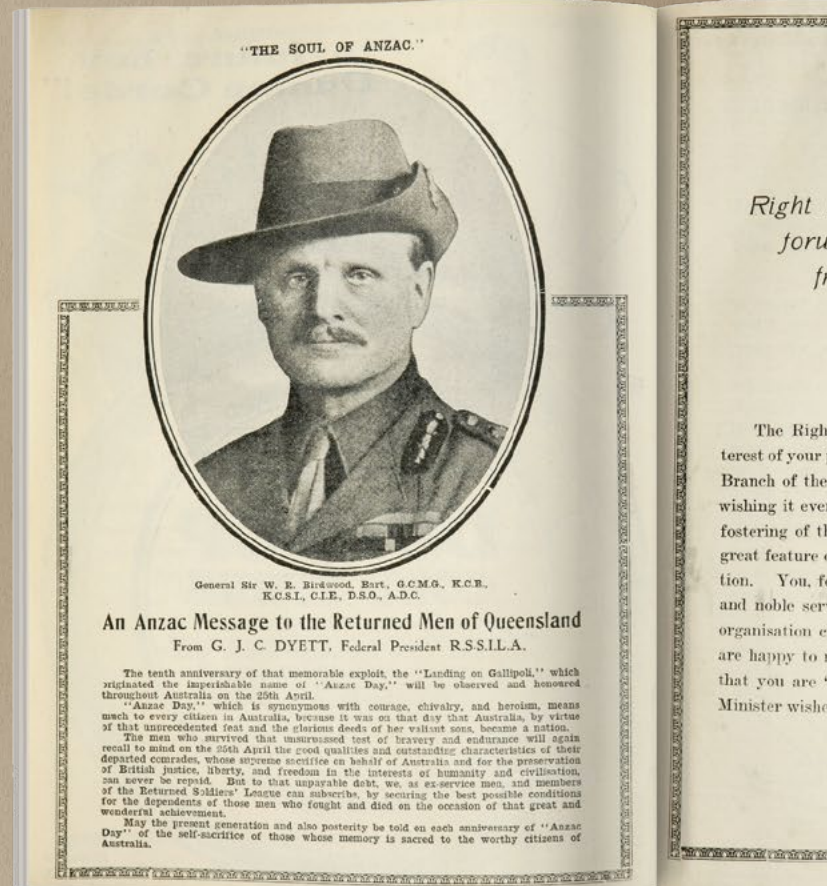
a bonus \$50,000 in gold. Congratulations, Jacob – we wish you all the very best for the future.

A massive thanks to you and everyone who supports RSL Art Union.

Each ticket sold supports veterans and families.

**Name changed for privacy reasons.*

HELP US CELEBRATE THE CENTENARY OF THE QUEENSLAND DIGGER...



In 2025 we will celebrate 100 years since *The Queensland Digger* (now *Queensland RSL News*) was first published. That's a centenary of telling veterans' stories!

We want you – our readers – to feel part of this milestone.

We'd love you to tell us:

- Do you have any special memories of our member magazine over the years?
- Did you read any articles that were inspiring or even life-changing?
- Has it helped you reconnect with long-lost friends?

Please email editor@rslqld.org if you have any photos, stories to share or ideas to help us celebrate the centenary.



RSL
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BEDSIDE SUPPORT FOR VETERANS IN BRISBANE

Two veterans share the story of RSL South Eastern District's Veteran Wellbeing Coordination Centre at Greenslopes Private Hospital.

 **Courtney Adams**

HOW THE CENTRE STARTED

RSL South Eastern District President Kerry Gallagher AM is more aware than most of the challenges that veterans face in navigating Australia's healthcare system. However, a dedicated wellbeing centre embedded in a local hospital has been helping ease this burden for veterans in his District for many years.

"I spent time in the Army and the Australian Medical Association (AMA), both as CEO of AMA in

Queensland and Secretary General of the Federal AMA," Kerry explains.

"One of the RSL's primary objectives is to look after the sick, the helpless and the needy, so I saw that a centre could exist to do exactly that."

Greenslopes Private Hospital in Brisbane provided the perfect location for this centre, and in 2016 the RSL South Eastern District's Veteran Wellbeing Coordination Centre was established.

"Previously, Greenslopes was a repatriation general hospital for Queensland," Kerry explains.

"Many ageing veterans, particularly those who served in WWII, Korea and Vietnam, remember this place as a veterans' hospital, so it still services a significant need in Queensland."

Today, the centre helps guide veterans through their stay in hospital and beyond.

"Our volunteers walk through the wards and chat to everyone



who's there, and they often pick up additional people who have not yet been referred to us," Kerry explains.

"We help veterans through the medical and allied health systems, but we also do simple things to see if they're okay, like visiting them, giving them hospital packs and talking to them."

VOLUNTEERING FOR A GOOD CAUSE

Over recent years, the centre has grown to provide an array of

services including DVA advocacy, housing, financial and employment support. RSL South Eastern District Secretary Judy Alterator has seen first-hand the difference that it's made to her fellow veterans.

"The staff put in that extra bit of effort, so we often get comments from the South Eastern District about how good the centre is doing, and also how good the service has been at the hospital," Judy says.

"By interacting with us, the veterans are also learning that

they have entitlements, and some of them have had their healthcare cards upgraded through the work of our volunteers in the hospital."

The centre's team of volunteer wellbeing officers meet with patients and their families to help assess any challenges they may be facing and connect them with relevant support services. In March 2024 alone, the centre provided approximately 740 services to patients via phone, email and face-to-face.

MAIN IMAGE: RSL South Eastern District President Kerry Gallagher AM, left, and Secretary Judy Alterator.

RIGHT: RSL South Eastern District President Kerry Gallagher AM, left, and Secretary Judy Alterator chat inside the wellbeing centre.

“We help veterans through the medical and allied health systems, but we also do simple things to see if they’re okay, like visiting them, giving them hospital packs and talking to them.”



“We have a Client Contact Officer who looks after our volunteers on a daily basis, getting them ready to conduct their visits at the hospital. She has seven full-time volunteers and three in training,” Judy says.

“The team have been able to get a lot of advocates to come in and see the patients. Some of the Sub Branches can’t get out and do home visits, so veterans are very appreciative when they get here.”

PLANNING FOR THE CENTRE’S FUTURE

Despite the overwhelming success of the centre, both Kerry and Judy continue to develop the centre’s capacity, driven by their dedication to the veteran community.

“I’ve been relatively fortunate – both in terms of employment and health – and therefore I believe that I need to give something back to the service. I think the RSL is the best vehicle to do that,” Kerry says.

“Overseeing out here allows me to give back some of the time and effort that was put into my training as a veteran. To listen to how someone is feeling and how they’re trying to get through it means the world,” Judy says.

Eight years on since the centre’s establishment, Kerry and Judy both agree there is more work to be done to help more veterans.

“Ultimately, we hope the centre will expand – to service not only the needs of people coming through Greenslopes Hospital, but also other private hospitals

in South East Queensland,” Kerry says.

“We want to expand our visits to outlying hospitals because we also have veterans there, but we don’t get to see them. They are hearing about the good work this centre is doing and have been asking us to start doing our visits to them as well,” Judy adds.

Until then, Judy has some advice for those who want to reach out to the RSL South Eastern District.

“Don’t be afraid; pick up a phone, ask questions, approach someone in the street. We can do as much for you as you will let us.”



SCAN TO WATCH VIDEO



For more information about the RSL South Eastern District’s Veteran Wellbeing Coordination Centre, visit rslsouthqueensland.org/resources/veterans-wellbeing-coordination-centre or email wellbeing@rslsouthqueensland.org

MATES 4 MATES

THE QUARTERLY MAGAZINE
FOR OUR DEFENCE COMMUNITY

Dolphins charity partnership supports local veterans.

WE HAVE PARTNERED WITH THE DOLPHINS TO HELP
VETERANS AND FAMILIES RECONNECT AND RECOVER.

+ BUILDING MEANINGFUL SOCIAL CONNECTIONS THROUGH MINDFULNESS.

HOW PRACTISING MINDFULNESS CAN DECREASE
SOCIAL ISOLATION.

The relationship between exercise and pain.

BREAKING DOWN A COMMON MISCONCEPTION
ABOUT EXERCISE AND CHRONIC PAIN.



A message from Emma.

It's hard to believe that the end of 2024 is only a few months away. It's been a busy and productive time at Mates4Mates, and I know the team have lots of exciting and engaging activities and programs in store between now and the end of the year.

Recently, the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide delivered its final report after more than three years of hearings and private sessions. I commend the brave people touched by military suicide who shared their powerful and personal stories. Over these past few years, it has been an honour to have had the opportunity to represent Mates4Mates as part of the Royal Commission Stakeholder Reference Group. Mates4Mates is well positioned to work alongside other ESOs to help address some of the issues faced by those impacted by service.

Over the last few months, I've been proud to watch Mates4Mates grow as an organisation alongside our Reconciliation Action Plan, as endorsed by Reconciliation Australia. Each of our locations across Australia came together to acknowledge both National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week through various activities as we work toward a more inclusive and aware environment alongside veterans and families.

As we reflect on recent milestones, I'd like to mention that the RSL Queensland Veteran & Family Wellbeing Centre in Stafford has officially been open for a year. When the Mates4Mates Brisbane team transitioned from the Centre in Milton to Stafford last August, it was wonderful to see so many veterans and families join us at the new location. Since then, the new Centre has been a thriving and supportive space for both long-standing Brisbane Mates and clients, as well as new faces.

Finally, as this edition of the Mates4Mates magazine includes stories of fundraisers and partnerships, I want to thank everyone who helps us to make a difference in the lives of veterans and families impacted by service. It's the support of these contributors that allows us to help more people, more often.

Emma

Mates4Mates Chief Executive Officer

Make the call that makes the difference.

Contact Mates4Mates to find out about our services, how you can access support or get involved.

mates4mates.org

[1300 4 MATES](tel:13004MATES)



Mates4Mates supports current and ex-serving Australian Defence Force members, and their families, who have been impacted by their service. We are an initiative established by RSL Queensland. If you would like to contribute to our magazine please contact Mates4Mates Marketing team via marketing@mates4mates.org or call 1300 462 837.



Shop your support.

Every purchase supports veterans and their families.

mates4matesshop.org



Dolphins charity partnership supports local veterans.

Earlier this year, Mates4Mates announced a charity partnership with the Dolphins NRL to further support the Defence community to reconnect and recover.

At a recent home game, the Dolphins took on the Titans at Suncorp Stadium, where the crowd raised \$28,601 as part of the 50-50 charity raffle where Mates4Mates was the beneficiary.

Thank you to everyone who attended the Dolphins game and contributed to this donation to Mates4Mates, as well as to the more than 50 volunteers who helped support us on the day.

It's through charity partnerships like this one with the Dolphins that Mates4Mates can continue our work in supporting the health and wellbeing of veterans and family members in every way we can.

With centres located across Australia, it's important to us that

we partner with organisations embedded in our local communities. The Dolphins have already had a great impact on the Brisbane community since the club's inaugural season in 2023 and our charity partnership has provided the veterans and families who access our services a range of engagement opportunities.

This includes joining the Dolphins for their Captain's Run at Kayo Stadium where families watched a training session and then had a meet and greet with players and coaches. We were also happy to welcome the Dolphins to a Mates4Mates Brisbane activity, to chat with local veterans about what it means to them as athletes to be "mentally tough".

When highlighting their charity partnership with Mates4Mates, the Dolphins were thrilled to share their passion for supporting the Defence community.



"Mates4Mates do important work for the people that have made huge sacrifices for our country both in their personal and professional lives.

The Dolphins are very pleased to enter into this partnership to provide assistance for the wonderful support they provide to the Defence community."

– Terry Reader, Dolphins NRL Chief Executive Officer.

For more information about the Dolphins, visit dolphinsnrl.com.au.

The relationship between exercise and pain.

✍ Written by Aric Visentin, Mates4Mates Exercise Physiologist

A common question our physical rehabilitation clinicians receive from clients relates to the relationship between pain and exercise. Pain is a normal response from our brain, so how can a person recognise when their pain is presenting as a health concern?

Pain is a human survival mechanism: an output from our brain, serving to protect us from injury or re-injury. Some pain within movements is normal and doesn't mean that the exercise is causing harm.

Persistent pain occurs when the signal between the site of pain and your brain is delayed, disrupted, or abnormal due to misfiring nerves. Chronic and persistent pain are often seen by clinicians working with veterans.

Many people believe that there are only two decisions when faced with persistent physical pain: live with it or undergo corrective surgery. But there are other options, including working with an exercise physiologist or physiotherapist to create a physical activity plan tailored to the veteran's condition and exercise abilities. Surgery might fix the anatomical issue or concern, but persistent pain can still be present after surgery.

Seeing an exercise physiologist or physiotherapist to manage physical pain decreases your risk of making it worse or re-injuring yourself. They can help develop a safe exercise program, ensuring you don't withdraw from exercise as this can make painful symptoms worse.

Recovering from or managing persistent pain is a tough journey. Having a trusted clinician to provide support is the best and safest course of action, letting you know when you are doing too much or doing things that may be hindering your recovery.



Mates4Mates offers veterans and family members access to exercise physiologists and physiotherapists. The team can provide one-on-one sessions and work with you to find the right place to start or book you in for one of our group programs.

Our Persistent Pain Program is also delivered throughout the year, covering various topics such as pain neuroscience, physical activity for pain, goal setting, overcoming barriers, mental health awareness, addiction and pain, sleep hygiene, and challenging our past experiences with pain.

For more information on how Mates4Mates can support your chronic pain, visit **mates4mates.org** or call **1300 4 MATES (62 837)**.



© Tim Floyd
Photography.



Passion fuels fundraisers for veteran community.

Mates4Mates supporters have been using their hobbies to host events and travel Australia to raise funds in support of veterans and family members impacted by service.

The Kokoda Caravan Owners spent a week travelling across the Flinders Range in South Australia, fundraising for Mates4Mates through raffles, auctions, coin toss games, and lots more. With donated prizes up for grabs, the group raised more than \$9,600 for Mates4Mates.

Kokoda Caravan Owners National Gathering's organiser Vicki Bryant shared how everyone had a great time raising funds for such a worthy charity.

"We are absolutely thrilled that we could help such a worthy cause, and that the result was a solid amount. We have many veterans who have purchased Kokoda caravans, and I think Mates4Mates was a good fit for our group"

– Vicki Bryant, Kokoda Caravan Owners National Gathering's organiser.

Meanwhile in Brisbane, Queensland, local musician Paul Baxter and his rock cover band Split Decision harnessed the energy of rock music to fundraise more than \$12,000 for Mates4Mates through their event 'Music4Mates'.

