

QUEENSLAND RSL NEWS

REMEMBRANCE DAY 2024

AS LONG AS WE REMEMBER,
THEIR SACRIFICE WON'T
BE FORGOTTEN

SPREADING CHRISTMAS CHEER

700 HAMPERS DELIVERED
TO VETERANS AND
THEIR FAMILIES

A QUIET PLACE FOR REFLECTION

42 FOR 42 MEMORIAL GARDEN
HONOURS AFGHANISTAN
VETERANS



RSL
Queensland

2024 // EDITION 04

The official publication of the Returned & Services League of Australia (Queensland Branch)



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Mirani RSL Sub Branch President Jan Lindbergs and Secretary Bob England gifted Defence bears to Pioneer Valley Community Kindergarten kids Remi (holding an Air Force bear) and Gracie (holding a Navy bear). They are pictured with Kindergarten Manager Courtney Doherty.

Royal Commission marks crucial step

IN September, following an extensive three-year inquiry, the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide handed down its final report.

I would like to thank and commend everyone who shared their stories and experiences during this time. I know it wouldn't have been easy.

The report has identified a range of issues that are contributing to the troubling level of suicide in our community and made a range of recommendations to address them.

We have worked with our RSL counterparts across the country to identify the recommendations that we believe are most likely to have an impact and help veterans. On the back of that work, the RSL Australia President has written to the Prime Minister to inform the government of the RSL's views.

The government is working its way through the report's recommendations and is consulting with the RSL, and others, as they go. We do not yet know when the government will publicly respond to the Commission's report.

You can read more about our analysis of the report on page 30.

OUR IMPACT ON VETERANS IN 2024

Looking back on the past year, I'm proud of the strides RSL

“It's clear that what we are doing as a team – Sub Branches, volunteers, Districts and State Branch – is resonating with the broader veteran community. Veterans are finding value here, and that's immensely gratifying.”

Queensland has made in the areas of care, commemoration and camaraderie and I want to single some of them out.

CARE: THE INCARCERATED VETERANS PROGRAM

One of the initiatives closest to my heart is the incarcerated veterans program. It was launched as a pilot in 2023 and has been expanded this year. We're on track to roll out a more developed program in 2025.

Our aim is to remind incarcerated veterans, who are often at their lowest point, that they were once capable, competent members of the Australian Defence Force. They made values-based decisions, showed discipline and had a purpose. By reconnecting them with that part of themselves, we hope to help them find a path back to a more fulfilling life and reduce their chance of re-offending.

I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge the outstanding professionalism

and commitment of those who undertake this difficult, often unseen work.

COMMEMORATION: RECORD ANZAC DAY ATTENDANCE

In commemoration, we saw a record number of ANZAC Day services organised by the RSL this year and, according to observer estimates, a record turnout for those services.

In some of the most iconic locations across Queensland, the crowds were as large as they've ever been. It's a powerful reminder that ANZAC Day continues to resonate deeply with Australians. We are honoured to play such a pivotal role in stewarding this important day for our country.

CAMARADERIE: MEMBERSHIP GROWTH AND A NEW WELLBEING CENTRE

On the camaraderie front, I'm heartened to see our membership numbers

continue to grow. This follows on from 2023, and it's clear that what we are doing as a team – Sub Branches, volunteers, Districts and State Branch – is resonating with the broader veteran community. Veterans are finding value here, and that's immensely gratifying.

In addition, we opened a new RSL Queensland Veteran & Family Wellbeing Centre on the Sunshine Coast this year. This is more than just a resource centre; it's a one-stop-shop where veterans can access the District office, RSL services, advocates, Mates4Mates and other partners.

It's designed to be a supportive, welcoming space, where veterans can connect, access resources and feel a sense of belonging. For me, that's what camaraderie is all about.

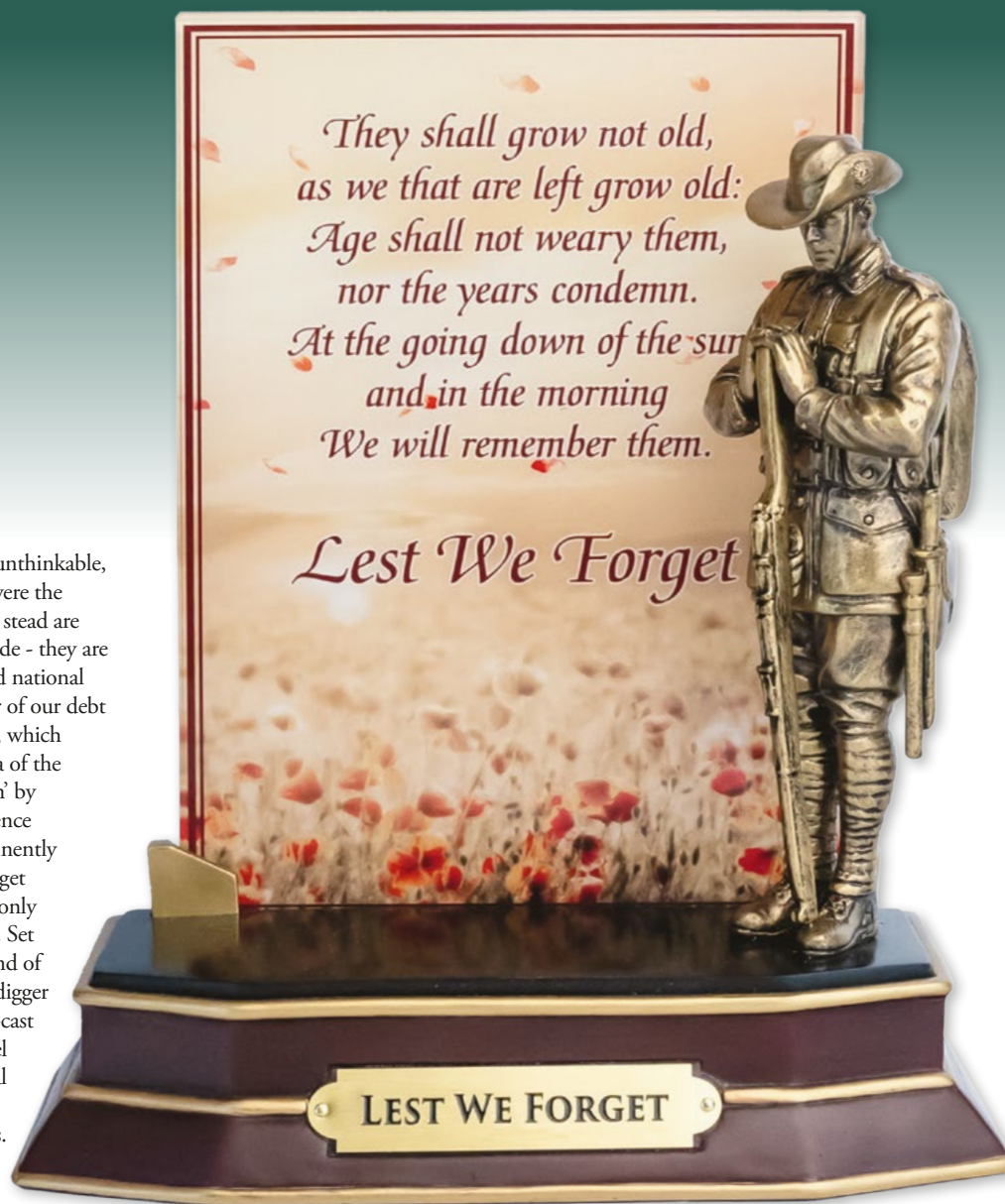
Our commitment to veterans and their families is stronger than ever, and we look forward to building on this progress in the years to come.



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

AT THE GOING DOWN OF THE SUN AND IN THE MORNING, WE WILL REMEMBER THEM.

While the horrors of war are unthinkable, the need to remember and revere the deeds of those who fell in our stead are more than just a matter of pride - they are part of our Anzac heritage and national identity. A poignant reminder of our debt is the 'Ode of Remembrance', which originated as the fourth stanza of the inspiring poem 'For the Fallen' by English poet and writer Laurence Binyon, which features prominently on this exclusive 'Lest We Forget ANZAC Sculptured Tribute' only from The Bradford Exchange. Set against a dawn-like background of symbolic red poppies, a lone digger masterfully replicated in cold-cast bronze stands in silent sentinel to one side, with the immortal fourth stanza printed respectfully above the poppies.