With an electric atmosphere and excellent acoustics, the venue was filled with passionate music lovers who wanted to make a change for veterans and families. We know Paul and his band are already planning their 2025 event, and we can't wait!

We are incredibly honoured for Mates4Mates to have been chosen as the recipients of these wonderful fundraisers. It is through the hard work and dedication of our supporters that we have the opportunity to make a difference for the veteran community and Defence families.

These generous contributions will support current and ex-serving Australian Defence Force members and families facing the physical, mental and social impacts of service.

To find out how you can support Mates4Mates, visit supportmates4mates.org.



Leticia is a veteran living in Cairns who has been accessing the support of Mates4Mates for three years.

What's your favourite social connection activity?

"I enjoy the fitness group activities and the creative workshops."

Why do you enjoy being a Mate?

"Being a Mate gives me a sense of belonging, support, and shared experiences. It means having a network of supportive veterans who understand and accept me. Mates4Mates provides me with connection, laughter and fun, and encouragement in my daily life."

Meet a Mate.



Celebrating women's health in the community.

Women's Health Week, held annually in September, encourages women and girls to make their health a priority.

This year, Women's Health Week spotlighted the theme of 'Your Voice, Your Choice', helping women across Australia to discover the power of self-advocacy when discussing health and wellbeing concerns.

Mates4Mates celebrated Women's Health Week across most of our locations, running a range of activities that focused on mindfulness and boosting mental wellbeing. A dedicated educational workshop was also held for women veterans and family members, guided by Mates4Mates exercise physiologists.

The sessions discussed common health concerns within the female veteran community, where to go for advice, and how physical activity can help to manage these conditions.

Putting their new knowledge into practice, our veterans and families ran through a mindful movement session, catering for and inclusive of all ages and physical abilities.



Building meaningful social connections through mindfulness.

✍ Written by Sharron Jones, Mates4Mates Counsellor

Mindfulness involves paying attention to your thoughts and feelings while remaining aware of the present moment. This mental practice can play an important role in building more meaningful social connections with those around us.

Integrating mindfulness practices into day-to-day life can help veterans to improve their health and wellbeing through engagement in social situations. Social connection is also crucial for veterans and families as they transition from the Defence Force.

Connecting with other veterans and Defence families through shared experiences can help to reduce the stigma of mental health in the community, providing understanding and an outlet that leads to increased motivation and resilience. It can also help decrease feelings of isolation and loneliness.

However, it can be overwhelming and stressful at times when engaging in social connection activities or situations. By bringing awareness to our emotions and wellbeing to ground ourselves and become more present, mindfulness can help to support meaningful social connections with others.

As well as supporting your social health, mindfulness can also:

- reduce stress
- improve emotional regulation
- increase self-awareness
- boost your immune system
- lower blood pressure
- improve sleep
- reduce social anxiety
- foster a more positive level of wellbeing, acceptance and contentment.

Mates4Mates psychologists, counsellors and social workers are available to provide mental health support to help veterans and family members improve their mental health

Practising mindfulness and grounding techniques.

- Focus on being consciously and fully 'present' in the social situation. This might involve really focusing on what someone is saying without being distracted by what you want to say in reply.
- Acknowledge unhelpful thoughts but try not to let them get in the way of being in the moment.
- If the situation becomes overwhelming, take some time out to do a simple grounding exercise such as focusing on the connection between your feet and the floor. This may allow you to then refocus on being fully present.

and wellbeing. They can provide advice and guidance on how to improve mindfulness practices in your everyday life.

To help veterans and families socially connect with like-minded others, Mates4Mates also offers regular social connection activities across Australia. These activities include bike riding, arts and crafts, coffee catch ups, walks and much more, all in a safe and supportive environment.

To find out how Mates4Mates can support you, contact us on **1300 4 MATES (62 837)** for a confidential chat.

MATES4MATES

Here for those
impacted by service.



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Find a way forward from
service-related injuries.

Support for all current and ex-serving Defence Force
members, and their families, impacted by service.



- ✓ Mental health and wellbeing services
- ✓ Physical rehabilitation and wellbeing services
- ✓ Social connection activities
- ✓ Skills-based recovery programs

 **Join Mates4Mates** Register today



FIGHTING FIRES, LIFTING SPIRITS

Ex-Army firefighter, SES volunteer and Army Cadet Staff Officer Ken Cook has spent years supporting the community in many ways.

  Belinda Crossman

THE PEACEKEEPERS



"I'm going to fit a towbar and tow a trailer behind it, which I'm going to decal based on my own service."



Ken Cook's connection to service is hard to miss. He wears it on his proverbial sleeve – and all over his

motorbike.

From front to back, Ken's bike is adorned with the Australian flag and Army badge (Rising Sun), illustrations of Peacekeepers and the charge at Beersheba, silhouettes of marching ANZAC soldiers, scatterings of red poppies, and the words 'Their service, their sacrifice, our freedom.'

"I've seen various bikes done up differently, but this is the first commemorative one I've seen



that's not ex-military," Ken says.

"The guy I bought it from let me test ride it for three weeks but to be honest, by the time I hit the end of his road, I was ready to turn around and pay him for it."

COMMEMORATION ON WHEELS

The bike's original owner, a fellow veteran and Army Cadet Staff Officer, had the bike decorated in tribute to his 30-year Army career and those who served before him. Not surprisingly, the distinctive ride attracts a lot of compliments and requests for appearances.

"People love the poppy theme. They reckon it's the only one they've ever seen done like this," Ken says. "If someone wants it displayed at an event, I'm happy to bring it along, provided they've got the right insurance and permissions."

It's not just a display piece, though. Ken's bike has seen its fair share of adventures, including a charity Christmas ride in 2023 and an Australia Day ride with the

Vietnam Veterans Motorcycle Club.

"I enjoy owning it. It really does mean something in terms of service and respect for people that have served in the past," Ken says. "The look on people's faces when they see it brings a bit of joy to me as well."

A LIFE OF SERVICE

Ken always wanted to be a firefighter and joined the Army to do so in 2003.

Initially posted to 1st Aviation Regiment, he served a mandatory 12 months in another corps (Transport) before serving at Army Aviation Centre Oakey's fire station, which has since closed.

"That was the last 24/7, 365-day working Army fire station," Ken explains. "We still did the on-base roles, like tending alarms at the different buildings on base, which no other fire station fires were doing in the Army."

An accident led to Ken's medical discharge in 2007, and since then he's spent countless hours serving the veteran and wider community.

ABOVE, RIGHT AND PREVIOUS PAGE: Ken's motorbike is adorned with commemorative symbols and artwork.

BELOW: Ken served in the Army from 2003 to 2007.





As Ashgrove-Bardon RSL Sub Branch Vice President, Ken is actively involved in organising member meetings, local commemorations, fundraising drives, and social outings for war widows. And as the RSL Sub Branch delegate, he's a key point of contact between his Sub Branch and RSL South Eastern District.

"We're fairly tight-knit, all-inclusive and welcoming here," he says.

Ken's dedication to community goes back a long time. After many years in the Scouting movement, he joined the State Emergency Service (SES) in 1990 and has deployed across Queensland and even New South Wales to assist at fires, searches, vehicle crashes, and during natural disasters.

"I'm now a leading field operator, so I can lead teams in the field, run incident management teams on searches and stuff like that. I'm also Cert IV training and education qualified, so I deliver courses and train newer members coming through," he explains.

"I've also been a peer supporter – doing low-level counselling – within the SES, because I've been there; I've done it; I've pretty much

seen it all. So, if I can assist newer members with any issues they're having, I'm happy to."

In 2015, Ken's passion for mentoring inspired him to join the Australian Army Cadets (AAC) as a volunteer.

"I'm the Quartermaster up at (123 Army Cadet Unit) Caboolture and assist at most activities where possible, like annual camps and promotion courses," he says. "Our unit staff are all either ex-military or ex-AAC, so our cadets get first-hand practical information."

COMIC RELIEF

More recently, Ken joined his unit's morale team – something he believes might be unique among cadet units in South Queensland AAC Brigade.

"When I first did a promotion course a few years ago, I said, 'Can I do something if the kids need cheering up?' They said, 'Bring

whatever you need to. We can't guarantee it'll happen, but we'll see.'

"The cadets arrived on the Saturday. By the Thursday night, the morale was nosediving. And I happened to take my inflatable (cartoon character) Pikachu suit."

Without warning, Ken donned the giant suit and burst onto the stage midway through a presentation, igniting the whole room with laughter.

"It was only a 30-second thing, but it did so much for the kids, and now we do something like that every year.

"It does pick up everybody's morale, and it picks us up as well."

BEING THERE FOR OTHERS

Being there for veterans, cadets and community members brings Ken a lot of satisfaction – as does setting an example for his children.

"All I can hope is that they get the same sort of community involvement that I have," he says.

Soon, he hopes to weave his own story into the ones adorning his bike.

"I'm going to fit a towbar and tow a trailer behind it, which I'm going to decal based on my own service," he says. "I'll probably add the Transport,

Engineer and Army Fire Service badges; the Army Cadet and SES badges; and the Ode." ←

LEFT: As RSL South Eastern District Delegate and Ashgrove-Bardon RSL Sub Branch Vice President, Ken is actively involved in organising member meetings, local commemorations, fundraisers and other activities for the veteran community.

BELOW: Ken previously served at Army Aviation Centre Oakey's fire station, and has volunteered for the SES since 1990.



CUSTOMISE MOTORBIKE HELP WANTED:

Can you help customise Ken's bike? He'd love to hear from you. Please email Ken.Cook@ashgrove.rslqld.net.au



FROM THE AIR FORCE TO ARTISTRY

ABOVE: Titled '1000', this work depicts the start of the 1000th round of the MotoGP, the world motorcycle championship at the French Grand Prix Le Mans in 2023. This painting depicts what was without question a major milestone in the history of Grand Prix motorcycle racing. The painting is now owned by the CEO of the company that runs the championship and this work is transported to every Grand Prix to be hung in his office.

Air Force veteran Garry Dolan rediscovered his passion for art and the joy of inspiring others to be creative.

AS a young man, Garry was drawn to the stunning landscapes of Port Stephens in NSW, spending his weekends capturing their beauty through intricate paintings. His artistry was not only fuelled by the natural wonder of the area but also by the sound of Mirage jet fighters taking off from the nearby Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) Base Williamtown.

LIFE TAKES AN UNEXPECTED TURN

A deep fascination with aviation led Garry to join the RAAF, where he served as an electronics technician. Sadly, a life-changing motorbike accident ended his military career, urging him to pursue a degree in sports management.

"After receiving high quality

training as a radio technician and working in both the air and ground environments, finding employment and transitioning into civilian employment was quite easy," Garry says.

He went on to travel throughout Australia and Europe in his new job, working in the promotion of car and motorbike racing. While his



that being an artist made to my life. It gave me a new network of friends, a new sense of worth and identity and, most importantly, it changed the way I looked at the world."

INSPIRING OTHERS TO FIND JOY THROUGH ART

Garry enjoys helping others discover their artistic side by teaching classes at the Centenary Suburbs Men's Shed. He believes that age holds no bounds, and loves watching his elderly students become fully absorbed in artistic expression, finding a sense of community connection and wellbeing through their shared passion.

"I now look at everything I see in more detail and with greater appreciation for the beauty in

everyday things," Garry says.

"It is a form of meditation in that the rest of the world disappears and only the subject, the paint, brushes and canvas exist. This is what I try to pass on to my students."

Together with his wife Kate, Garry embarked on a six-week holiday in September 2023 to paint racing cars and bike races throughout Europe. They now reside in Kenmore in Brisbane, where Garry has his studio, creating and sharing his passion with the world.

He recently joined Centenary Suburbs RSL Sub Branch and completed a portrait of fellow Sub Branch member and WWII digger Keith Buck, aged 102. ←



BELOW: Garry is captured painting a portrait of WWII veteran and fellow Centenary Suburbs RSL Sub Branch member Keith Buck.

career was a success, Garry's big challenge lay in recovering from his motorbike injuries and adapting to everyday life outside Defence.

"After being medically discharged from the injuries sustained in a major motorcycle accident, adjusting to civilian life was more difficult," Garry explains.

REKINDLING THE CREATIVE FLAME

During a medical visit to London, Garry stumbled upon an article on oil painting, which rekindled his interest in the art form. This revived passion led him to pursue a career as a full-time artist, showcasing his work in esteemed locations such as the Pentagon and the Australian War Memorial.

"I took up painting again mainly for my own mental health. I had no real thoughts of becoming professional," Garry explains.

"I quickly fell in love with painting and was very aware of the changes



PICK UP A PAINTBRUSH YOURSELF: Garry teaches at the Centenary District Men's Shed's art program on Wednesdays from 10am-2pm. To learn more, visit csms.org.au or call Mal Lancaster from Centenary Suburbs RSL Sub Branch on **0412 795 118**.



ABOVE: Flying Officer G. Roberts, Melbourne, Victoria, of Spitfire no. 453 Squadron RAAF, leaving the cockpit of his Spitfire aircraft after returning from beach-head patrol over the invasion coast on D-Day. Photo courtesy of the Australian War Memorial.

THE DAY THAT TURNED THE TIDE OF WWII

Nearly five years into WWII, the fate of western Europe hinged on a mission like no other. It all began with D-Day.

 **Courtney Adams**

A SHORT HISTORY OF D-DAY

D-Day took place towards the end of World War II and is widely considered the Western Allies' most significant victory of this war. On 6 June 1944, an immense air, sea and ground force from

13 nations (including Australia) invaded Normandy, France, to launch the Allied campaign – codenamed Operation Overlord – to liberate western Europe from Nazi occupation.

Successfully executing such

an operation required years of preparation. Allied nations – namely, the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, France, Greece, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, and Rhodesia – were required to secretly coordinate logistics, train troops, invent new equipment and predict ideal weather conditions before the landings could take place.

They also had to plan for encountering many challenges,

At the time, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill wrote to United States President Franklin D. Roosevelt, describing D-Day as “much the greatest thing we have ever attempted”.

such as rough seas, heavy artillery fire and breaching Hitler’s ‘impenetrable’ Atlantic Wall. So much was at stake that bad weather delayed the scheduled 5 June landing by 24 hours.

D-Day was executed in two phases. The first phase was an airborne assault from approximately 24,000 paratroopers and glider-borne troops, who landed behind German lines to bombard and suppress the German defences.

The second phase was an amphibious landing of more than 130,000 troops on five beaches across more than 80km of coastline. In total, more than 5,000 vessels and 10,000 aircraft were used to pull off the mission.

At the time, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill wrote to United States President Franklin D. Roosevelt, describing D-Day as “much the greatest thing we have ever attempted”. Following the invasion, the Battle of Normandy ensued and lasted until the end of August 1944, when the Germans retreated from France. They surrendered a few months later in May 1945.

AUSTRALIA’S INVOLVEMENT IN D-DAY

Approximately 3,200 Australian troops were deployed on D-Day and thousands more served in the wider Normandy campaign. Australia’s primary contribution on D-Day was in the air, with 2,800 Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) personnel taking part in the operations.

Additionally, around 500 members of the Royal Australian Navy and a dozen Australian soldiers served in D-Day operations on attachment to the Royal Navy and British Army.

Sadly, at least 14 Australian lives were lost in combat on 6 June 1945.

During D-Day, seven RAAF squadrons took part in attacks on the Normandy beaches and surrounding areas. Although no Australian Navy ships were present, Australian Navy personnel did serve in or command landing craft, coastal craft and warships on D-Day. One Australian, Lieutenant Ken Hudspeth RANVR commanded the X-Craft (midget submarine) X20 that provided navigation assistance to the Allied assault craft, ensuring the armada arrived at the correct beaches.

Australian soldiers who served alongside the British Army reportedly gained experience that helped prepare them for amphibious operations in the Pacific later in WWII.

REMEMBERING D-DAY

6 June 2024 marked the 80th anniversary of D-Day. On this day, Australia joined its former Western Allies in commemorating this important chapter of world history.

Internationally, the Standing with Giants installation was in place at the British Normandy Memorial from April to August 2024. This spectacular installation featured 1,475 silhouettes, representing the number of servicemen who lost their lives on this date.

The Royal British Legion held various commemorations, including a Legacies of D-Day exhibition in France and the UK, anniversary events, and community events around the UK.

On 6 June, we paused for a moment to remember the troops who served on this important day and the campaign that followed, especially those who lost their lives in combat. 🇺🇸

COMMEMORATING D-DAY ANNIVERSARY ON THE SHORES OF NORMANDY

ON 6 June 2024, WWII veteran and Sandgate RSL Sub Branch member Jim Grebert (pictured below) was invited by Timothy Davis, President of The Greatest Generations Foundation, to travel to Normandy, France, for the 80th anniversary of D-Day.

Jim had been given the great honour of raising the Australian flag at the important commemoration in Normandy and laid a wreath at the Commonwealth War Graves “in memory of departed Allied comrades” on behalf of RSL Australia.

Accompanied by his granddaughter, Helen Bishop, this was the most important mission for Jim as he paid tribute to all Australians who served in WWII, symbolising their unwavering dedication to our country.

On the day, Jim was the only Australian in a contingent of veterans from WWII (including two from D-Day), and the Korean, Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan wars.

Jim remarked that it was very emotional to see the large number of graves on the site as it represented the significant loss he saw during WWII of men making the ultimate sacrifice. But it was important to him to see that each gravestone had been kept and cared for. 🇺🇸



EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM LIGHTS VETERAN'S PATH TO NEW CAREER

Thanks to the RSL Employment Program's guidance and connections, Army veteran Clare Mason found a civilian role she loves.

RIGHT: Given her responsibilities as a mother of two, Clare says the support and guidance provided by the RSL Queensland Employment Program was crucial.

BELOW: Clare dedicated almost 12 years to a diverse array of roles in the Army.

AFTER dedicating almost 12 years to a diverse array of Army roles spanning logistics, warehouse management, account oversight and operations, Clare Mason found a meaningful and fulfilling civilian career with help from the RSL Employment Program.

SUCCESS AFTER SERVICE

Discovering the RSL Employment Program through a Defence transition coach was instrumental



in helping her secure a job with Electrotech Australia as an Administration and Support Officer in July 2022.

Now more than a year in the position and enjoying her role, Clare recommends the program to those going through the transition process, which can sometimes be an intimidating experience. She believes services like RSL Queensland's Employment Program are essential to helping veterans find their footing in the civilian job market.

"The program really opened my eyes and gave me the confidence to navigate the job search process effectively," Clare says.

"The team analysed my

skills and personality, aligning them seamlessly with career opportunities that not only met my expectations but also catered to my personal life and family needs."

A PARTNER TO COUNT ON

RSL Queensland understands that finding meaningful employment involves more than just securing a job.

It's about finding a role that fits each veteran's stage of life and ambitions, and gives them a sense of purpose every day when they go to work.

"Through meetings and discussions, RSL Queensland understood the value of the skills I had acquired during my



military service – skills that extended beyond logistics. Areas like prioritisation, account management, and time management are transferable to many careers,” Clare says.

Delivered by RSL Queensland, the RSL Employment Program offers vital employability skills training – including interview preparation – to give veterans a competitive edge in the job market.

The program facilitated Clare's career transition by assisting with the development of her resume and crafting compelling cover letters.

More than that, it helped streamline her job search through a wide network of employer connections.

“Not only did I receive unwavering support and guidance, but it also saved me time, which was crucial given my responsibilities as a mother of two and having a job at the time,” Clare says.

“Each day brought me closer to finding the perfect job, and even when things didn't go as planned, the RSL Employment team kept me motivated and positive.”

AN EXEMPLARY EMPLOYER

Clare hopes that her success story will inspire more members of the Defence community to explore the benefits of the RSL Employment Program.

This program has already helped more than 1,100 veterans and partners of current or ex-serving Defence members secure meaningful employment, and has forged partnerships with employers nationwide to facilitate job placements for ex-service personnel.



LEFT: Army veteran Clare Mason found a civilian role that allows her to balance her professional and family life.

“RSL Queensland understands that finding meaningful employment involves more than just securing a job. It's about finding a role that fits each veteran's stage of life and ambitions, and gives them a sense of purpose every day when they go to work.”

Electrotech Australia is an enterprise dedicated to supporting veterans and Defence families. From the beginning of her employment, Clare has thrived in her role and praises the business for its support of veterans and

Defence families and its flexibility in accommodating family needs.

“I love my position; it aligns perfectly with my personality and life goals, offering both professional development and financial growth opportunities,” Clare says. ←



RSL Queensland partners with a wide range of employers across Australia to help transitioning and ex-serving Defence members and partners of current or ex-serving Defence members find meaningful work. For more information, visit rslqld.org/find-help/employment



HOW NETWORKING CAN UNLOCK YOUR POST-DEFENCE CAREER

Be it online or in real life, networking can be a game-changer in securing a fulfilling career.

IN the fast-paced landscape of today's job market, securing a fulfilling career extends beyond a stellar resume and impressive credentials.

One key element that can be a game-changer is networking.

Building and maintaining a robust professional network opens doors to new opportunities that might otherwise remain hidden.

Online networking is also a vital

component of career advancement. Leverage platforms like LinkedIn to showcase your expertise, connect with industry leaders and stay updated on relevant news.

A compelling online presence can attract opportunities and elevate your professional profile.

REMEMBER TO NETWORK OFFLINE

If you are not connected online,

there are still many valuable networks in real life that you can tap into to access the hidden job market. Personal connections such as friends, family, former colleagues and mentors may have insider knowledge about unadvertised positions or could connect you with key decision-makers. Express your career aspirations to your social networks and you might be surprised by the opportunities that arise.

RSL Employment Program Manager Virginia Coffison says in the competitive job market,

relationships. Attend industry events, engage in online forums and participate in professional groups to foster connections with like-minded individuals. Remember, your network is not just a list of contacts but a community of potential mentors, collaborators and advocates.

Networking provides access to insider information and industry trends. Conversations with professionals in your field can offer valuable insights into the latest industry/labour market developments, helping you stay ahead of the curve. This knowledge not only enhances your professional acumen but also positions you as a resource within your network.

"Building a network is not a one-time effort but an ongoing process. Regularly attend conferences, participate in webinars and seek out opportunities to meet new professionals," Virginia explains.

"Remember, networking isn't just about what you can gain; it's about reciprocity. Be genuine in your interactions, help where possible and contribute to the collective success of your network."

A BRIDGE BETWEEN DEFENCE AND CIVILIAN LIFE

For veterans transitioning from Defence to civilian life, networking offers a bridge between military expertise and civilian opportunities. Attend veteran-focused career fairs, join veteran social/interest groups and tap into organisations dedicated to supporting military transitions.

These connections provide not only a sense of camaraderie, but also invaluable insights into industries that value the unique skills and leadership cultivated in Defence.

Relationships in Defence are built on trust and collaboration. In this world, networking takes on a heightened significance. Leverage connections made during service, reach out to former colleagues and explore industry-specific events to expand your professional circle. These relationships can open doors to Defence contractors, government agencies and private sector roles where your skills are not just appreciated but sought after.

Additionally, mentorship can be a powerful tool within the Defence and veteran community. Seek mentors who have successfully navigated the transition from military to civilian life. Their guidance can be instrumental in helping you adapt your skills, translate your experiences and navigate the nuances of the civilian workplace.

Networking is the compass that guides Defence personnel and veterans through the uncharted territory of civilian employment. Embrace the power of your professional connections – both in-person and online – and forge a path that honours your military background while propelling you towards a fulfilling civilian career. Your network is not just a safety net; it's a strategic advantage in the mission to transition successfully and thrive beyond the uniform. ←

"Networking serves as a dynamic catalyst for career growth. Beyond the exchange of business cards and LinkedIn connections, it creates a platform for meaningful relationships."

personal recommendations and referrals are golden tickets.

"A well-nurtured contact can vouch for your skills and work ethic, giving you a distinct advantage over other candidates," Virginia says.

"Hiring managers often prefer candidates who come with trusted recommendations as it minimises the risks associated with unfamiliar hires."

Networking serves as a dynamic catalyst for career growth. Beyond the exchange of business cards and LinkedIn connections, it creates a platform for meaningful



TALK TO AN EXPERT: If you're ex-serving, or the partner of a current or ex-serving Defence member, our highly trained team can support your search for employment with expert advice and helpful connections. Learn more at rslqld.org/employment

Marking Service

RSL Sunshine Coast and Regional District is paying tribute to local Korean War veterans, placing individual plaques at the Korean War Memorial.

 **Olivia Lawrence**

FOR over a decade, RSL Sunshine Coast and Regional District has been working hard to pay tribute to local Korean War veterans, placing individual plaques at the Korean War Memorial in Alexandra Headlands.

RSL Sunshine Coast and Regional District President Grendell (Skip) Antony says it is a privilege to be one of the caretakers of the memorial and to work with local families and community groups to implement plaques for veterans who have served and now passed on.

"The plaques acknowledge the veteran's service details, any specific roles or duties they had and how long they spent in Korea," Skip says.

"It not only allows their legacy and memory to live on in the community but gives relatives a place to come and remember them.

"The memorial is in a beautiful spot overlooking the ocean and it's a popular place that people walk past to enjoy the view. We often see individuals who are walking by pause when services are being held throughout the year to pay their respects."

BEGINNING OF SOMETHING SPECIAL

In 2011, the Korean War Memorial was gifted to the State by the Republic of Korea and the Korean community. The monument includes around 50 dedication plaques to Korean War veterans as well as a number of plaques representing the various forces

that fought in the war.

The following year, the Korean War Veterans' Association Sunshine Coast approached the District with the idea to add more plaques to the memorial and the team happily jumped on board to support the initiative.

"The Korean War Veterans' Association sent out letters to family members letting them know to contact us if they would like a plaque created for their loved one," Skip explains.

"From there, we collect the veteran's background from interested relatives, work with engravers to design the plaque, and then hand over the finished product to Sunshine Coast Council so they can add it to the memorial.

"The final step is us organising an unveiling



“This initiative and the memorial are important reminders for us to remember all veterans, no matter what battle or conflict they were involved in. All Australian service personnel have given us the freedoms we have today.”

initiative going and the memorial maintained.

A RECENT UNVEILING

This past Korean Veterans' Day on 27 July, the eighth plaque was unveiled by the District, honouring William Albert Bailey. William was a Private in the Army (2RAR), serving in Korea from 1951 to 1953.

“William's son Steven attended the unveiling, and it was great to see his chuffed reaction at the plaque,” Skip says.

“I also gave a speech discussing how the Korean War is sometimes referred to as the ‘forgotten war’, but the campaign was significant for the country, involving Army, Navy and Air Force.

“This initiative and the memorial are important reminders for us to remember all veterans, no matter what battle or conflict they were involved in. All Australian service personnel have given us the freedoms we have today.”

PRESERVING THE MEMORY

RSL Sunshine Coast and Regional District plans to continue creating plaques to honour those who served in Korea.

“We want to make sure the monument continues to be in top condition not only for the 75th anniversary coming up in 2028, but for decades to come.” ←

date, where our local padre will bless the plaque and we invite family members to attend. Typically, we try to coincide the blessing with a day that holds meaning to the family or with Korean Veterans' Day.”

Since 2019, RSL Sunshine Coast and Regional District has helped with the creation and dedication of eight plaques.

Despite the ageing population of Korean War veterans in the area and the Korean War Veterans' Association Sunshine Coast no longer operating, the RSL District, Alex Headland Community Association and the Sunshine Coast Council continue to keep the



LEFT:
Pictured from left, RSL Sunshine Coast and Regional District President Grendell (Skip) Antony, Steven Bailey, Korean War veteran Viv Humphrys, and Kawana RSL Sub Branch President Jeff Pidgeon.



VETERAN ATHLETE INSPIRING WELLBEING THROUGH ATHLETICS

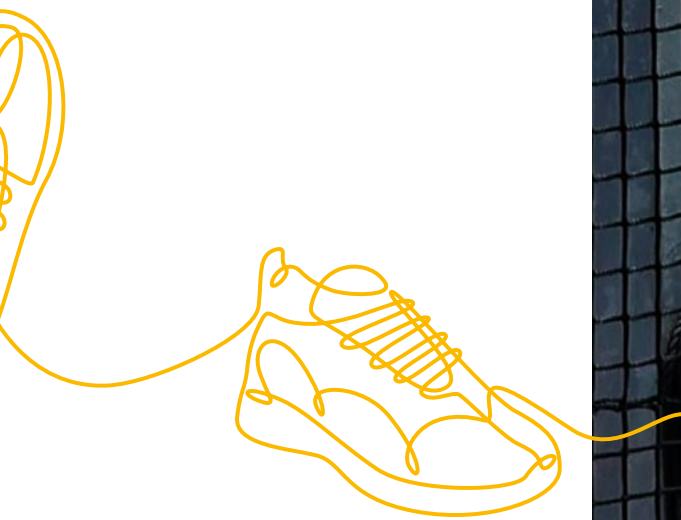
Seventy-two-year-old veteran Bruce Bodsworth is defying all expectations when it comes to the pursuit of athleticism later in life, providing a beacon of inspiration to his fellow veteran peers and the wider community.