This reverential and important piece - which pays tribute to all those that made the ultimate sacrifice - is strictly limited to just 1914 editions worldwide and has the immortal words, 'LEST WE FORGET' engraved across a solemn brass plaque placed on its proud platform. Order this fitting tribute to the Anzacs now for just 5 monthly instalments of only \$39.99 or \$199.95, plus \$19.99 postage and handling - backed our 365-day return policy for complete peace of mind. Pay tribute to those who fought and fell for our freedom. Just go to bradford.com.au/140213, call 02 9841 3311 anytime, or mail the coupon today.

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2024 in review: a year of growth, unity and support

AS 2024 draws to a close, it's remarkable to look back on the progress made across RSL Queensland. This year has been significant for the veteran and family community in Queensland and we are proud to have been part of this.

At every level, we remain committed to our core pillars of care, commemoration and camaraderie. Our membership continues to grow, we've expanded our support for those in need, and we've enhanced our commercial capabilities to ensure that we can continue to deliver a high level of support for many years to come.

DREAM HOME ART UNION, PROUDLY RSL QUEENSLAND: NEW BEGINNINGS FOR OUR WINNERS AND OUR VETERANS

In this edition, we celebrate the dawn of a new era for RSL Queensland's prize home lottery, which recently relaunched as Dream Home Art Union. We need to make sure that our customers understand the value of our Art Union – where every ticket purchase contributes to supporting veterans and their families in Queensland and across Australia. For our lucky winners, they don't just win a house, they win a dream.

The new name helps us demonstrate our value to customers, highlight RSL Queensland's impact on veterans and their families, and

“*I wish all of you a safe Christmas and New Year. I look forward to 2025, with all of us working together to strengthen the League in Queensland and continue to build a stronger, united and progressive RSL that supports veterans locally, statewide and nationally.*”

reflect on the long history of our Art Union operations.

ROYAL COMMISSION: A PATHWAY FORWARD

The recent release of the final report from the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide marks an important milestone for the veteran community. Despite varying views on the Commission, it was certainly a significant undertaking.

The report highlighted that any organisation delivering care for veterans must be governed by high standards. Our investment in services and research provides a solid foundation for the sector moving forward.

We are well positioned to help shape future pathways, and discussions on this are already underway. We'll be closely monitoring the establishment of an oversight body to implement and monitor the recommendations.

COLLABORATION DELIVERS IMPACT AND COHESION

Improving the cohesion of the RSL across Australia is vital to

achieving targeted outcomes for veterans, alongside government and non-government support. We've increased our engagement and collaboration with other RSL State Branches, starting with a long-standing partnership with RSL Tasmania, then expanding to RSL NSW, and more recently opening discussions with other states.

Collaboration within the RSL network is central to ensuring real change for veterans and their families, unlocking investment potential, and ensuring we have a seat at the table when it comes to veteran issues.

OUR COMMUNITY AT CHRISTMAS

The tradition of Christmas hampers continues in 2024, recognising that social isolation and financial pressures can be a real challenge for veterans, particularly during the festive season. We are honoured to be able to contribute to making things a bit better.

This year, 700 people from

the veteran community will receive a hamper – whether they're members facing tough times or clients navigating difficulties. These hampers help ease the burden of the holiday period but, more importantly, let recipients know they aren't forgotten and that they have a community here for them.

I hope the members who have the honour of handing out Christmas hampers enjoy the opportunity to demonstrate this sense of community firsthand. The hamper deliveries will complete a long process that began back in the second quarter of the year.

I wish all of you a safe Christmas and New Year. I look forward to 2025, with all of us working together to strengthen the League in Queensland and continue to build a stronger, united and progressive RSL that supports veterans locally, statewide and nationally. Thank you for your contributions to making the League what it is today.



Robert Skoda
Chief Executive Officer
RSL Queensland

The Highest Award For Valour



The Victoria Cross is the highest decoration for valour in the British armed forces - awarded for extreme bravery in the face of the enemy. It was instituted in 1856 by Queen Victoria at the request of her consort, Prince Albert, with the first crosses awarded during the Crimean War. In 1902 King Edward VII decreed that the honour could be awarded posthumously, which, since then, it frequently has been. Anyone in any branch of the British armed forces is eligible. Only a handful of commonwealth nations have honoured the Victoria Cross on their coinage and Australia is one of them. This striking and historically significant set includes an example of all four of the Australian coins that celebrate the VC with its main motif, along with a luxury presentation case with certificate of authenticity booklet.

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The Victoria Cross Four-Coin Set features:

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INTERESTING READ FOR DOCTORS

MY compliments to those who produce and send me each issue of *Queensland RSL News*. You will be pleased to know that I pass my copy on to my doctor, who finds much interest in it; particularly in what is being done in rehabilitating our ill and wounded veterans.

Bob McNeil
Longreach RSL Sub Branch

NEWS

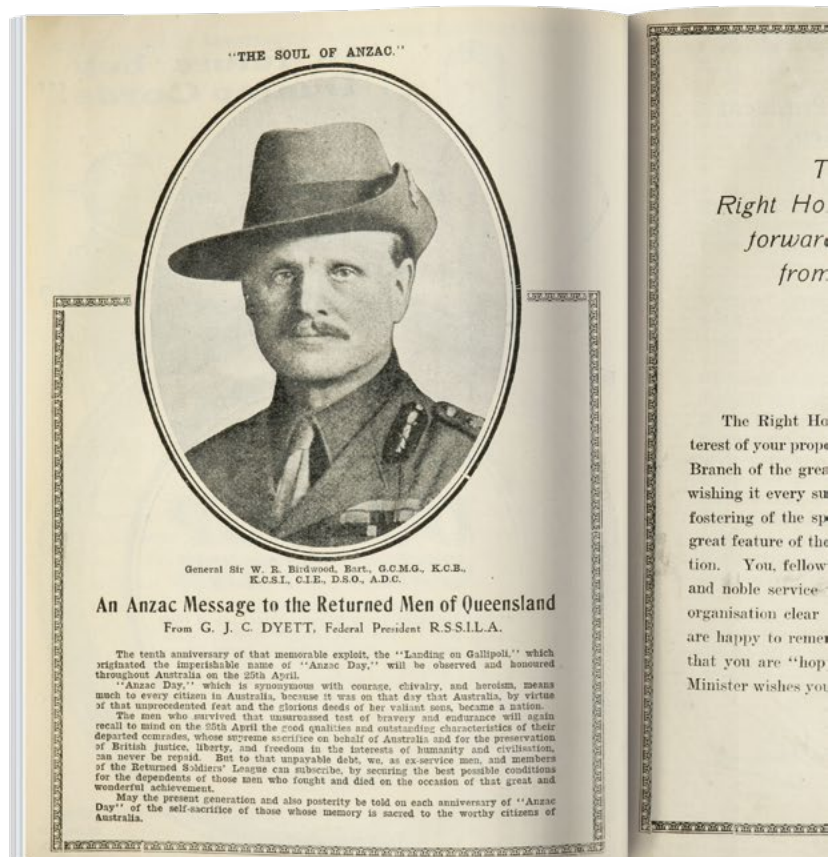
KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR A SPECIAL KEEPSAKE IN OUR NEXT EDITION

AS you may know, 2025 marks 100 years since *The Queensland Digger* (now *Queensland RSL News*) was first published. To celebrate, we'll be including a special historical keepsake in Edition 1 of 2025 – something you won't want to miss!

Throughout the year, we'll also be marking the occasion

with feature articles that reflect on our magazine's evolution, celebrate a century of veteran storytelling, and highlight key moments from our rich history.

If you have any photos, stories or ideas to share to help mark this milestone, please email editor@rslqld.org ←



RSL PEER-LED PROGRAMS AND RSL REC CONNECT

RSL QUEENSLAND constantly reviews and refines its services to meet the changing needs of veterans and their families. Our Wellness Programs and Active Lifestyles offerings have evolved and expanded over the past few years, and as of 1 August, the new names are:

“RSL Queensland constantly reviews and refines its services to meet the changing needs of veterans and their families.”

- **RSL Peer-Led Programs** (formerly Wellness Programs), which offers mental health and wellbeing support for veterans and their families, guided by others with similar experiences.
- **RSL Rec Connect** (formerly Active Lifestyles), which supports veterans and their families connect through a diverse calendar of recreational events. Be it active, creative, outdoors or indoors, each RSL Rec Connect event is designed to help participants feel happier and more connected with others.

Keep an eye out for programs and events we will be spotlighting into the future. ↩

Learn more at rslqld.org/find-help



NEWS



LIFE MEMBER AND MERITORIOUS AWARDS

Congratulations to the following Life Member award recipients, who were recognised for their ongoing service and dedication to the RSL. We appreciate their tireless efforts and the support they provide to veterans and their families.