 **Olivia Lawrence**

BRUCE'S commitment to Queensland Masters Athletics, a sports club offering to 30-plus-year-olds 16 events in running, jumping and throwing, sets a powerful example that people of all ages and abilities can seek out an active lifestyle.

The Southport RSL Sub Branch member says he is on a mission to encourage fellow veterans to join him in enjoying all the benefits of an active lifestyle.

"Having witnessed firsthand the mental and physical challenges that service men and women can return home with, I firmly believe athletics can work wonders for veterans," Bruce says.



"It is well documented how activity has positive effects on one's physical and mental health, but I think in particular, this type of activity takes a lot out of you. At night you're tired, which allows your body to sleep and rest, which can be a huge help for veterans dealing with PTSD."

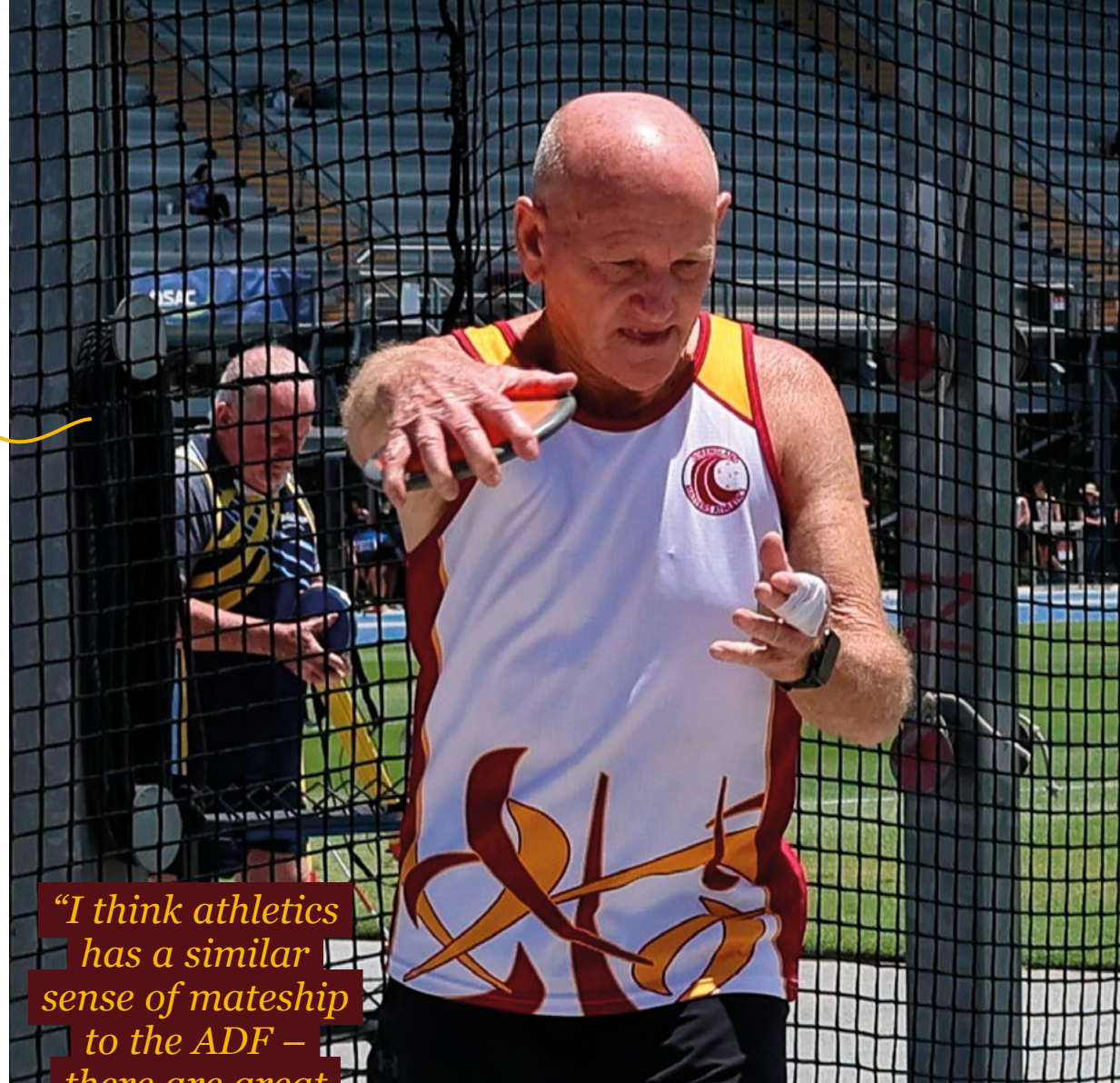
Bruce and his family have an extensive military history, stemming back to his grandfather who served in the Merchant Navy and his father who served in the Army during the New Guinea campaign. Additionally, his two brothers were involved in multiple campaigns during the Vietnam War and his son recently returned home from Afghanistan.

His own service background consists of three years in signals toward the end of the Vietnam War, with the majority of Bruce's postings in different parts of Queensland.

It was during his time in service in the late 1960s that Bruce started pursuing his athletic interests through Inter Service Athletics. Since then, he's been involved in track and field for 50 years – achieving 300 medals to date at the state, national and international level.

"I think athletics has a similar sense of mateship to the ADF – there are great bonds formed through training, practice and competitions. It's an environment where we look out for each other and cheer each other on," Bruce explains.

His passion also extends beyond personal achievements. Bruce is an enthusiastic coach and enjoys



"I think athletics has a similar sense of mateship to the ADF – there are great bonds formed through training, practice and competitions. It's an environment where we look out for each other and cheer each other on."

sharing his love for the sport with athletes of all abilities.

For a period of time, he was a guide runner for a competitive blind sprinter.

With a vast experience in track and field, Bruce has gravitated towards the pentathlon and decathlon, relishing in the opportunity to compete in five-to-ten events that include running, jumping and throwing.

"The season runs from October to April, meaning it can become consistent and quite a permanent hobby in a veteran's life," he says.

"As we age, it can be intimidating to start something new that's strenuous on the body, but vets can make it as competitive as they want to – my advice to anyone is just give it a go.

"I think it has also helped my ageing both physically and mentally. I believe I will live longer and healthier because of it."

Regularly participating in local competitions, the Gold Coast veteran most recently took part in the decathlon and pentathlon state championships in February and the national championships in Hobart in March.

"I am incredibly passionate about spreading my love for athletics because it has brought so much positivity into my life and I want others to experience that too. I believe the sky is the limit for me." ←

ABOVE: Veteran Bruce Bodsworth thinks athletics offers participants a similar sense of mateship to the ADF, with great bonds formed through training, practice and competitions.

OPPOSITE PAGE: Bruce is hoping to inspire others to discover the physical and mental health benefits of athletics.

EMERALD'S DYNAMIC DUO

BELOW: Noel and Margaret Mallyon selling badges and pins in the lead up to ANZAC Day. Photo by Emerald Today.

Local volunteers Noel and Margaret Mallyon have been enhancing veterans' lives through Emerald RSL Sub Branch for 45 years.

 **Olivia Lawrence**

services throughout the year. Some of these local services have attracted more than 3,000 attendees due to the couple's efforts.

"I don't remember a time that I haven't been volunteering," Margaret says. "I have been involved in it all my life and since marrying Noel, it's just increased.

"My merchandise stalls include a good affordable raffle and donation helmet. Looking back at last year, I am proud to say that for ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day alone, I raised \$16,544."

"Margaret always says she sells and I speak," Noel says with a laugh.

"She handles the merchandise stalls and I promote our upcoming services to the community or encourage veterans to become members."

In addition to Noel's service background, Margaret and Noel both come from a military background, with several of their family members – including their son – serving in the Australian Defence Force.

"I have got good at letter writing over the years," Margaret explains.

"But when my son was deployed to Afghanistan for seven months, I sent him and nine of his friends food parcels every Monday morning, so they could enjoy goodies from home during isolating times."

The parcels were not only sent to Afghanistan, but also to Iraq and the Sinai Peninsula in Egypt where their son's friends were deployed. Margaret thought the parcel delivery was particularly valuable around Christmas.

Noel and Margaret believe it's important for veterans to know they are thought of. Over the past three decades they have noticed that small gestures can make a big impact in someone's life.

"For me, it's the satisfaction of helping people who need it, but may not necessarily realise they do," Noel says.

FROM promoting commemorations throughout the year to providing welfare support, Noel and Margaret Mallyon have had great impact on veterans within the Emerald community.

Noel served in the Royal Australian Navy for six years throughout the 1960s and 70s and has been part of the Sub Branch's committee since its early beginnings. He later took over as President, serving 30 consecutive years to date.

His wife, Margaret, has been right by his side as a volunteer fundraiser, organising merchandise stalls for key commemorative





ABOVE:
Members of
Emerald RSL
Sub Branch.

"Especially for veterans – it's great assisting them with things they think they may not be able achieve on their own."

As Emerald RSL Sub Branch President, Noel has multiple responsibilities in terms of assisting veterans, but the welfare space is a particular point of focus for him. From home to hospital visits to poppy services and pointing individuals in the right direction when it comes to DVA claims, Noel sees value in this type of volunteer assistance at the Sub Branch.

"It was important to me to get involved in the welfare space

because originally, when manual claims were still used, it was a very challenging process for veterans to go through," Noel explains.

"While the claims process is now digital, it's still essential that we keep our finger on the pulse so anyone who has served gets the support they need and deserve."

For their unwavering efforts at Emerald RSL Sub Branch, Noel and Margaret both received Australia Day Medallions in 2024. This year, Noel was also awarded RSL Australia's highest honour – the Meritorious Service Medal.

"You don't do it for the reward, but as one of our members said, 'It is also recognition of Emerald RSL Sub Branch as a whole,'" Noel explains.

"I think it's also a reflection of the nearly 45 years that Margaret has been by my side, supporting and helping me in big ways." ←



YouTube



SCAN TO WATCH VIDEO



RECHARGING IN THE HEART OF NATURE

*Veterans from across
Australia are invited to rest
and recharge at Cockscomb
Veterans Bush Retreat in
Central Queensland.*

 Courtney Adams



Central Queensland's Cockscomb Veterans Bush Retreat is giving military and emergency services veterans a chance to escape the buzz of everyday life.

We spoke with Rockhampton-based Vietnam veteran and Cockscomb Treasurer Nick Quigley OAM about the retreat.

THE COCKSCOMB ORIGIN STORY

The idea to set up a dedicated veterans' camp in Central Queensland was first conceived in 1997. Cockscomb Veterans Bush Retreat was ultimately born from the partnership between a group

of Vietnam veterans and the late Bruce Acutt, a Rockhampton-based psychologist who treated veterans for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

"Veterans wanted a quiet place to go out of town where there were no streetlights, no cars and no people," Nick explains.

"Bruce had a 60-acre property in Cawarral named Cockscomb, which was ideal; all you could hear was birds tweeting in the bushes. Nighttime was pitch black, like the rubber plantations in Vietnam."

From there, the camp was registered and team members worked for thousands of hours to bring the vision to life. Many supporters helped with the



build, including the RSL Central Queensland District, which provided water tanks for the property.

As his personal circumstances changed, Bruce eventually decided to survey off one hectare of his land to bequeath to the veterans and emergency services personnel he dedicated his career to helping.

"The members of Cockscomb Veterans Bush Retreat – about 800 veterans and emergency services members – now own this plot of land," Nick says.

A HAVEN FOR HEALING

In 2015, the retreat was devastated by Cyclone Marcia. Forty trees fell, buildings were flattened, and rubbish was strewn across the property. Despite the destruction, help was quick to arrive.

"There must have been 100 people that came from around the community – the police, the fire brigade, the SES – to give us a hand. We were then able to look at what needed to be resurrected and since then, it's just been getting better every day," Nick says.

As of today, hundreds of veterans from across Australia and the world have made the trip to recharge at Cockscomb Veterans Bush Retreat.

"People think it's an amazing place to go. When they drive up the road, they don't expect to come across a village in the bush, but that's exactly what Cockscomb is," Nick says.

Cockscomb offers all the comforts of modern life: internet and mobile phone reception, hot showers, solar electricity with a bank of batteries, kitchen facilities, two four-bed houses and one five-room donga.



Perhaps most importantly, Cockscomb also provides a safe space for veterans doing it tough. Emu Park RSL Sub Branch and Legacy have visited to offer support services, and dedicated healthcare is just a phone call away.

"We've had a few veterans come in with major PTSD problems, so we watch them and make sure that they are safe and okay. We also have facilities where we can ring up one of the psychologists in town and get them some help."

PEACE AND QUIET

For veterans who are on the fence about taking some time off to

recharge, Nick shares his personal experience as a guest of the retreat.

"Cockscomb is a restful place. A beautiful breeze comes in from Yeppoon through a gap in the mountain and with all those trees around, there's lots of oxygen and you really do feel relaxed," he explains.

"I first went to Cockscomb in 1999. I was working and didn't have many days to take off, so I went one day just to have a look, but I ended up staying.

"I sat in an armchair when I arrived and looked at the mountain. It was so peaceful that I slept from nine o'clock in the morning to five o'clock in the afternoon." ←

ABOVE:
An aerial view over Cockscomb Veterans Bush Retreat in Central Queensland.



Rest and relaxation are vital for veterans' health and wellbeing. To learn more about Cockscomb Veterans Bush Retreat visit cockscombvets.au

GROWTH AND CHANGE FOR RURAL VETERANS

With a presence that has spanned more than a century, Yarraman RSL Sub Branch is passionate about enhancing the Sub Branch's capacity to serve veterans and the community.

 **Olivia Lawrence**

"I want all our local veterans to know that we are here for them."

YARRAMAN RSL SUB BRANCH

President Warwick O'Neill says their larger headquarters and the relocation of the community's key monument are necessary and significant for the organisation and will help serve the Sub Branch's growing membership.

"We have made the move from a single room in Yarraman's Memorial Hall to a more expansive and accessible space in the community," Warwick says.

"It has been great to see that our membership has grown from just a handful of people to more than 50 members over the past year, and we're committed to growing our membership even further."

The Sub Branch provides modern amenities, including a fully equipped kitchen and a spacious shed that has been transformed into an entertainment and socialising space.

The move had been in the works for several years and Warwick assisted in bringing the new space to its final stages after assuming the

role of President in March 2023. The 50-year-old veteran, who served as an Army apprentice mechanic from 1991 to 1996, is motivated to support veterans of all ages.

"I want all our local veterans to know that we are here for them. It's a safe and welcoming place, whether it be for welfare, rehabilitation or camaraderie," Warwick says.

The Sub Branch's sights are also set on relocating the local cenotaph, with the hopes to have the move completed by ANZAC Day 2025.

"It will give the community somewhere nice to come together and reflect that's away from the noise and traffic of D'Aguilar Highway, where the cenotaph was originally located," he says.

"Typically, we have 150 to 200 people attend our ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day services, so it's important for us to have a memorial space that accommodates the crowd of people."

The project includes relocating the cenotaph itself, as well as the addition of a garden, public seating and commemorative plaques.

"Through both of these initiatives, our focus is to evolve how we support veterans and their families, while also taking the opportunity to attract younger veterans to the Sub Branch," Warwick says.

"In addition, we hope to build connections with neighbouring Sub Branches to collaborate and foster a larger veteran community in the region."

Former Yarraman RSL Sub Branch President Bernie Rushby says it has been great having a younger president to ensure the Sub Branch continues to develop and advance into the future.

"Having a younger president leading things allows the Sub Branch to introduce new ideas we may have otherwise not thought of. For example, we now have a Facebook page and have incorporated amenities at our Sub Branch that will attract younger vets," Bernie says.

"It's also important to share stories and spend time with veterans from all generations, because we want the legacy of Australia's war history to be shared for generations to come." ←



 **YouTube**



 **SCAN TO WATCH VIDEO**



02



03



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04

(01) Yarraman RSL Sub Branch Vice President – Projects Bernie Rushby, left, with Yarraman RSL Sub Branch President Warwick O'Neill; (02) Yarraman RSL Sub Branch building; (03) Ron 'Booie' Lewis cooking on the barbecue; (04) Simon Manchee, left, and John Walsh play pool; (05) Bernie, left, and Warwick in front of Yarraman RSL Sub Branch; (06) Bernie, left, and Warwick look over some paperwork.



06



05

A HOME FOR THE LEAGUE: THE RESIDENTIAL CLUB (1917-1920) *Part 1*

This year marks the centenary of ANZAC House's establishment as the permanent home of the RSL in Queensland. In this – the first of a two-part series – the history of the Returned Sailors and Soldiers Imperial League of Australia's (RSSILA) first headquarters, the Residential Club, will be examined. The story concludes next edition with the establishment of Queensland's first ANZAC House in 1924.

"In 1919, the RSSILA was just one of dozens of ex-service organisations that sprang up in Brisbane during and after the war and all were jostling for membership, recognition and funding."

Dr Susan E. M. Kellett

IN June 1916, the RSSILA was formed in Melbourne. A month earlier, a committee of Brisbane's patriotic women had proposed building a residential club for returned men. The idea of supporting the injured as they transitioned from service back into civilian life captured the interest of the public and local government alike. Fundraising began in earnest.

The committee acquired 'Corona', a substantial double-storey brick and timber residence located on the corner of Brisbane's Ann and Wharf Streets in July 1916. Of the £6,500 spent on the property's purchase, the Queensland Government and Brisbane City Council contributed £1,000 each, while the remaining £4,500 was raised through various fundraising activities and appeals.

An additional £3,000 was pledged to modify and furnish the property. On Empire Day in May 1917, extensions to the existing building

began with the ceremonial laying of a foundation stone.

The Residential Club was officially opened by the Governor in August 1917. Its amenities included 26 beds, kitchen and dining facilities, a billiards room, concert hall, library, and offices for the RSSILA, a manager, and a staff of eight.

The League moved into its new headquarters the next month and the facility began taking guests. In May 1918, the Residential Club was gifted to the RSSILA and the residual £3,500 owed on the property was cleared with the earnings from a recent art union.

While the acquisition of the city property was regarded as a blessing by the young League, economic and environmental challenges soon emerged to threaten the future of both the RSSILA and its club.

BUILDING THE RSSILA

By the end of 1918, and with the war over, the repatriation of

troops back to Australia began in earnest. Membership of the RSSILA exceeded 4,500 and, with the promise of many more men to swell the organisation's ranks, the League realised that its Brisbane-based model of organisation was no longer feasible.

In early 1919, the RSSILA adopted the District and Sub Branch model. Brisbane District (renamed South Eastern District in 1927) joined State Branch with an office in the Residential Club, and local Sub Branches began meeting there regularly.

However, problems with the Ann Street property soon surfaced. The city's fire station was located adjacent to the club and additional noise from passing trams and trains made it unsuitable for guests convalescing from shell shock.

The club's proximity to the city's wharves attracted regular incidences of petty crime and the facility was not big enough to accommodate the larger meetings





OPPOSITE PAGE: May 1917: A crowd of returned servicemen and citizens assembled on Ann Street to watch the foundation stone of the Residential Club extensions being laid on Empire Day (State Library of Queensland).

ABOVE: 'Corona' circa 1882. The former residence of the late Dr Bancroft was located on the corner of Ann and Wharf Streets. It served as a boarding house before becoming RSSILA's first permanent state headquarters in 1917 (State Library of Queensland).

LEFT: Former site of the Residential Club on the corner of Ann and Wharf Streets (author's image).

and events run by the League. Then, in December, the auditor's report for 1918 identified that the facility was running at a £10 loss per week.

To make the club viable, at least 50 additional guest rooms were required. A lack of land and the estimated £10,000 cost put this well beyond the scope of the fledgling League. To contain costs, executives discontinued the club's dining service and briefly considered selling the property.

In 1919, the RSSILA was just one of dozens of ex-service organisations that sprang up in Brisbane during and after the war and all were jostling for

membership, recognition and funding. No less than four returned men's leagues were operating locally, and all except the RSSILA were political in nature.

In particular, the Returned Sailors and Soldiers Labour League (RSSLL) regarded the RSSILA and its Residential Club with suspicion and envy. It quickly seized upon the club's economic woes to further its own agenda by publicly questioning the political motives of the RSSILA and discrediting its leadership.

When the 1919 auditors' report revealed that the RSSILA's losses now exceeded £50 per week, the RSSLL again criticised the organisation publicly.

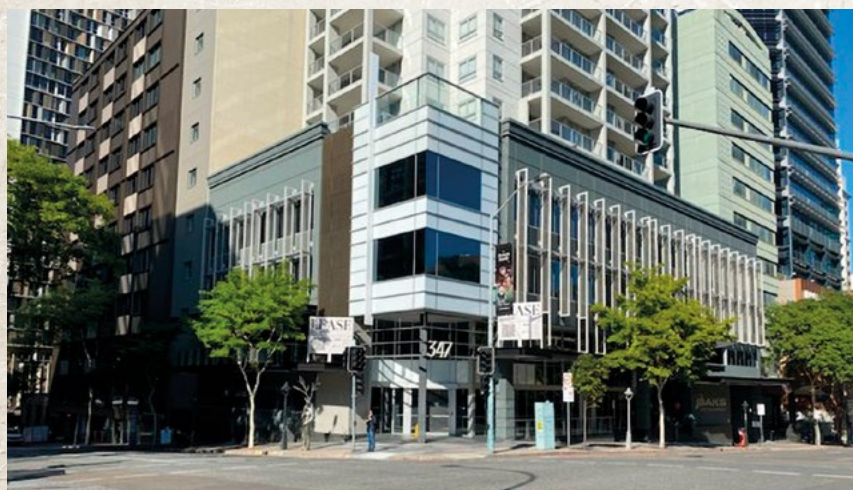
The RSSILA moved swiftly to address the loss and salvage its reputation. An extraordinary meeting of the State executive was called. The club's manager was immediately suspended and, after an investigation, was dismissed.

A board of management was installed to run the Residential Club, and, at the next State Congress, League executive made sweeping changes to its system of staffing and administration to ensure that an incident of this magnitude could not happen again.

By now, confidence in the beleaguered Residential Club was at an all-time low and, coupled with the environmental challenges that its location posed, the decision to sell the facility was made.

The RSSILA was once again without a permanent home. In that same year, however, the establishment of Victoria's state headquarters inspired members in Queensland to start planning for the first of the four ANZAC Houses that it would occupy over the coming century.

Read part two of this article in the next edition of Queensland RSL News. ←



MATESHIP



Vietnam veteran recalls wartime experiences

Beachmere RSL Sub Branch member Bob O'Connor (82) has been interviewed by Moreton Bay Regional Council about his experiences during the Vietnam War. Bob has been a member of RSL Queensland for 55 years, including as a Life Member, Meritorious Medal recipient, welfare officer and as an Advocate with two different Sub Branches for around 13 years (off and on).

Bob served in 10 Platoon 'D' Company, 3rd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment during the Vietnam War in 1967-1968. When he first joined the Army, Bob said his mother "was amazed, very thoughtful, never crook at me, but congratulated me and said make sure I look after myself." He described the training as a mental and physical challenge, with no time to relax. But he enjoyed the 11-day journey from Australia on the HMAS *Sydney* as he didn't suffer from seasickness and was lucky enough to get extra meals and beer that his mates couldn't stomach.

To find out more about Bob's experiences in Vietnam, visit Moreton Bay Regional Council's website. The photo showing two Australian soldiers on patrol in Vietnam has been digitised by the City of Moreton Bay from Bob's personal collection.



Goondiwindi celebrates 105th anniversary

Goondiwindi RSL Sub Branch celebrated its 105th anniversary earlier this year, with morning tea at the Customs House Museum and lunch at the Queensland Hotel. As part of the day, members of Goondiwindi High School and the Goondiwindi State Primary School Combined Choir sang the ANZAC version of We are Australian. A celebratory cake was cut by Goondiwindi Regional Council Mayor Lawrence Springborg MP and Goondiwindi RSL Sub Branch President Bill Brasington (pictured).

Deborah Wheeler also compiled an anniversary booklet to mark the occasion. Guests included RSL Queensland State President Major General Stephen Day DSC AM, RSL Queensland CEO Robert Skoda, Western District President Denis Pollard, and Shadow Assistant Minister for Veterans and Defence Industry James Lister MP.



Timber museum visit

Crows Nest RSL Sub Branch members enjoyed a recent bus trip to the South Burnett Region Timber Industry Museum in Wondai, followed by a visit to Nanango RSL Sub Branch and lunch at the RSL Club. It was a great opportunity for camaraderie among the 15 members who attended, and it encouraged lively discussion about possible military displays that could be established within their own Sub Branch.

Lunch for ANZAC Day volunteers

Gracemere RSL Sub Branch hosted a lunch at Kabra Pub to thank the many incredible volunteers who assisted with the 2024 ANZAC Day service. It was organised to coincide with National Volunteers Week.



Governor of Queensland visits Mossman

Mossman RSL Sub Branch was honoured to receive an unplanned visit from the Governor of Queensland Her Excellency the Honourable Dr Jeannette Young AC PSM, accompanied by Professor Graeme Nimmo RFD. They both enjoyed viewing the museum.

Supporting Bowen students

Bowen RSL Sub Branch proudly donated \$300 to help Bowen State High School Grade 10 student Eliza McNee attend a tertiary preparation workshop at Griffith University in Brisbane. Eliza has played the Last Post at ANZAC Day services in Bowen for the last two years. Her third great-grandfather Walter Bath was a WWI veteran who fought in Gallipoli and was lucky enough to return home. The Sub Branch is keen to continue supporting Eliza in her musical journey.





Inaugural military weekend

The inaugural Herberton Military Weekend, 'Troops and Trains: Trekking Back to WWII' was held on 20-21 July to commemorate the 82nd anniversary of the Kokoda campaign. Herberton RSL Sub Branch and the Atherton Herberton History Railway joined forces with the community to create a family-friendly program of events and commemorative activities.

Herberton RSL Sub Branch Treasurer and Project Officer Shaaron Linwood said the event highlighted the crucial role the country towns of Herberton and Ravenshoe played in WWII. "The area hosted thousands of Australian and American troops who were stationed here to train in the jungle warfare training camps before they headed off to New Guinea, Borneo, and Bougainville during the Pacific theatre of the war," Shaaron explained.

A Red Cross nurse is pictured at the event with Geoff Schulz and Neil Landford, who were dressed to portray General MacArthur and General Blamey. Photo by Darryl Cooper.

D-Day 80th anniversary service

More than 100 people attended a commemoration in Hervey Bay for the 80th anniversary of D-Day.

RSL Sub Branch President Brian Tidyman led the service, giving a brief rundown of Operation Overlord. The Sub Branch's three WWII veterans, from left, Stan Hanna, Ken Hayden and Alan Williams, are pictured at the Cenotaph in Freedom Park alongside President Brian Tidyman, with Reverend Jeff Jarvis in the background.



Great Wheelbarrow Race

From 10-12 May, 'Dad's Army' – consisting mostly of Mareeba RSL Sub Branch members – took part in the 140km Great Wheelbarrow Race to raise money for Mareeba Hospital. Led in the pre-race street parade by 3 RAR Pipes and Drums, who also competed, Dad's Army finished first in the over-55s category with a time of 15:08:01.



Appreciation for Hervey Bay volunteers

Hervey Bay RSL Sub Branch hosted a lunch in appreciation of the hard work of its volunteers during National Volunteer Week in May.

Volunteers help the Sub Branch in numerous ways, including wellbeing support officers who go above and beyond to look after members, drivers who transport veterans and take members on bus trips, and those who assist with commemorative services, such as steadfast bugler Geoff Harper and much-loved Reverend Jeff Jarvis.



Quilts of Valour presented

Quilts of Valour Australia made several presentations to recipients in Longreach on 20 June. Quilts were awarded to, from left, Douglas Winterbotham (Vietnam veteran, Army), Karen (Kaz) Mitchell (11 years Army, signals), Jim Egan (201/2 infantry including 3RAR and 4RAR, with deployment to Vietnam), and Patrick Casey (National Service for six months and then two years with the RAAF in Malaysia).

Their quilts were made by June Schossow and The Wednesday Girls. A quilt made by Margaret Argent in Mackay was presented to Longreach RSL Sub Branch President David Wilson, a 1RAR Army veteran who spent time in Somalia. Ralph Nankervis, an engineering Stoker in the Navy, was also given a plaid quilt crafted by Lynell Jendra in honour of his Scottish heritage.



30 years of membership

Agnes Water/1770 Sub Branch President John Turner was honoured to present six members with certificates for 30 years of continuous Sub Branch membership. Five of these recipients were founding members who helped form the Sub Branch 30 years ago. They were Dave Halloran (pictured with John Turner), William Taylor, Kathleen Taylor, Donald Worner, Desmond Blazley, and Dale Maidment (pictured with John Turner and Bob Hickson).



Medallion honours 102-year-old WWII veteran

World War II veteran Daisy McPaul (102) was recently presented with a medallion commemorating the 75th anniversary of the end of WWII. She is pictured at her home in Toowoomba with daughter Coralie Pitt, receiving the award from Harlaxton RSL Sub Branch President Tim McCrorey (back left) and Secretary Mike Gowdie (back right).