Service Life Members

- Melanie Annand – North Gold Coast RSL Sub Branch
- Stephen Boyle – Mudgeeraba-Robina RSL Sub Branch
- Ronald Bulmer – Redcliffe RSL Sub Branch
- Graham Cockerell – Stanthorpe RSL Sub Branch
- Colin Diachkoff – Stephens RSL Sub Branch
- Karin Grainger – Pine Rivers RSL Sub Branch
- Norman Henstridge – Tweed Heads and Coolangatta RSL Sub Branch
- Brian Laing – Bulimba District RSL Sub Branch
- Carol Orr JP(Qual) – Redcliffe RSL Sub Branch
- Ron Robinson – Emu Park RSL Sub Branch
- Graham Ross – Stephens RSL Sub Branch
- Paul Scarborough – Pine Rivers RSL Sub Branch
- John Thompson OAM – Stephens RSL Sub Branch
- Adrian Wallin – Springsure RSL Sub Branch
- Jon Willson – Emu Park RSL Sub Branch

Women's Auxiliary Life Members

- Jeanette Cockerell – Stanthorpe RSL Sub Branch
- Ingrid Munday – Stanthorpe RSL Sub Branch

Citizen's Auxiliary Life Members

- Jean Payne – Pine Rivers RSL Sub Branch

HONOURABLE MENTION FOR SUPPORTING RESERVISTS

RSL QUEENSLAND is committed to being a champion for ADF Reservists and fostering a culture of support and appreciation.

The organisation has been awarded an honourable mention for its efforts to support employees who are also Australian Defence Force

Reservists. Nomination for the prestigious award originates from the Reservists themselves, making it a huge honour. RSL Queensland staff members and

Reservists John Hardgrave, Jonathan Vasquez and Hannah Axford accepted the award on behalf of the organisation (pictured above). ←

SECOND ESO FORUM FOR 2024

IN November, RSL Queensland and Legacy Brisbane hosted its latest Queensland Ex-Service Organisations (ESO) Forum, connecting veteran support organisations from across the sector.

These ESO Forums provide an opportunity for the sector to connect and collaborate, and this event was no different. Participants heard updates about advocacy, health and wellbeing initiatives, and discussed how the sector as a whole can work together with government agencies.



Conversations throughout the day also highlighted that the industry and ESO stand ready to

action and implement the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide.

We look forward to continuing these important discussions at our next Forum in May 2025 ←

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NEWS



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RUN ARMY RETURNS

NEXT year, Run Army is hitting the streets of Brisbane on Sunday 30 March and Townsville on Sunday 6 April 2025. This unique fun run is your chance to say thanks to frontline service members who go above and beyond.

RSL Queensland is proud to support the event for a fifth consecutive year and help promote the importance of physical and mental wellness to the veteran community and broader public.

Join us as we lace up our

shoes with the Australian Army, Queensland Police Service, Queensland Fire Department, Queensland Ambulance Service, State Emergency Service Queensland and Surf Life Saving Queensland,

to raise money for each organisation's beneficiaries, including Legacy Brisbane.

Everyone is welcome – whether you're a seasoned runner or just want to walk for a cause, come and be part of the action! ←

MILITARY TRANSITION TOOLS RECOGNISED

WE'RE proud to share that RSL Queensland, in partnership with Gallipoli Medical Research, was selected as a finalist for the 2024 Lord Mayor's Business Awards in the ISPT Investment in Brisbane

Award category for our groundbreaking military transition tools, including MT-Ready.

This achievement represents the culmination of six years of research and partnership between RSL

Queensland and Gallipoli Medical Research. We've worked together since 2012, delivering 42 research projects and publishing 40 studies – all aimed at improving the lives of veterans and their families.

Winners were announced at an awards ceremony on 25 October and RSL Queensland and Gallipoli Medical Research were thrilled to walk away with a special mention of MT-Ready from Brisbane Lord Mayor Adrian Schrinner. ←

The background of the entire page is a dark, blurred image of many red poppies. Some poppies are in sharp focus, while others are out of focus, creating a sense of depth. The poppies have bright yellow centers and black outlines for their petals and centers.

REMEMBRANCE DAY 2024

On Remembrance Day (11 November), communities across the world came together to honour all who gave their lives in service.

More than 150 commemorative events were held across the state by RSL Sub Branches, upholding a solemn pledge to remember the fallen. This was the largest number of services we have seen for Remembrance Day in over three years.

From poppy light displays to children's chalk murals, here's a few snapshots of how Queensland remembered.

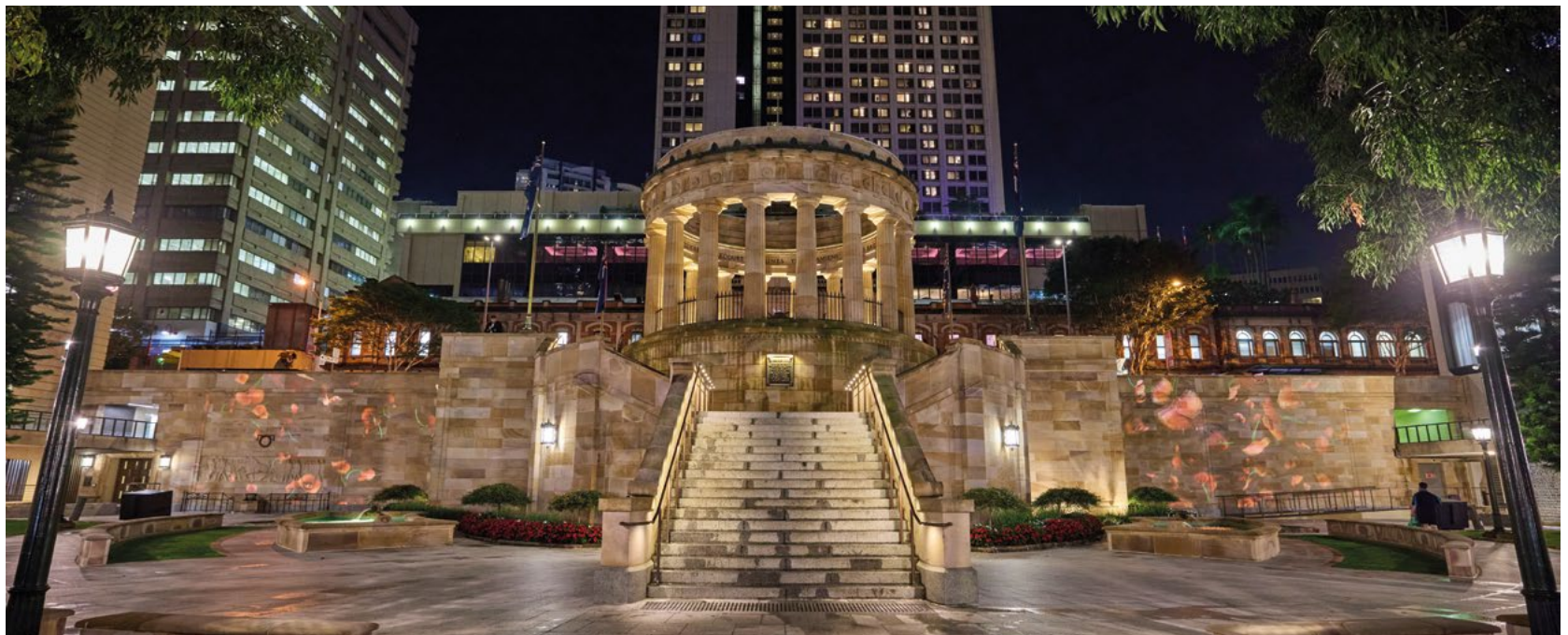


◀ Organised by RSL Queensland, ANZAC Square became a place of reflection and tribute in the lead up to Remembrance Day.

▼ Between 5 to 11 November, visitors were invited to honour those who served by placing a poppy at ANZAC Square in Brisbane.



▲ Australian Light Horse Association member Kym Flehr, left, with Toc H Director Ray Geise OAM KSJ MACE at Brisbane's Remembrance Day service.



▲ An evening light display of falling poppies on the Shrine of Remembrance was part of the RSL Queensland activation at ANZAC Square.



REMEMBER
to remember

► Pictured at ANZAC Square following the Remembrance Day service in Brisbane were, from left, guest speaker and 2024 Premier's Anzac Prize recipient Sophie Robertson, RSL Queensland State President Major General Stephen Day DSC AM and RAAF veteran-turned-teacher Michelle Pipe, who co-chaperoned students on the 2024 Premier's Anzac Prize trip.