Three generations come together

Three generations of the Mack family – Doug, David and Clayton – from Meandarra and Moonie came together to pay their respects during ANZAC Day commemorations in Meandarra.

Redland students honour their fallen

Redlands RSL Sub Branch continues to partner with local schools for the 'Honour Our Fallen' program, where students research and locate the graves of ex-servicemen in local cemeteries. Prior to ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day, students place an Australian flag on the gravesite of deceased veterans from conflicts dating back to the Boer War.

The program helps preserve the memory of veterans and builds pride in the community, particularly among young people. With this year marking the 80th Anniversary of the D-Day landings on the beaches of Normandy in France, visiting French students participated alongside those from Cleveland District State High School. Photo: John Butler.



Medallion makes WWII veteran's day

WWII veteran Stanley Kellett (102) was presented with a medallion commemorating 75 years since the end of WWII on 28 June. Stanley (front left) is pictured with his wife Helen (front right) and (back, left to right) niece Lesley Bryce, visitor Madelyn Martin, Oakey RSL Sub Branch President Mark Carter, sister Joyce Beckwith and brother-in-law Bill Beckwith.

Stanley is a member of Bell RSL Sub Branch but has relocated to McDonald Nursing Home in Oakey. When Oakey RSL Sub Branch President Mark arrived to present the medallion on behalf of Bell RSL Sub Branch, he says Stanley's eyes lit up with excitement and the visit made his day. Mark thanked him for his service and listened to some of his great stories. Stanley's family visited from Victoria, Bell and Tin Can Bay. Photo: *The Oakey Champion*.



Assistance dog program

Forest Lake & Districts RSL Sub Branch continues to have success with its Assistance Dog Program, which is designed to increase a veteran's confidence, independence and self-esteem. As part of the program, veterans spend eight days working with professional trainers and program staff, learning how to correctly handle, command and care for the animal. Members and their dogs are pictured at the Dogs Queensland ANZAC Day dusk service organised in conjunction with Forest Lake and Districts RSL Sub Branch.



WWII veteran celebrates centenary

World War II veteran Tom Kelly recently celebrated his 100th birthday and is pictured with his granddaughters Caitlin and Rhiannon Dudley. On ANZAC Day, a representative from Tin Can Bay RSL Sub Branch also presented Tom with a WWII medallion and League certificates.

Sandgate members honoured with quilts

Quilts of Valour Australia recently presented quilts to three long-time Sandgate RSL Sub Branch members. Pictured (left to right) Doug Warden (past President, Life Member and Vietnam veteran), Allan Bird (past committee member, Life Member and curator) and Peter McNamara OAM (past President, compensation advocate and Life Member).



RSL Queensland dinner at Government House

RSL Queensland patron and Governor of Queensland Her Excellency the Honourable Dr Jeannette Young AC PSM and Professor Graeme Nimmo hosted a volunteers' dinner for representatives of RSL Queensland at Government House in May.

The event was attended by State President Major General Stephen Day DSC AM, State Vice President Wendy Taylor, Director Tony Orchard, Far Northern District President Kenneth Willoughby, Moreton District President Paul Rogers, Central Queensland District President Phillip Luzzi, Brisbane North District President Merv Brown OAM, Tulley RSL Sub Branch President Allan Coenik, Currumbin Palm Beach Director Cherisa Jane Pearce, Tamborine Mountain RSL Sub Branch President Phillip Hunter, Magnetic Island RSL Sub Branch Secretary Janet Pranskunas, Gladstone RSL Sub Branch President Edward Dahlheimer, Sunnybank RSL Sub Branch President Hugh Polsen, Gayndah RSL Sub Branch President Stephen Adams, Crows Nest RSL Sub Branch President Gregory Watt, Defence Service Nurses RSL Sub Branch President Ann Bramwell, GM Partnership and Engagement Katie Maloney and GM League Services John Stock.

Photo credit: Government House Queensland.



Lamp lighting ceremony for D-Day anniversary

Redlands RSL Sub Branch held a lamp lighting ceremony on 6 June to mark the 80th anniversary of D-Day. WWII veteran Herb Shapcott (left) is pictured lighting the peace lamp, representing the light that emerged from the darkness of war, with assistance from Vice President David Field.

Victory in Europe remembered

South Eastern District held a service to commemorate Victory in Europe at its headquarters in New Farm on 11 May. The Navy cadets pictured in front of the flag poles hold their weekly training sessions at the venue.



Young and old cut 90th anniversary cake

Oakey RSL Sub Branch's oldest available member, Len Fanning (Stretch), cuts the 90th anniversary cake alongside the youngest member, Matthew Thornton, a soldier from Oakey Aviation Training Centre.



Honouring Australian veterans of Chinese heritage

Sunnybank RSL Sub Branch held a re-dedication ceremony for its Australians of Chinese Heritage War Memorial on 6 July. It was attended by members of the Sub Branch and local multicultural community.

Sleeping bags donated

On 7 June, Springwood Tri Services RSL Sub Branch donated 40 sleeping bags to local charities as part of its program to support homeless veterans. "It's all about being part of our community – stretching out and making our presence as a Sub Branch become noticeable and relevant," program coordinator Ross Gowers says.



COMMUNITY



Donation for wheelchair playground

The Australian War Animal Memorial Organisation (AWAMO) recently donated \$5,000 to Narbethong State Special School for the creation of a new wheelchair playground. The playground will be an extension to the scented garden previously funded by AWAMO.

Thanks to the organisation, the animal sculptures in the garden have braille included on their name plate, as can be seen with Rocket the dog (pictured). The organisation is raising further funds to help purchase a wheelchair swing.

Lost cadet swords replaced

Banyo RSL Sub Branch stepped in to help the 220 Squadron Air Force Cadets, who sadly lost a significant amount of equipment in the 2022 floods.

Thanks to grants from Brisbane North District, the Sub Branch was able to replace two swords, with Sub Branch member Squadron Leader Athol Jory MBE DFC pictured presenting a sword to a 220 Sqn member at Aviation High in Hendra. Sub Branch President Michael Frawley, Secretary Richard Morse and Treasurer Bob McPherson also attended the presentation.



Article acknowledges former sailor

Madeline Blyth (96) is the sister of SBLT Eagar, who served on HMAS Sydney II when it was sunk by the German Raider *Kormoran*. Her brother was featured in an article in *White Ensign Magazine*, published by the Naval Association (NA) of Australia.

The article was written by NA WA President Ian Holthouse and mentioned a wreath that was laid on behalf of Madeline. Paul Andrews, welfare officer and VP of the Ipswich and West Moreton Sub Section of the NA visited Madeline on 2 June to present her with a copy of the magazine. Madeline was visibly moved by all the attention her brother received.



50th Anniversary reunion of HMAS *Nirimba* apprentices

A combined reunion marking the 50th anniversary of the 1974 36th and 37th apprentice intakes of the former Royal Australian Navy Apprentice Training Establishment, HMAS *Nirimba*, was celebrated at Currumbin RSL Club on 6 June 2024.

The event was historically aligned to the 80th anniversary of D-Day and noted the 30th anniversary of the closure of *Nirimba*, which turned out Navy's skilled artificer trade sailors since 1956. Living up to the *Nirimba* motto of 'Success from Endeavour', organiser Phil (Yak) Kay tirelessly mustered the 114 participants together from wide and afar, including three colleagues of the Royal Malaysian Navy and those living in Indonesia, Norfolk Island and across Australia.



Mayor thanks Crows Nest volunteers

Toowoomba Regional Council Mayor Geoff McDonald is pictured with Lyn Mengel at a lunch thanking Crows Nest RSL Sub Branch volunteers for their "spectacular" efforts organising ANZAC Day 2024. Geoff said the public is unaware of how much time and effort volunteers put into organising the event.

A show of hands also confirmed his suspicion that many people volunteer their time with more than one organisation. Both the Dawn Service and mid-morning march saw an increase in the number of attendees in 2024. The dress code for the lunch was something spotted because volunteers are "spot on".

Students honour veterans via Garden of Service

Pallara State School, which has always played an active role in local commemorations, recently opened a Garden of Service in honour of veterans. History Club students, with some help from club coordinator Keegan Peace, have been working hard on the garden since September 2023, and celebrated with an opening ceremony on 18 April.

Forest Lake and Districts RSL Sub Branch President Steve Ford and Sunnybank RSL Sub Branch President Hugh Poulson attended the day, together with Forest Lake and Districts RSL Sub Branch member Greg Amey, who was dressed in a WWI uniform. Students were given the opportunity to speak with or interview a veteran to learn more stories of service from the local community.





Lost legends of Tobruk

The Descendants of the Rats of Tobruk Australia Association have unearthed the eight WWII servicemen who had previously been absent from the Siege of Tobruk's roll of honour. The meticulous research led by Deb Goodwin and Sue Trewartha has ensured that these soldiers' courage and sacrifice will be rightfully acknowledged. The association has been working to connect with living relatives to honour them with a commemorative Rats of Tobruk tribute.

The men from the 2/1st Survey Regiment RAA, Sound Ranging Battery, were: Sgt Ian Leslie BRAID VX42526 (pictured), Sgt Edmund Frank SPREADBOROUGH VX43014, Sgt Jack Bonnel DONALDSON VX18690, Bdr Persse Salisbury RAINSFORD NX29331, L/Bdr Vernon William HERCUS VX41153, L/Bdr Douglas Patrick LAMPE DX601. Additionally, 4th Durham Survey Regiment war diary records unveiled the names of Gnr Albert Victor GODWIN VX789 and Lt Col Bruce KLEIN NX4. For more information, contact Deb via rats.verifier@gmail.com or 0408 491 205.

WWII Navy veteran touched by visit

WWII Navy veteran Alan Grimmer (100) was touched by a recent visit from members of Ipswich and West Moreton Sub Section of the Naval Association of Australia. It followed an article on Alan published in *The Local Bulletin* that was seen by Sub Section welfare officer Paul Andrews. Alan (pictured second from the left) served on HMAS *Ipswich* (also pictured) during WWII and wrote a book about his exploits. He also served on HMAS *Dimantina* and has been a member of RSL Queensland for 78 years.

Various donations were presented to Alan during the visit, including a HMAS *Ipswich* bar mat from Ipswich RSL, a bottle of port and glasses from Wounded Heroes and a cap and shoulder patch from the TS Ipswich and Australian Naval Cadet training unit. Ipswich RSL Sub Branch loaned a vehicle to make the visit possible. Members enjoyed connecting with Alan and hearing his life story over morning tea.



Student presents about Premier's Anzac Prize

Student Eloise Brown – a winner of the 2024 Premier's Anzac Prize – presented to Holland Park-Mt Gravatt RSL Sub Branch about her recent trip to France and Belgium. At the same meeting, Citizen's Auxiliary member Chris Smith gave his Sub Branch an Australian flag that had been given to him by Commonwealth War Graves staff at the Australian Corps Memorial at Le Hamel in 2023. The Sub Branch decided to present the flag to Eloise's school, Mansfield State High School.

COMMUNITY CONNECT



HONOURING UNSUNG NAVY HEROES

Each month, the Queensland Section of the Naval Association of Australia (NAAQLD) commemorates a Royal Australian Navy (RAN) ship, significant event or crew. The ceremonies are usually held on the last Thursday of the month at the Jack Tar statue in South Brisbane Memorial Park and were inspired by the Australian War Memorial's Last Post Ceremonies. They help preserve the Navy's legacy and are attended by descendants of those being honoured, former and current serving RAN members, friends and the general public. The NAAQLD is always looking for veterans, descendants and associations interested in attending and numbers have grown rapidly since the regular ceremonies began. For more information, contact advocacy@navalassocqld.org.au.

HONOUR ROLL FOR BRISBANE STATE HIGH SCHOOL

Brisbane State High Alumni is updating its honour roll and board, post-World War II. If you know of past students who died in the service of their country during this time, please contact Col McCowan OAM or Ian Alcorn via bshalumni@gmail.com.

HISTORY OF WAR FLAG SOUGHT

The Australian Flag Society is continuing extensive enquiries about a New Zealand red ensign that was converted into an Australian red ensign during WWII, which is presently on loan from a kind donor. The flag bears the words 'Changi '41 '42' on one star and 'Chitty flag' on another. It is thought to have been at the Changi prisoner-of-war camp during the fall of Singapore as the facility had previously been occupied by NZ forces.

Also on loan are five whistles, including one that was manufactured in 1941 by Bell and Rider in Sydney and another that bears the inscription 'Changi football league'. The whistles were discovered inside a leather AFL ball and a basketball bearing the inscription 'Changi basketball league'.

If anyone has information about the red ensign or other Changi relics, contact Nigel Morris via 0431 149 177 or 02 6742 3689 or nigelrmorris@hotmail.com.



REUNIONS

RANKIN OCT 66 REUNION (58TH ANNIVERSARY)

The 58th reunion of the Rankin October 1966 intake at HMAS Cerberus will be held on 18-21 October 2024. Both veterans and their partners are invited to attend. It will be held at HMAS *Cerberus* and the Hastings/Frankston localities. Further details can be found via the Facebook group 'Rankin Oct 66 Reunion'. Contact coordinators Steve 'Yogi' Yovan via sgyovan@gmail.com or 0434 890 113 or Pat 'Ringo' Ringold via patrick.ringold@bigpond.com or 0409 726 487.

30TH INTAKE ARMY APPRENTICES 50-YEAR REUNION

A 50-year reunion of the 30th intake Army apprentices will be held on Saturday 8 February 2025 at Maroochy RSL on the Sunshine Coast. All members and partners are welcome. Details can be found on the 30th intake Army apprentices Facebook page or by contacting organising chair Colin Ferguson via cfs.sailing247@gmail.com.

6RAR ASSOCIATION REUNION 2025

A reunion celebrating 60 years of 6RAR will be held in Brisbane over the weekend of 6-8 June 2025. For more information or to register to attend, contact Secretary Allan Whelan via 0427 632 402 or wheels6rarassn@gmail.com.

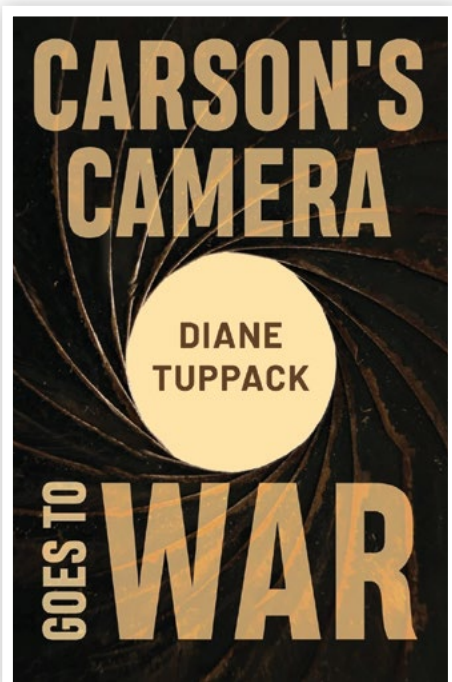
6RAR PIONEER PLATOON REUNION

A 20-year reunion will be held for 6RAR Pioneer Platoon East Timor (Operation Citadel) on 11 November 2024 from 10:50am – 3pm at Gaythorne RSL, 534 Samford Road, Mitchelton, Qld 4053. A remembrance service will be held at Sid Loder Park. All those who were involved in the QRF in 2004 are welcome to join the reunion hosted by Brad Stubing. For more information, contact Paddy Brennan via 0401 138 245, patrick.brennan@defence.gov.au or paddybrennan13@hotmail.com.

5 PLATOON BRAVO COMPANY 1RAR REUNION

5 Platoon Bravo Company 1RAR will hold a 15-year Afghanistan reunion on 14 September 2024 from 12-3pm at Breakfast Creek Hotel, 2 Kingsford Smith Drive, Albion, Qld 4010. LT COL Jack Westhorpe requests the company of all those who were part of the tour. For more information, contact Paddy Brennan via 0401 138 245, patrick.brennan@defence.gov.au or paddybrennan13@hotmail.com.

WIN



CARSON'S CAMERA GOES TO WAR

Follow the story of Private Neville Carson and his experience in the Middle East during World War II. Using his camera, which he was prohibited from having, Neville was able to depict and tell a story of his experience in the Australian Army.

This enabled the 19-year-old private to focus on the adventure of his deployment rather than its harsher realities. Told from the perspective of a normal young man, this story highlights the life-changing impact the war had on even the most ordinary of lives.

Such a detailed insight into a first-hand experience of the war allows for a greater understanding of what soldiers were subject to during such difficult times in history.

Carson's Camera Goes to War by Diane Tuppack is published by Olympia Publishers (RRP: \$18.30).

FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN one of four copies of *Carson's Camera Goes to War*, email your name, address and contact number to editor@rslqld.org (with the subject 'Carson's Camera Goes to War') or post to 'Carson's Camera Goes to War', PO Box 629, Spring Hill Qld 4004. Competition closes 7 October 2024.

CONVICT ORPHANS

Many thousands of abandoned children were treated as free labour in late 19th century Australia, yet their stories have been hidden until now, even to their descendants. Lucy Frost's painstaking research has uncovered what really happened to the convict orphans.

All families have their secrets, and a convict ancestor or an illegitimate birth were shames that families once buried deep. Among the best-hidden stories in Australia's history are those of the convict orphans.

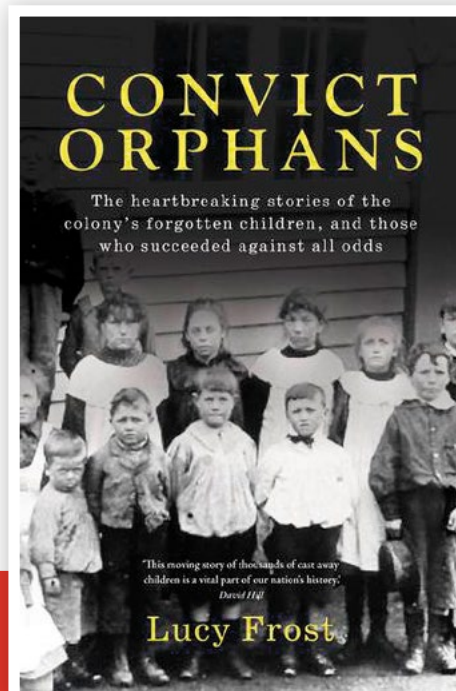
Agnes arrived on a convict transport aged four and was abandoned when her mother needed to escape an abusive husband.

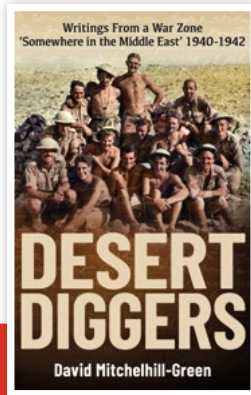
After their mother died and their father deserted them, Maria and Eliza Marriner were taken into state care too. Cut off from family, behind the walls of the imposing sandstone buildings of the Queen's Orphan Schools, they were among hundreds of young children entrusted to the much-feared Matron Smyth.

These are stories of abuse and abandonment, and also of great generosity and kindness from individuals who rescued and supported children. Some children managed to build happy lives for themselves, but many could not navigate a system stacked against them.

Convict Orphans by Lucy Frost is published by Allen & Unwin (RRP: \$36.99).

FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN one of four copies of *Convict Orphans*, email your name, address and contact number to editor@rslqld.org (with the subject 'Convict Orphans') or post to 'Convict Orphans', PO Box 629, Spring Hill Qld 4004. Competition closes 7 October 2024.





FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN one of four copies of *Desert Diggers*, email your name, address and contact number to editor@rslqld.org (with the subject '*Desert Diggers*') or post to '*Desert Diggers*', PO Box 629, Spring Hill Qld 4004. Competition closes 7 October 2024.

DESERT DIGGERS

Desert Diggers: Writings from a War Zone 'Somewhere in the Middle East' 1940-1942 draws upon hundreds of soldiers' letters in a fresh and captivating narrative of the war in North Africa.

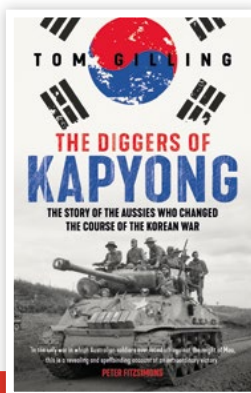
Desert Diggers follows the first men to volunteer after the outbreak of war in 1939, tracing their adventures in exotic ports before further training in Palestine. A hunger for action grew: 'Most of the chaps are... anxious to get into anything that looks like a fight,' one soldier wrote to his brother.

From Egypt, 'the hottest and dustiest place on God's Earth' was the Diggers' next destination and their 'bleeding' in the battles for Bardia and Tobruk.

After Rommel failed to storm Tobruk in April-May 1941, Nazi propaganda denigrated the garrison, 'caught like rats in a trap.' Amid frequent bombing and shelling, Berlin's scornful broadcasts were an unintended tonic. 'Frequently we laughed and joked until the tears came into our eyes,' a Digger quipped.

Told in the words of the men who served, *Desert Diggers* offers a new personal perspective on the Western Desert campaign. With immediacy and raw emotion, these skilfully woven letters provide a remarkable and compelling account of the Australian experience of war.

***Desert Diggers* by David Mitchelhill-Green is published by Big Sky Publishing (RRP: \$32.99).**



FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN one of four copies of *The Diggers of Kapyong*, email your name, address and contact number to editor@rslqld.org (with the subject '*The Diggers of Kapyong*') or post to '*The Diggers of Kapyong*', PO Box 629, Spring Hill Qld 4004. Competition closes 7 October 2024.

THE DIGGERS OF KAPYONG

The gripping account of Australia in the Korean War and how 3RAR battalion held back an entire Chinese Army division to prevent Seoul being overrun.

April 1951. After 10 months of fighting, the Korean War hangs in the balance. A single Australian battalion, backed by Kiwi gunners and American tanks, is dug in on a hilltop overlooking the Kapyong Valley, north of Seoul. Together with a Canadian battalion on a nearby hill, they are all that stands between Mao's army and the South Korean capital.

Since pouring across the North Korean border to support Kim Il Sung's communist fighters, the Chinese have launched offensive after offensive to drive General MacArthur's UN forces off the peninsula. Hundreds of thousands of soldiers from both sides have been killed or have frozen to death in the cruel Korean winter. On the barren hills above the Kapyong Valley, the heavily outnumbered diggers of 3RAR wait in darkness for a battle that could decide the war's outcome.

Told through the eyes of the soldiers, *The Diggers of Kapyong* is a compelling account of the mateship, sacrifice and heroism that defined Australia's role in a bloody war whose bitter legacy still resonates today.

***The Diggers of Kapyong* by Tom Gilling is published by Allen & Unwin (RRP: \$34.99).**

QUEENSLAND RSL NEWS WINNERS EDITION 2, 2024



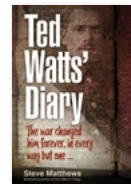
GONA'S GONE

M White, Newport
K Tilyard, The Gap
M Lord, Murrumba Downs
S Wilding, Rosedale



MAKERSON'S WAR

R Nicholas, Banksia Beach
D Edwards, Urangan
J Bongard, Warner
K Ryan, Redlynch



TED WATT'S DIARY

P Gore, Lutwyche
C Atkinson, Regents Park
S Perry, Manunda
D Deering, Forest



THE SINKING OF HMAS SYDNEY

B Kingston, Highfields
M Wright, Albany Creek
K Glover, Mt Coolom
I Melham, Proserpine

** Winners' books will be posted to the addresses supplied in the weeks following publication of the magazine.*

LAST POST

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	SERVICE NUMBER	SUB BRANCH
Ada*	B	422826	Caloundra Sub Branch
Allen	Colin	2781361	Currumbin/Palm Beach Sub Branch
Andrews	Neil	3/3254	Southport Sub Branch
Arron	George	22394020	Redcliffe Sub Branch
Arrowsmith	Raymond	342556	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Baldwin	Edward	2/5109	Caloundra Sub Branch
Barker	Herbert	VX104343	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Barnett	George	31009	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Barracrough	Brian	1/726445	Esk Sub Branch
Barwick	Keith	147889	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Bates	Frank	531294	Maroochydore Sub Branch
Batty	Gary	1201334	Bayside South Sub Branch
Beaven	David	1205396	Ipswich Sub Branch
Bell	Ivan	3785009	Centenary Suburbs Sub Branch
Bess	Neville	1/706672	Mudgeeraba-Robina Sub Branch
Bewhue*	Jack	4590	Cardwell Sub Branch
Bisbal	Marjorie (nee Bray)	102416	Innisfail Sub Branch
Bourke	Brian	-	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Brannock	Neville	NX203282	Kingaroy/Memerambi Sub Branch
Brennan	Carl	45732	Caloundra Sub Branch
Brennan	Andrew	1/400567	Bundaberg Sub Branch
Brew	Bruce	S10375	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Brewer	Martin	R27782	Bray Park-Strathpine Sub Branch

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	SERVICE NUMBER	SUB BRANCH
Broomfield	Trevor	S59759	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Brotherton	Reginald	173595	Hervey Bay Sub Branch
Bryant	Colin	235129	Tewantin/Noosa Sub Branch
Bryant	Richmond	R46193	Redcliffe Sub Branch
Buckley*	Glenise	-	Gympie Sub Branch
Burns	William	A25416	North Gold Coast Sub Branch
Burton	Mary	W15777	Bundaberg Sub Branch
Butler*	Keiron	1737612	Redbank Sub Branch
Cain	Claude	18394	Bundaberg Sub Branch
Cauchi-Gera	John	53098	Redcliffe Sub Branch
Chamberlain	Norman	R50797	Currumbin/Palm Beach Sub Branch
Chambers	Anthony	125242	Coorparoo & Districts Sub Branch
Chester*	Robert	1/703016	Ravenshoe Sub Branch
Chilcott	Raymond	R62835	Sandgate Sub Branch
Cleary	Vincent	214476	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Cooksley	Mervyn	23083428	Caloundra Sub Branch
Cooper	Edward	2/400987	Atherton Sub Branch
Cooper	John	3790362	Sherwood-Indooroopilly Sub Branch
Coote	John	1/723988	Gaythorne Sub Branch
Corkhill	Kenneth	A37559	Maroochydore Sub Branch
Corporaal	Rudy	25486	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Cossey	Henry	14960738	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Coulson	Michael	2783588	Rollingstone Sub Branch
Crouch	Reuben	8533664	Thuringowa Sub Branch
Crummer	Arthur	18163	Currumbin/Palm Beach Sub Branch

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	SERVICE NUMBER	SUB BRANCH
Cunningham	James	A14149	Ipswich Sub Branch
Curran	Paul	2737236	Currumbin/Palm Beach Sub Branch
Cushway	Ronald	QX59388 (Q265367)	Hervey Bay Sub Branch
Dakin	Cyril	O274	Burleigh Heads Sub Branch
Daniels	Richard	2742872	Caloundra Sub Branch
Darracott	Geoffrey	1/701037	Caloundra Sub Branch
Davies	Thomas	36078	Southport Sub Branch
Davis*	Henry	4241NS	Cairns Sub Branch
Davison	Kerry	1731429	Yeronga-Dutton Park Sub Branch
De Vries	Richard	–	Greenbank Sub Branch
Denny	Martin	ON34044	Gaythorne Sub Branch
Dillon	Thomas	1734561	Caloundra Sub Branch
Dimsey	Elva	VF513445	Kawana Waters Sub Branch
Distant*	Stanley	A112543	Helidon Sub Branch
Donges	Carolyn	W118104	Stanthorpe Sub Branch
Donnelly	Trevor	1735003	Bundaberg Sub Branch
Doyle	Douglas	1/703650	Texas Chapter of the Stanthorpe Sub Branch
Dunstan	George	122253	Redlands Sub Branch
Edwards	James	R53963	Centenary Suburbs Sub Branch
Eglinton	Ronald	1730934	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Ellwood*	Douglas	2/6689	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Englebright*	Kenneth	7534110	Wynnum Sub Branch
Enriquez	Charles	–	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Etchell	John	351395	Ipswich Railway Sub Branch
Falk	Jack	SX38698 (S115244)	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	SERVICE NUMBER	SUB BRANCH
Fancourt	Ronald	19077338	Coorparoo & Districts Sub Branch
Ferguson	Douglas	44977	Ayr Sub Branch
Fort	Kenneth	206473	Bundaberg Sub Branch
Foster	Michael	61973	Edge Hill/Cairns West Sub Branch
Fothergill	Kelvin	A322572 / 8193507	Bribie Island Sub Branch
Franklin	Ty	1101034	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Fredericksen	Allen	A1200798	Townsville Sub Branch
Gardner	Ron	A2199601	Warwick Sub Branch
Gaskell*	Robert	A55745	Toowoomba Sub Branch
George	Robert	52396	Townsville Sub Branch
Gimm	Alma	QF270957	Stanthorpe Sub Branch
Gittings	Reginald	R587565	Hervey Bay Sub Branch
Goudie	Wallace	V514897	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Goundrie	Alma	194159	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Gray	Alan	A17319	Ipswich Railway Sub Branch
Gross	Frederick	16955	Boonah Sub Branch
Gubbins	John	R28222	Maroochydore Sub Branch
Gumbrell	Rex	A56018	Redlands Sub Branch
Gunning	Robert	2/723033	Miles Sub Branch
Gygar	Terence	147389	Currumbin/Palm Beach Sub Branch
Halbesma	William	2236656	Bundaberg Sub Branch
Hall	Steven	212283	Stanthorpe Sub Branch
Hanlon	John	R2749674	Bribie Island Sub Branch
Harris	Ron	2412395	Agnes Water/1770 Sub Branch
Hegarty	Warren	129521	Townsville Sub Branch
Hethorn	Fraser	1730962	Redlands Sub Branch