▲ Australian Commando Association member Mark Stanieg, left, gathered with fellow veterans and community members to watch the Remembrance Day service hosted by RSL Queensland at ANZAC Square.

▼ Navy Commander Rosemarie Apikotoa, left, with Council of Ex-Servicewomen's Association Queensland President and Redcliffe RSL Sub Branch member Wendy Griggs in front of the Shrine of Remembrance, following the Brisbane service.



▲ Her Excellency the Honourable Dr Jeannette Young AC PSM, Governor of Queensland, and Professor Graeme Nimmo RFD paying their respects during the Brisbane service.



▲ Premier of Queensland, David Crisafulli, lays a wreath during the service at ANZAC Square, Brisbane.



▲ Pictured at the Brisbane service, from left, New Farm RSL Sub Branch member Paul Johnston, his wife Catherine Johnston and Wynnum RSL Sub Branch member Shane Cooper. Paul and Shane are both on the executive committee of the 'A' Battery Association. This Association dates back to 1871 and reports being the longest continuous serving unit in the ADF.



▲ Current and ex-serving veterans gathered at the Atherton War Memorial on Remembrance Day.



▲ Staff and students from Bellenden Ker State School joined Babinda RSL Sub Branch members, veterans and community members for their local Remembrance Day service.



▲ Veterans and members of the local community gathered in Beachmere to mark Remembrance Day.



▶ Ex-British Forces veterans participated in the Beerwah and District RSL Sub Branch service.



▲ Beauesert RSL Sub Branch member Noel Parker with piper Aileen Cooper.



▲ Veterans and members of the catafalque guard from the 9th Royal Queensland Regiment in front of the 'Remember' artwork, following the Remembrance Day service in Buss Park, Bundaberg.



▲ Gracemere and District RSL Sub Branch President Tony Harris (ex-Army), left, is pictured with 1st Central Queensland Light Horse Regiment members, left to right, Dave Britten (ex-Reservist), Brendon Connor and Anthony Egretz. The service was well attended by the local community and followed by a light lunch provided by the Ladies Auxiliary. Photo by Crissy Williams.

▼ Despite a very warm day, approximately 200 people attended the Forest Lake Remembrance Day service.



▲ Caloundra veterans assemble to commemorate Remembrance Day at the cenotaph in the Caloundra RSL Sub Branch Memorial Gardens.

▼ Hervey Bay RSL Sub Branch members and peacekeeping veterans Ben Reed (RAAF) and Troy Gill (Army) lay wreaths at the Hervey Bay RSL Sub Branch service. A crowd of over 500 locals and ex-service personnel gathered at Freedom Park and were warmly welcomed by Sub Branch President Brian Tidyman.



▲ Under cloudy skies, Killarney RSL Sub Branch President Jim Domjahn, emcee Rod Petersen and chaplain Rosemary Petersen are pictured with the Warwick Thistle Pipe Band and the catafalque party from RAAF Base Amberley for Remembrance Day. Guest speaker John Telfer, a RAAF veteran, military historian and author, enthralled the crowd with stories from the Charge at Beersheba during WWI. The township of Killarney sits on the western side of the Great Dividing Range only a few kilometres from the NSW border.



▲ A new memorial bench was unveiled at Kilcoy RSL Sub Branch's Remembrance Day service. Pictured with the bench are, from left, Katherine Garwood, Val Fuller and Valda Conrad.



▲ Members of the local community paying their respects at the Kilcoy RSL Sub Branch service.

► Longreach RSL Sub Branch encouraged students from Our Lady's Catholic Primary School to participate in Remembrance Day commemorations.



◀ Air Force veteran Michael Rogers at the Lowwood RSL Sub Branch service. Coincidentally, Michael enlisted in the ADF on 11 November 1975 and discharged on 10 November 1991. He worked as an airframe fitter during his time in service.



▲ Veterans and community members gathered for the Maryborough RSL Sub Branch Remembrance Day service.



▲ Vietnam veterans and the Veterans Motorcycle Club of Australia Capricorn Coast Chapter are pictured at the Monto RSL Sub Branch service.

► Approximately 100 people attended the Sandgate RSL Sub Branch service.



▲ Mirani RSL Sub Branch member Danniell Martin with her daughter at the Mirani Remembrance Day service.



▲ Mirani RSL Sub Branch President Jan Lindbergs with students from Mirani State High School and Mirani State School, who participated in the local Remembrance Day service.



▲ Meandarra/Glenmorgan RSL Sub Branch President Philip Murray with Year 6 students from Meandarra State School.



▲ Pictured at the Miles RSL Sub Branch Remembrance Day service were WWII Commando Eric Geldard OAM (99 years old), flanked by Sub Branch President Adrian Daveson, Western Downs Regional Council Mayor Andrew Smith, member and bugler Ian Perry, Secretary Shirley Makin, member Hohaia Downs (who sang the Australian and New Zealander National Anthems) and Miles State High School students Sienna and Asher (who read the names of the fallen).



▲ Veterans and community members came together in Mossman to mark Remembrance Day.



▲ Mossman RSL Sub Branch member Ron Morley with his son, who was wearing his miniature medals, prior to the Remembrance Day service.



▲ North Gold Coast RSL Sub Branch member Doug Parry, left, and Treasurer Kerry Parry are pictured with Jennifer Ross and her two sons Daniel and Zac Pederson. Daniel and Zac attended the Remembrance Day service in honour of their late father, an Air Force member who passed away three years ago while still serving. The family now have a close association with North Gold Coast RSL Sub Branch.



▲ Beaudesert RSL Advocate Steve Monteath, left, and pastor Mark Ironside watch cadets march past in Rathdowney. The service was organised by Beaudesert RSL Sub Branch.



▲ Children attended the Rockhampton RSL Sub Branch service alongside their parents.



REMEMBER to remember



▲ Salisbury RSL Sub Branch President Tony Stevenson laid a wreath at the Remembrance Day service.



▲ The Yungaburra Military Commemoration Committee organised a Remembrance Day service at Memorial Park, Yungaburra.



▲ Springwood Tri Services RSL Sub Branch President Jamie McLellan lays a wreath during the Remembrance Day service.

► Sunnybank RSL Sub Branch held its Remembrance Day service indoors this year, to allow for a cool and comfortable air-conditioned environment for the older attendees. More than 150 people attended the service, including student leaders from six neighbouring high schools who spoke during the commemoration. The bugler was Mitchell Stewart, an accomplished trumpeter and College Captain at Stetton State College. His great-grandfather was Sunnybank RSL Sub Branch's first ever Life Member.



◀ Premier's Anzac Prize recipient Sophie Robertson is pictured at the Brisbane service with Chris Smith, the great-grandson of Lieutenant Robert Joseph Luxton, a Giru-born serviceman who served in the Boer War and died in World War I's First Battle of Bullecourt. While on the Premier's Anzac Tour, Sophie researched Luxton, who once cultivated sugar cane in her hometown and has a street named in his honour. Through Chris, she received letters and photos, deepening her connection to Luxton's legacy and his wish to teach future generations about the sacrifices of war.

Draw to **REMEMBER** 2024



FOR the third year running, children across Queensland unleashed their creative talents to commemorate Remembrance Day.

More than 14,000 children from 177 primary schools took part in RSL Queensland's Draw to Remember initiative, sketching heartfelt chalk murals to honour veterans past and present.

Volunteers from 47 RSL Sub Branches helped prepare schools for the activity, allowing students to meet and learn about remembrance from local veterans.

"Schools that participated all loved being a part of it," North Gold Coast RSL Sub Branch School Liaison Officer Matt Ardley says.

"Art is very prevalent for children in those formative years, and I think the activity generates more awareness of Remembrance Day, making sure our local schools are pausing on the day so that moment of remembrance isn't missed."



▲ Cloncurry RSL Sub Branch brought the Draw to Remember initiative to local schools, including St Joseph's Catholic School.





▲ Banyo RSL Sub Branch visited St Pius Primary School.



▲ Thomas, Jamie and Carlos from West Moreton Anglican College working on their creations. "My Dad's got medals because he's been deployed in the Air Force for 30 years now," Year 4 student Thomas says. "They are from all the overseas missions that he's done and from training some pilots. It makes me feel really happy, thinking that maybe one day I could also achieve this."



▲ Kennedy State School students proudly display their chalk drawings to Cardwell RSL Sub Branch members.



▲ Stanthorpe RSL Sub Branch brought Draw to Remember to Pozieres State School.



▲ Murgon State School students show their drawings to a member of Murgon RSL Sub Branch.



▲ Gatton RSL Sub Branch helped students from Our Lady of Good Counsel participate in the initiative.



▲ Townsville RSL Sub Branch volunteer Jason Martin and his assistance dog visited Southern Cross Catholic College for Draw to Remember.



▲ Springwood Tri Services RSL Sub Branch visited Woodridge State School for Draw to Remember. The multicultural school has students from across the globe who now call Australia home and were enthusiastic to participate in the initiative.



▲ Marian RSL Sub Branch visited North Eton State School for Draw to Remember, where 26 students participated in the initiative.



Warning: This article discusses the experiences of prisoners of war (POWs), which some readers may find confronting. If you require assistance or support, please reach out to **Open Arms – Veterans and Families Counselling** on **1800 011 046** or **Lifeline** crisis support on **13 11 14**.

HONOURING THE MEMORY OF THE SANDAKAN PRISONERS OF WAR

A recent memorial service honoured the Australian and British service men who were forced to endure the Sandakan death marches during World War II.

 **Jasmine Halley** |  **Fred Cook**

In early 1945, the Imperial Japanese Army forced more than 2,000 Australian and British prisoners of war (POWs) to trek 260km from Sandakan westward to Ranau in a series of marches, deep within the dense jungles of Borneo.

On 26 September 2024, the Naval Association of Australia Queensland Section hosted a memorial service to honour the lives of these service men and solemnly commemorate one of the most harrowing episodes of WWII.

Special guests including RSL Queensland State President Major General Stephen Day DSC AM, joined current and ex-serving Navy personnel, representatives of Navy associations and members of the community, who gathered for the service in South Brisbane's Memorial Park.

In his opening address, MAJGEN Day stressed the importance of honouring and remembering the lives of these noble service men.

"The Sandakan prisoners did not die in battle; they were tortured and then murdered," MAJGEN Day

told those in attendance.

"Sandakan was more than a part of the war between nations; it was a struggle between human decency and human depravity.

"Their horrific treatment must not be shied away from nor purposefully forgotten. It is our sacred obligation to keep the flame of remembrance for them alive."

A HORRIFYING ATROCITY

Between 1942 and 1943, Australian and British POWs that were captured during the Battle of Singapore were transported to North Borneo (Sabah) to construct a military airstrip and POW camps at Sandakan.

These POWs endured three long years in harsh conditions and were subjected to forced labour with minimal food and medical attention.

The conditions continued to deteriorate, which caused prisoners to become malnourished and endure serious illness. Many died due to these conditions or were unlawfully murdered.

By January 1945, Sandakan had been continually bombed by





the Allies, which prompted the relocation of prisoners before the Allies landed ashore. The prisoners who remained were moved westward into the mountains to Ranau over a series of marches,

covering approximately 260km.

The movement of prisoners was conducted over three phases. In each phase, prisoners were provided with fewer rations than required for the length of the

journey, causing most to collapse from exhaustion and starvation en route. These prisoners were either left behind or killed by officers.

The Sandakan marches saw the deaths of 2,434 Allied prisoners. Out of all of those incarcerated at Sandakan and Ranau, only six soldiers – all of them Australian – survived by the war's end by escaping into the jungle.

REMEMBERING THE LIVES LOST

Without those six resilient souls, we may have never discovered the fate of more than 2,000 Australian and British POWs.

Naval Association of Australia Queensland Section President Patrick Ringold OAM says the Sandakan death marches are commemorated as a solemn reminder of the sacrifices made by these brave men.

"The actions of those who endured the Sandakan death marches teach us about resilience, compassion and the enduring human spirit," Patrick says.

"These lessons remain relevant in any crisis, urging us to be better, kinder and more resilient individuals." ←

OPENING IMAGE:

Naval Association of Australia Queensland Section Vice President and Ceremonial Rudi Bianchi speaking at the service.

LEFT:

Wreaths were laid by current and ex-serving Navy personnel, representatives of Navy associations and members of the Defence community.

BELOW:

Pictured at the commemoration, from left, Lieutenant Madeleine Kinnear, RSL Queensland State President MAJGEN Stephen Day DSC AM, Petty Officer Gabi Ryan and Naval Association of Australia Queensland Section President Patrick Ringold OAM.



A sunset scene over a beach. The sky is a mix of blue, orange, and yellow. The ocean has gentle waves. A large, colorful circle, resembling a sun or moon, is on the right side of the image. The text 'DREAM HOME Art Union' is overlaid on the sky.

DREAM HOME

Art Union

**Returning to our beginnings in support
of veterans and their families**

RSL Queensland is proud to announce that the RSL Art Union is embracing a name that reflects our rich history and enduring mission: Dream Home Art Union, proudly RSL Queensland.



Proudly RSL QLD since 1956

THIS is more than just a return to our beginnings – it's a recommitment to the values that have guided us since 1956.

"At the heart of the Dream Home Art Union is our commitment to supporting veterans and their families," RSL Queensland CEO Rob Skoda says.

"Every ticket sold offers more than a chance to win a dream home; it directly funds programs that provide advocacy, employment

and wellbeing services for veterans and their families."

These initiatives help veterans transition to civilian life, ensuring they receive the care, respect and opportunities they deserve.

A LEGACY OF CHANGING LIVES

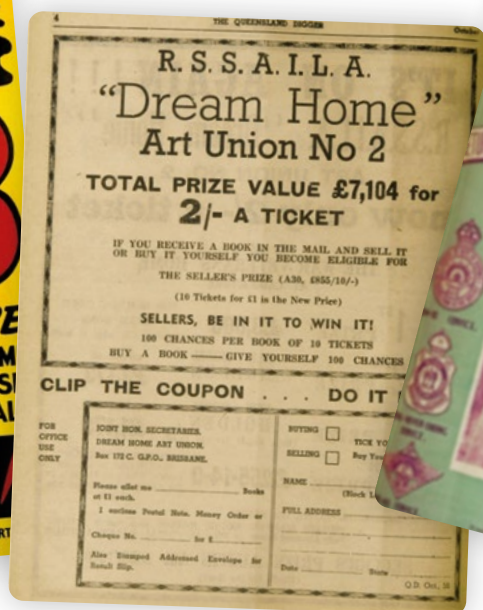
Since our inception, we've grown to offer Australia's most substantial prize home line-up. In 2024 alone, more than \$50 million in prizes was awarded, with even

more on the horizon for 2025.

However, the Art Union's true impact goes beyond the prizes – these lotteries have supported veterans and their families for nearly seven decades.

"Year after year, our Art Union continues to deliver incredible prizes to the community and changes lives in doing so," Rob says.

Our story began in the spirit of mateship, born from the need to support veterans facing immense



ABOVE:
Dream Home Art Union is returning to its beginnings, as highlighted by these historical advertisements unearthed from the archives.

challenges after World War I.

In 1956, the first Dream Home Art Union was created as a sustainable way to fundraise for RSL Queensland and provide ongoing support to those who served.

Now, 68 years later, we are proud to return to that original name – a name that symbolises our

commitment to both our winners and the veteran community we serve.

"The idea of the Dream Home Art Union isn't new – we are going back to our roots," Rob explains.

"We are now the size and scale that it really is a dream come true to win the Dream Home Art Union.





And we want to make them more beautiful, with even bigger prizes in even better locations."

HOW THE ART UNION HELPS VETERANS

The Dream Home Art Union has always been more than a prize home lottery; it's a legacy of giving back. While our name is changing, our mission remains the same: to offer life-changing opportunities through our prize homes while continuing to support veterans and their families.

"What we offer our customers is more than just a prize home, it is a life-changing prize and that can be 'their Dream Home,' and in turn we are able to help support and improve the lives of veterans and

their families across Queensland and nationally," Rob says.

"What better way to kick off the Dream Home Art Union than with our biggest prize yet, proudly launching a \$13 million 'Dream Home' apartment complex in Palm Beach on the Gold Coast as Australia's largest ever prize home on offer."

Proceeds from every ticket sold in the Dream Home Art Union go towards a range of support services and programs delivered by RSL Queensland.

In 2023, RSL Queensland delivered \$25 million in social and community services that directly engaged with veterans and their families in Queensland, with many

accessible by interstate veterans.

It also expended \$17.7 million in donations and sponsorships appropriate to our charitable Objects, which provided support and direct relief to veterans and their families.

As we move forward under the banner of Dream Home Art Union, proudly RSL Queensland, we do so with deep gratitude for our customers. Their participation enables us to make a lasting difference in the lives of those who have served our country.