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LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	SERVICE NUMBER	SUB BRANCH
Higginbotham	Norman	2795602	Ayr Sub Branch
Hocking	Raymond	A43595	Redlands Sub Branch
Hockley	Allan	R54253	Currumbin/Palm Beach Sub Branch
Hoepper	Nola	W221163	Kawana Waters Sub Branch
Hollingsworth	Neil	2/746446	Gladstone Sub Branch
Holman	Leslie	A111409	Cooroy-Pomona Sub Branch
Homer	Barbara	F12245	Agnes Water/1770 Sub Branch
Howard	Russell	171030A	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Hows	John	429568	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Hughes	Gordon	24265892	Caloundra Sub Branch
Ivetich	Walter	224387	Mossman Sub Branch
Jackson	Desmond	1732164	Bundaberg Sub Branch
Jans	Warwick	VX135956	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Jansson	Carl	355895	Hervey Bay Sub Branch
Jones*	Arthur	A51061	Atherton Sub Branch
Jones*	Russell	58374	Gracemere & District Sub Branch
Josephson	Warwick	NX166644	Tewantin/Noosa Sub Branch
Kennedy	Brian	1200386	Bribie Island Sub Branch
Kenyon	Derek	29589	Bundaberg Sub Branch
Keyes	Richard	O123563	Townsville Sub Branch
King	Jeffery	1410372	Bribie Island Sub Branch
Knight	John	127577	Beenleigh & District Sub Branch
Ladner	Gwenith	QF272153	Kawana Waters Sub Branch
Laing	James	2784993	Nambour Sub Branch

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	SERVICE NUMBER	SUB BRANCH
Lambden	Ian	R124769	Currumbin/Palm Beach Sub Branch
Lanfranchi	William	38636	Townsville Sub Branch
Laurie	Alexander	34478	Beenleigh & District Sub Branch
Lawson	Denise (nee Carey)	W113063	Townsville Sub Branch
Leslie	Ian	38836	Beenleigh & District Sub Branch
Lewis	Dennis	A230336	Gatton Sub Branch
Lister	Russell	A125993	Maryborough Sub Branch
Little	Robert	QX500081	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Litzow	Ian	A115786	Caloundra Sub Branch
Lloyd	Christopher	122738	RSL QLD State Branch
Lucas	William	M40928	Redlands Sub Branch
Lyme*	Graham	18207	Goombungee Sub Branch
Mackellar	Norman	A18832	Gympie Sub Branch
Mackey	Noel	1734029	Bundaberg Sub Branch
Malam*	Don	213826	Helidon Sub Branch
Marling	Thomas	F927040	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
McAllister	Angus	220398	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
McDermott	Peter	A95311	Hervey Bay Sub Branch
McKee*	Kenneth	515631	Boonah Sub Branch
McKeown*	Raymond	QX57096	Cairns Sub Branch
McLean	Peter	A35194	Pine Rivers District Sub Branch
McLuskey	Daniel	A43863	Mackay Sub Branch
McMullen	Scott	117463	Emerald Sub Branch
McNally	Kevin	A45854	Caloundra Sub Branch

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	SERVICE NUMBER	SUB BRANCH
McNaught*	Donald	1410749	Bribie Island Sub Branch
Medhurst	Douglas	2781771	Ipswich Sub Branch
Meiklejohn	Jean	QF270486	Currumbin/Palm Beach Sub Branch
Menzler	John	A28586	Maryborough Sub Branch
Mew	Edward	4/700366	Ipswich Sub Branch
Miles	Keith	QX58926	Bundaberg Sub Branch
Millis	Robin	A125372 / 8155160	Ipswich Sub Branch
Mitchell*	Frank	78745	Townsville Sub Branch
Mooney	Robert	217050	Currumbin/Palm Beach Sub Branch
Moore	David	2787506	Maryborough Sub Branch
Morrison	Adam	132357	Sherwood-Indooroopilly Sub Branch
Morrison	Roderick	A39626	Beenleigh & District Sub Branch
Morrison	Leigh (nee Holm)	W122230	Townsville Sub Branch
Moulder	Warwick	2782843	Currumbin/Palm Beach Sub Branch
Mullane	Phyllis	98168	Currumbin/Palm Beach Sub Branch
Mullen*	Eric	QX60934	Wynnum Sub Branch
Nelson	Keith	3112704	Greenbank Sub Branch
O'Connor	Gerald	VX501693	Gaythorne Sub Branch
Oliver	John	N25322	Goodna Sub Branch
Palmer	John	2412449	Warwick Sub Branch
Parker	Leslie	1/730727	Ipswich Railway Sub Branch
Pashley	Robert	1737517	Clayfield-Toombul Sub Branch
Paterson*	Eric	A110144	Gympie Sub Branch
Patrick	Peter	1/715204	Gympie Sub Branch

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	SERVICE NUMBER	SUB BRANCH
Peddie	Peter	3794497	Bundaberg Sub Branch
Pedrina	Jeffrey	0314595	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Petrie	Adrian	A218250	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Petty	Richard	R58998	Bribie Island Sub Branch
Pilgrim	William	A115202	National Servicemens Sub Branch
Poidevin	Eron	1/7041	Sandgate Sub Branch
Polson	Joan	94225	Coorparoo & Districts Sub Branch
Poulton	Ronald	O113327	Ipswich Sub Branch
Pountney	Neville	A121434	Townsville Sub Branch
Preston	Barry	37940	Townsville Sub Branch
Quilty	John	R57270	Redlands Sub Branch
Readdy	John	1734669	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Reynolds	Vernard	5023225	Toowoomba Sub Branch
Rhyne	Harold	49695	Dalby Sub Branch
Ridgley	Roderick	1732624	Maryborough Sub Branch
Rimland	Adolf	111317	Ipswich Railway Sub Branch
Robinson	Bruce	21173	Bayside South Sub Branch
Rolley	Edward	1/714250	Malanda Sub Branch
Ross*	Glynn	2785611	Bribie Island Sub Branch
Rowe	Richard	A54706	Bowen Sub Branch
Rowley*	Kenneth	449302	Townsville Sub Branch
Ryan*	Philip	5717263	Hervey Bay Sub Branch
Sanders	Reginald	3792091	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Schoorl	Gerardus	216676	Goodna Sub Branch
Sciberras	Joseph	2/779736	Redlands Sub Branch
Sheppard	Noel	1/714253	Ravenshoe Sub Branch

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LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	SERVICE NUMBER	SUB BRANCH
Shreeve	Peter	RM127983	Sherwood-Indooroopilly Sub Branch
Smedley	Ronald	NX168391	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Smith	Andrew	PMX634974	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Smith	Kevin	B5243	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Soutar	William	B4364	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Southerden	Edward	A110167	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Springall	Allan	1200739	Caloundra Sub Branch
Springer	Ronald	1/410040	Centenary Suburbs Sub Branch
Springer	Ronald	129487	Centenary Suburbs Sub Branch
Stanton	James	VX503722	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Steines	Albert	15759	Caloundra Sub Branch
Strachan	Milford	167453,1/729721	Beenleigh & District Sub Branch
Tamkin	Colin	23544975	Bribie Island Sub Branch
Tapp	Maurice	6/702701	Emu Park Sub Branch
Taylor	Ian	312916	RSL QLD State Branch
Taylor	William	B5210	Hervey Bay Sub Branch
Thiele	Bevan	450884	Caloundra Sub Branch
Todhunter	Samuel	053169	Currumbin/Palm Beach Sub Branch
Treston	Reginald	2277331	Hervey Bay Sub Branch
Turnell	Beresford	33100	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Uebergang	Allan	R59740	Greenbank Sub Branch

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	SERVICE NUMBER	SUB BRANCH
Vaughan	Charles	1/8514	Yeronga-Dutton Park Sub Branch
Verran*	Thomas	170544	Townsville Sub Branch
Viney	Phillip	15857	Townsville Sub Branch
Vogele	David	1200116	Charters Towers Sub Branch
Ward	Alec	A11244	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Watson	James	R53368	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Watt	Robert	131687	Caloundra Sub Branch
Weatherhead	Jack	972570	Holland Park Mt Gravatt Sub Branch
Weier*	Barry	1/713485	Dalby Sub Branch
Wells	John	A1438	Sherwood-Indooroopilly Sub Branch
Werda	Mervyn	QX58313	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Wheatley	Andrew	A63285	Gympie Sub Branch
Whiteford*	John	NS1480	Caloundra Sub Branch
Whitney	Dallas	56667	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Whitten	Teryl	W120577	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Widdrington	Weldon	23948194	Caloundra Sub Branch
Williams	Roger	A130104	Bribie Island Sub Branch
Williams	Robert	D8247669	Mackay Sub Branch
Wojciechowski	Wally	3791132	Sherwood-Indooroopilly Sub Branch
Woodhead	Neil	162834	Redlands Sub Branch
Woolf	Leonard	VX120958	Hervey Bay Sub Branch
Woolmer	Colin	R45048	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Worthington	Gregory	318296	Hervey Bay Sub Branch

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PRAYING FOR SUNLIGHT, WAITING FOR RAIN

Ellen Starck, a young South Australian from a privileged background, shares the prejudices of her society about native peoples. Her initial experience of the newly 'discovered' New Guinea highlands, in which she arrives in 1937 as the wife of a Lutheran missionary, does little to change her mind.

She begins by marking time, hoping her husband will soon tire of his missionary work, but she gradually ventures beyond the meagre European society around her into the highland world—especially the world of women and girls, whom she comes to see as New Guinea's best hope.

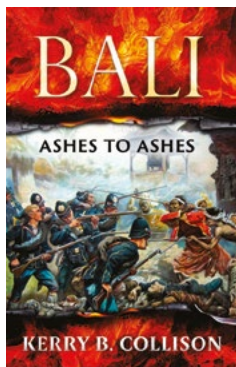
Providing simple health care in nearby villages gives her a sense of purpose, but then personal tragedy strikes, testing her to her limits. Unexpected new relationships, born in part of the tragedy, help her through her grief and encourage her to stay.

The Pacific War intervenes, bringing further isolation and loss. Her response is a decision to return home, but not to the home she originally left.



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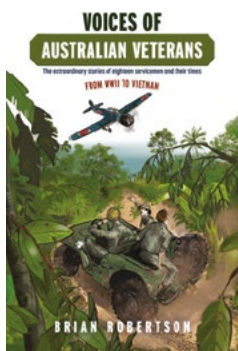
RECENT RELEASES:



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In 1904, the *Sri Kumala*, a Chinese schooner became wrecked off Sanur in Bali. Claiming the vessel had been sacked by the Balinese, the Dutch attack recorded in history as the brutal Puputan Wars, was to change Bali and its culture forever. Entire kingdoms perished as wave upon wave of the island's inhabitants committed suicide.

European artists become entrenched, integrating with the Balinese. Their stories of surviving the Dutch invasion, then the Japanese and the brutal 1965 slaughter of more than eighty-thousand Balinese, reveals an unspoken image of Bali, The Island of the Gods.



ISBN: 978-1-922958-64-8

Eighteen veterans inhabit these pages. Each voice their story directly to the reader without intervention. One describes having breast milk squirted in his face, another tells of having his hands held behind his back as a knife is put to his throat, and yet another describes the incidents in the brothels of Malaya.

Some of the stories are very sad, such as when you realise that it was your side who laid the mine, causing the little girl you just met, to lose her foot. For some, such experiences made them true believers. On others, it had exactly the opposite effect.

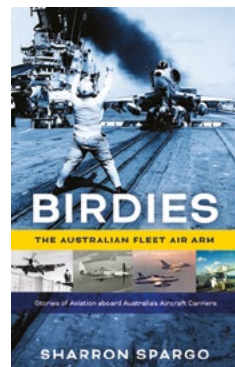
Five chapters offer an Australian perspective on world affairs from 1940 to 1970.



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Join Australian soldiers, Stan and Billy, in their stubborn resistance against an overwhelming World War II Japanese force in Papua New Guinea as the Australians fight a tactical withdrawal along the Kokoda Track. The strategies and tactics used in this withdrawal created one of the most famous actions in the annals of Australian military history.

Link arms with Carol and Jean, two sisters who experience love and tragedy while struggling to fulfil their duties as waitresses. Experience the full effect that tens of thousands of allied troops had on their home city of Brisbane.



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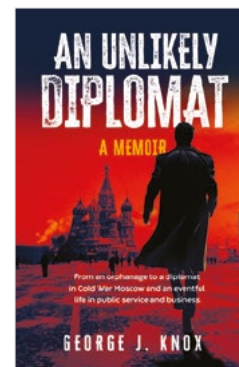
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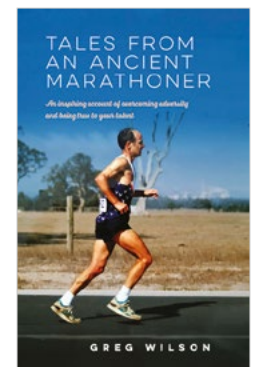


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This is a true-life story told by a man who believes that despite his start in life he succeeded in reaching the almost impossible goals he set for himself. There is much to interest the reader: Domestic and child abuse — Ward of the state — Orphanages — RAAF service, British nuclear tests at Maralinga, Office of the Air Attaché, Washington, DC, USA; and Foreign Service at embassies in Moscow, USSR in the '60s and again in the '70s, at Santiago de Chile.

The author spent his formative years in orphanages run by the Christian Brothers in Western Australia.



ISBN: 978-1-922958-67-9

From a deprived childhood within a family history of mental illness, suicide and addictions, Greg Wilson has attained unexpected heights as an ultramarathoner.

Joining the Australian Army at seventeen was the catalyst for an athletics career.

This enthralling account documents Greg's inclusion in the winning team at the Olympic Marathon trials and competing in the ADF Orienteering team.

He has raced in the company of the likes of the world's greatest ultra runner, Yiannis Kouros, and smashed the records set by legend Cliff Young.

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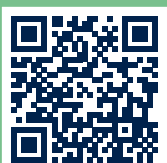
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