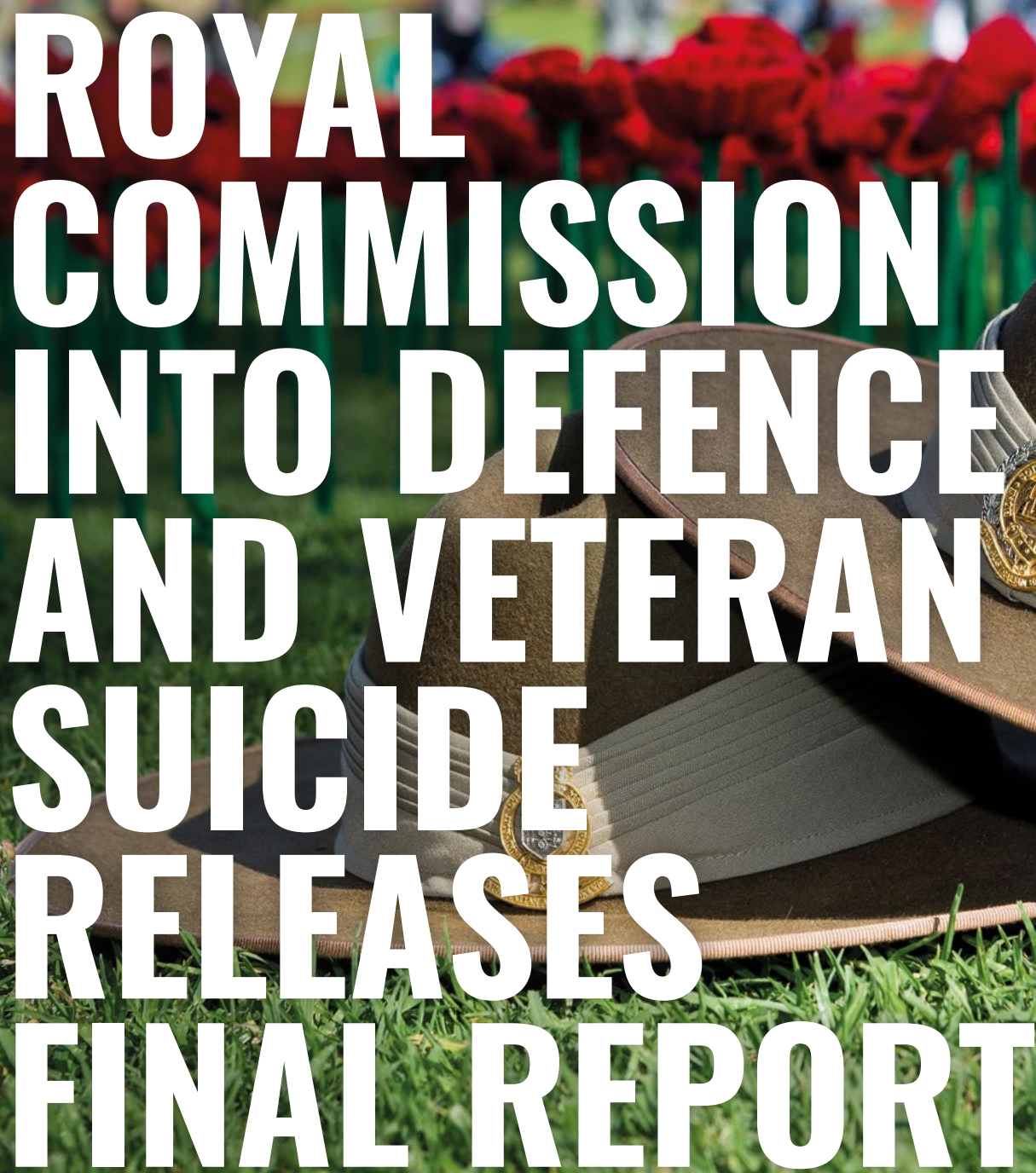
Together, we will continue to set the standard for prize homes while upholding the proud tradition of supporting veterans and their families. ←

ABOVE:

For the lucky winners, Dream Home Art Union is a life-changing experience.

OPPOSITE PAGE

Proceeds from every ticket sold in the Dream Home Art Union go towards a range of support services and programs delivered by RSL Queensland.



ROYAL COMMISSION INTO DEFENCE AND VETERAN SUICIDE RELEASES FINAL REPORT

RSL Queensland has undertaken a detailed analysis of the final report from the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide, which was handed down on 9 September.



he Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide was established in July

2021 to inquire and

investigate systemic issues and identify themes among Defence and veteran deaths by suicide, including risk factors before, during and after service in the Australian Defence Force. It provided a

significant opportunity for brave veterans and families to share their experiences and be heard.

RSL Queensland engaged with the Royal Commission every step of the way, working in collaboration with state and territory RSL branches and through the national branch, RSL Australia.

The final report is now available online, together with high-level

summaries provided by the Royal Commission.

Commission Chair Nick Kaldas described the report as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to save veterans' lives.

"Australia cannot afford for this Royal Commission's Final Report to end up on a shelf gathering dust," Commissioner Kaldas warned. He pointed to a "catastrophic



(Photo: LSIS Kylie Jagiello/Department of Defence)

failure of leadership at all levels” to prioritise the wellbeing of serving and ex-serving ADF members and urged immediate action.

The Australian Government is currently preparing its response to the report, which has been presented in seven volumes, with 122 recommendations focused on reducing Defence and veteran suicide.

HOW THE REPORT RELATES TO THE LEAGUE, VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES

As we await the government’s response, RSL Queensland has

undertaken a detailed analysis of the final report and considered those recommendations we believe are of particular interest to the League, veterans and their families.

It’s important to remember that this Royal Commission inquiry looked at the factors and settings that may contribute to death by suicide. While the findings are serious, they do not reflect the experience of every current or former serving member or their family. The majority of veterans transition well into civilian workplaces and communities, and continue to make invaluable social and economic contributions to our state and nation.

RSL Queensland Deputy CEO – Veteran Services Troy Watson says: “There is an urgency to this action, but also a reality that we must use what we now know to effect and sustain changes, and continue to strengthen the health and wellbeing of current and former ADF members now and into the future. RSL Queensland remains committed to amplifying the voices of veterans and their families to ensure they inform the work that is ahead of us.”

HOW WE CAN WORK TOGETHER

RSL Queensland is well-positioned to inform the Australian Government’s consideration of many of the recommendations and is planning a series of stakeholder communications and engagements to brief them about RSL’s capability to support the Government’s response.

Several of the recommendations highlighted in our analysis are of particular interest to the League because of the possibility to deliver systemic change for veterans and their families post-service and because RSL Queensland has the capability to help the Australian Government

implement the recommendations.

“The findings of the Royal Commission’s report are sobering and highlight the profound impact suicide has had, and continues to have, on our Defence and veteran community,” RSL Queensland State President Major General Stephen Day DSC AM says.

“While alarming, I believe the final report has provided some recommendations that, if they are implemented, will improve the transition experience and in turn reduce the rate of suicide in the veteran community.”

To read our analysis of the final report, see the link in the breakout box below.

In the coming weeks, RSL Queensland will work with our State counterparts, our National Office and stakeholders to refine our position on the recommendations we’ve identified in our analysis as important to our community. We will continue to share updates with members in due course. ←

SUPPORT AND IMPORTANT LINKS

If you require assistance or support, please reach out to Open Arms – Veterans and Families Counselling on 1800 011 046 or Lifeline crisis support on 13 11 14.

Final report of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide:
defenceveteransuicide.royalcommission.gov.au

RSL Queensland’s analysis of the final report:



SCAN TO VIEW ANALYSIS

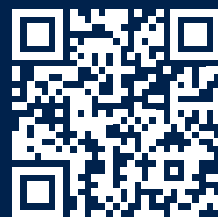
INTERFET 25th ANNIVERSARY

— 20 September 2024 —

25th anniversary of Australian service in Timor-Leste

This year marked the 25th anniversary of the beginning of Australian service in Timor-Leste (formerly East Timor), which ultimately spanned 14 years and multiple operations. From 1999 to 2013, some 18,800 Australian military and police personnel – and additional civilians – were deployed to Timor-Leste to serve as part of multinational peacemaking, peacekeeping and humanitarian operations. On 20 September 2024, we honoured those who served in Timor-Leste, and the sacrifice of their families.

SCAN TO READ MORE





A STORY OF HEALING, RECONNECTION AND RENEWAL

Major Guy Warnock reflects on his time serving in Timor-Leste and the skills he learned through the Timor Awakening Gold Coast Program.

 **Jasmine Halley**

THOUGH INTERFET was one of his most confronting deployments, Guy planned to return to Timor-Leste for a fourth time to commemorate the 25th anniversary of INTERFET.

SUPPORT TO THE RESCUE

At 18 years old, Guy joined the Regular Army then spent the next 36 years in infantry. Over the course of his career, he served in an infantry battalion, the Special Air Service Regiment (SAS), and as a training

instructor with the Special Forces. As a Commissioned Officer, he was posted across Australia to oversee infantry training and development, later deploying overseas as a Commando and spending three years as a squadron commander in The Pilbara Regiment.

"In that time, I've also been deployed on several operations, including two to Timor-Leste with INTERFET and later the UN," Guy says.

"The first time was for five

months in late 1999, when I was in the SAS. We were part of General Cosgrove's strategic reserve: RESPFOR, or the Response Force. Our role was to provide the immediate reconnaissance force for the peacemaking mission in Sector West along the northern part of the Indonesian border, which was the Australian area of operations.

"We also covered areas much further south, where other INTERFET units had yet to visit, to employ our specialist driving skills to bypass landslides and destroyed bridges.

"Basically, we were a ready force that was equipped with strategic long-range communications. We had extra medical training, special equipment and skills, like our own linguists, that allowed us to deploy in the field for long periods of time without the support of anyone else."

His first deployment to Timor-Leste was one of the hardest postings Guy had ever experienced in his career. He arrived amidst tough, warlike conditions with the mission to prevent the militia from disrupting the peace process of

ABOVE:
Foot patrol in Bazartete, East Timor.

OPPOSITE PAGE:
Clayfield-Toombul RSL Sub Branch held a service to commemorate the Timor-Leste anniversary.



ABOVE:
Guy meeting
with Joshua's
family in 2003.

BELOW RIGHT:
INTERFET
officials meeting
with locals in
Bazartete, East
Timor.

the United Nations, which was supporting East Timor becoming a sovereign nation.

"It was physically demanding and relentless in its execution. We'd be working days, weeks on end in the field in tough, mountainous terrain, and jungle conditions during the wet season," Guy recalls.

"But the local people were still being terrorised and harassed by the militia. It was devastating to see whole villages destroyed or burnt. As there was limited UN police presence, they needed the additional support of our patrols observing the border to stop more militia crossing over.

"One of my most memorable moments was when I helped deliver a baby boy, Joshua. The situation was still dire, but I remember the father rushing to us looking for a doctor and assistance. We arrived just in time. In many ways it felt quite symbolic: new life being born into a new, liberated country. It was truly impactful.

"The locals were tough; sometimes they would be fighting off the militia themselves with bamboo poles. But they were always so happy and appreciative of our support. They were truly

happy people despite all the atrocities they endured. It made me want to go back."

Guy returned for six months in 2003 for a second mission to support the peacekeeping efforts of the United Nations Headquarters. This time, the conditions were a lot more peaceful.

"Our duties that time included a lot of infrastructure repair and general support for the Timorese. I was truly impressed, once more, by the incredible people. It was so fascinating to see how they lived

and how they had moved on," Guy remembers.

"I was so inspired by the locals and their way of life that I wanted to go back to Timor-Leste again for a third time, but actually be posted there rather than deployed for a mission. So almost 20 years later, when I had the opportunity to do a Tetun language course and take a posting there as a military advisor, I took it."

AN AWAKENING EXPERIENCE

Guy was posted to Timor-Leste for three years as part of the Defence Corporation Program. That's when he came across Veterans Care Associations' Timor Awakening Program.

"We provided some logistic support to the program during my time there, but what I remember most was witnessing the amazing transformation of the people who participated in the program.

"To see these people – many who had mixed feelings about returning to the country due to the trauma they endured – come away from the experience visibly lifted, made me realise how impactful Timor Awakening's peer-led support is. It made me reflect on how we deliver support to veterans in general.





"To see this program get people up and about in a positive, supportive environment made me reflect on what is truly effective to someone who may not be in a good space."

When Guy returned home from Timor-Leste, he was invited to participate in Timor Awakening's Gold Coast program.

"At the time I didn't think I needed any support, but I realise now that I, like many others, was operating at such a level of stress that it had become my norm and was in fact impacting my life.

"The program showed me that there are some simple strategies you can implement to improve your general health, mental health and relationships. For me these were life-changing – but for many, these were life-saving.

"I especially liked how the program was peer-led and not run by scientists or doctors; it was a supportive group of people who all shared similar lived experiences."

Guy says it was encouraging and validating to listen to other members' experiences and witness them overcome their troubles.

"A particular part that stood out for me was hearing some of

the veterans – who were initially diminishing their service because they had not been deployed – overcome their self-doubt and realise that their service was just as valuable as that of those who had been deployed.

"It was wonderful to learn about the many simple strategies you can use to make you more aware of your wellbeing. In the military you tend to focus on the organisation – like the platoon or your particular ship's department – rather than you as the individual; this experience allowed me to focus on myself and become an active participant in my own recovery.

"I definitely left the program feeling more energised and connected with myself, my family and my communities.

"The program also gave me an insight into what I need to put in place before I transition out of the Defence Force, whenever that may be. Timor Awakening has prepared me for this eventuality, and it is no longer daunting."

In September this year, Guy planned to return to Timor-Leste to commemorate the 25th anniversary of INTERFET's deployment, and hoped to

reconnect with the now 24-year-old Joshua.

"I'm excited at the thought of returning to find Joshua's village. I'd like to think he won't be there but in university in Dili, and I'm a bit nervous thinking about if he is OK... it will be interesting to see how his life has changed since the last time I saw him," Guy says.

Guy further reiterates the importance of commemorating Australia's peacemaking and peacekeeping operations.

"We can't underestimate how impactful Australia's contribution has been to peacekeeping in our world history; it should not be thought of as a less significant form of service," Guy explains.

"Australia's involvement in peacekeeping operations around the world has been truly life-changing to those affected. In many cases, those people we've been fortunate enough to assist can now go on and live a life of peace, free of war. We should feel honoured to have been able to provide them with this new way of life.

"For us, it might have been a few tough months we had to endure away from our families, but to them, it was the start of the rest of their lives in safety." ←

ABOVE:

Australian and New Zealand veterans with Timor Awakening at the site of New Zealand Army (1RNZR) WO2 Tony Walser's death.

"The locals were tough; sometimes they would be fighting off the militia themselves with bamboo poles. But they were always so happy and appreciative of our support. They were truly happy people despite all the atrocities they endured."

SERVICE, SMILES AND MINTIES



Twenty-five years on, Navy veteran Dannielle Brearley looks back at her time serving in Timor-Leste (formerly East Timor) with a newfound sense of honour and gratitude.

 **Jasmine Halley**

ABOVE:
Navy veteran
Dannielle
Brearley was
deployed to
Timor-Leste at
just 20 years old.

FINDING HER PURPOSE

Dannielle joined the Navy straight after school in 1996 and was deployed to Timor-Leste at just 20 years old.

"I'd never left home or anything like that prior to joining the Navy, so leaving was a whole new experience for me in itself," Dannielle explains.

"When we arrived on the shores of Timor-Leste and began our peacekeeping duties, it was confronting to see what the community had gone through.

"While we hadn't served on the frontline, witnessing the aftermath was still incredibly eye-opening for me. Some scenes have never left my memory."

From 1999 to 2013, some 18,800 Australian military and police personnel – and additional civilians

– served in Timor-Leste as part of a number of peacemaking, peacekeeping, humanitarian and other operations.

Among these was the International Force East Timor (INTERFET) peace enforcement operation, which deployed to Timor-Leste from 20 September 1999 to 28 February 2000.

INTERFET's mission included restoring peace and security, and facilitating humanitarian assistance operations, in response to attacks by pro-Indonesia militias on Timorese civilians.

"When I arrived, the situation was already peaceful; the guerillas were out and the UN forces were in place," Dannielle says.

"My operations would be described as 'peacekeeping'; I arrived to continue the peaceful situation in the country, ensuring the locals were able to move forward with the governance that was keeping those efforts in place."

Some of these operations included rebuilding schools and buildings, helping the community and socialising with the local children.

"It was wonderful to be able to meet the local kids; they ran at us

like we were celebrities and would always give us the biggest smiles. After everything they had gone through, everything they had lost, it was inspiring and heartwarming to see them so appreciative of us just being there," Dannielle recalls.

"I remember a bag of Minties was like gold; to us they were a \$2 bag of lollies, but to them, those lollies seemed like the best thing in the world. It made you reflect on what you value and appreciate in life, and how at times we can take the little things for granted."

Now, as a mother herself, Dannielle wishes she could go back and tell her younger self how honourable her role in Timor-Leste was and how significant her service was to those families.

"I was so young at the time; I didn't fully understand the significance of what we were doing over there – how important it was to the Timorese that we were there for them.

"When you join the military as an 18-year-old you can't quite comprehend the bigger picture. You're instead focusing on getting up every day as per your routine, passing a fitness test and things like that.

"Then when you're deployed, you just focus on completing your operation; you never fully step back to understand the important opportunity you've been given to serve your country and be a part of Australia's military history."

A NEW CHAPTER OF SUPPORT

After Dannielle discharged in 2002, she worked in property management, started a family and got her Certificate III in Business Administration before joining Bundaberg RSL Sub Branch in 2018 as an Admin Assistant.

"I had just finished maternity leave and was ready to get back into the workforce. I knew I wanted to do something in administration and then saw this assistant job



come up for Bundaberg RSL Sub Branch," Dannielle says.

"Two weeks into the role, I took the opportunity to become the Secretary and have been in this role for the last six years. I absolutely love it."

Dannielle says the people she's met and the support she's received along the way have made the role incredibly rewarding.

"Being able to share stories with veterans who find their way into the Sub Branch, and them understanding your lingo – it was like I found my happy place again," Dannielle says.

"I'm also incredibly appreciative of the support I've received from the RSL District office. The secretaries were so approachable and helpful when I was just starting out. I could rely on them for any questions or concerns I had."

Dannielle also attributes the success of Bundaberg RSL Sub Branch to its board members.

"Because our board members range in age, we're able to confidently assist any member, no matter their service history, and help them uncover the most appropriate services for their specific needs.

"It doesn't matter whether you're

young or old, or what arm of Defence you served in. All veterans are veterans; we're all a part of that same family. This idea of equality and that we're all part of the same team is instilled in you when you join the military, and should continue for the rest of your life."

As a younger veteran herself, Dannielle is passionate about inspiring the next generations of veterans to reach out and get involved with the RSL, whether it be utilising the services available or simply enjoying the camaraderie at their local Sub Branch.

"Having the time to join and visit an RSL Sub Branch is definitely a barrier of entry for most younger veterans. Like myself, they struggle with the fact that they're busy with their lives and work.

"But, by the same token, we want to encourage the younger veterans in our area to come through our doors, to assure them that they are not alone and that there are services available that they might not have known they needed."

Bundaberg RSL Sub Branch offers a variety of services for all veterans, as well as a veteran support centre.

"We offer financial assistance, counselling services, wellbeing

services... we also run a veteran support centre, which has an open-door policy. If they want to call in to just sit down, enjoy a cuppa and be left alone, they're more than welcome to," Dannielle explains.

"We also have advocates willing to assist, like our Compensation Advocate Lex Roberts. He's working closely with the advocates at Legacy, who have connections with local companies that can provide veterans with the support they need, not just through DVA.

"It's all about finding the need, meeting it, and providing a place that they can all come together." ←

ABOVE:
Navy veteran
Dannielle
Brearley served
on HMAS
Newcastle.



YouTube



SCAN TO WATCH VIDEO

PENTHOUSE | LIVING



PENTHOUSE | BALCONY



APARTMENT 3 | DINING



APARTMENT 2 | LIVING



APARTMENT 1 | KITCHEN



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**DREAM
HOME**
Art Union



Proudly
RSL QLD
since 1956

VIETNAM VETERANS' DAY

18 August

RECOGNISING THE LEGACY OF OUR VIETNAM VETERANS

On 18 August, communities across Queensland marked Vietnam Veterans' Day. More than 60,000 Australians served in Vietnam from 1962 to 1973, with some returning for humanitarian operations in 1975. Sadly, 523 died, some 3,000 were evacuated with wounds, injuries or illnesses, and – amidst strong community opposition to the war – many who returned home were not treated with the respect and honour they deserved. Vietnam Veterans' Day is a chance for us all to recognise the service and sacrifice of Vietnam veterans – a legacy that many have continued out of uniform as dedicated community leaders and volunteers.



FROM BATTLEFIELD TO COMMUNITY: VIETNAM VETERANS REFLECT ON A LEGACY FORGED IN FIRE

Belinda Crossman

MONTHS after surviving the Battle of Long Tan, bombardier John Burns arrived safely home. But to him, the Vietnam War was unfinished business.

"I thought we had a lot more to do and I wanted to do my part as well," he says.

So, John signed up for a second tour, returning to Vietnam in 1968 with 102 Battery, Royal Australian Artillery.

Arriving in Ba Ria, he was confronted by the once-familiar sight of a theatre building – formerly a hub of civilian life – now scarred by 50-calibre bullet holes.

"I'd also heard that some of the elders had been killed by the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) and Viet Cong (VC), and I thought, nobody should put up with that," he says. "It reinforced why I came back to help free these people."



YouTube



SCAN TO WATCH VIDEO



THE BATTLE OF CORAL-BALMORAL BEGINS

Weeks later, John faced another battle that would go down in history: the Battle of Coral-Balmoral.

On 12 May 1968, Australian and New Zealand forces set up Fire Support Base (FSB) Coral to help thwart enemy troops approaching or withdrawing from Saigon.

"Our picket post was still being dug in the dark. We heard someone creeping around, but we didn't see them," John recalls.

"I did my shift and dozed off. Next thing I heard this 'bang, bang'."

He instantly recognised the sound of mortars and rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs).

"It's one of the most frightening sounds. You can hear mortars coming in, because it sounds like it's right above and about to drop on your head.

"It was terrifying because we didn't know what was happening. It was pitch black."

Early on 13 May, North Vietnamese ground forces attacked FSB Coral in strength.

Australian artillerymen, mortarmen and machine gunners came under intense fire. Two of their positions were overrun, and one gun was put out of action.

"It was dawn the next morning when the NVA pulled out," he says.

"We got hit the second night, but everything was ready. It just started and next thing I knew, the sky was full of gunships."

CENTURIONS TO THE DEFENCE

Army vehicle mechanic Des Kearton was deployed to Vietnam with the 1st Independent Armoured Squadron Workshop, Royal Australian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers.

Just a few months after Des received a head wound on Operation Pinnaroo, his unit was ordered to reinforce FSB Coral.

On 26 May, both FSB Coral and newly established FSB Balmoral were bombarded by mortars and RPGs. The tables were turned when Centurion tanks from 1 Troop, C Squadron, along with D Company, 1RAR, attacked the NVA's hiding spot.

"The enemy were hiding in B-52 bomb craters and bunkers around that area, so that's where we had to get the tanks in to clear them out. Every type of round they had – armoured piercing rounds, machine guns – got used," Des explains.

"Before '68, the infantry was just relying on armoured personnel carriers for defence and things like that. But when the Centurion tanks arrived, they saved a heck of a lot of lives."

The battles around FSBs Coral and Balmoral lasted until 6 June 1968. Twenty-five Australians and at least 300 North Vietnamese lost their lives, and many more were wounded.

AFTER THE WAR

Like many Vietnam veterans, John and Des returned home to face not just the after-effects of the war, but also the anger of anti-war protesters.

"We couldn't wear uniform outside our Army unit area because protesters would attack you," Des explains.

"It shocked me to see people getting violent over something that was out of our control," John adds.

"I could understand that nobody wants to see their son go to war and maybe not come back. But I was looking at the South Vietnamese side as well and said, 'No, we have to be there.' I was glad that I'd been there."

Years after the war, John was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

"I don't think a day goes by that I don't have flashbacks to Coral and Long Tan. But I've learned over the years to live with it.

"I'm happy I can share the stories with my grandkids now, which they think is great."

Des can closely relate.

"It's taken many years to come back to Earth and be part of the community," he says. "I hope people don't have the same experience in future."

HEALING THROUGH HELPING

Since leaving the Army, both John and Des have spent decades helping others – John as President of the Disabilities Ten-Pin Bowling Tryers League in Capalaba, and Des as a welfare pension officer, counsellor and (funeral) poppy service conductor for RSL Sub Branches on the Sunshine Coast and in Brisbane.

"I've realised that helping other people with their problems is great therapy," John says. "I've got a great deal of pleasure from working with the Tryers League. It's relieved a lot of the pressure that was built up in me."

"Helping other Vietnam veterans certainly helped me as well as them," Des adds. "I've seen these veterans leading organisations and Sub Branches now, so it's worked out very well. I'm very proud of what I've done to help."

Both John and Des see Vietnam veterans as a positive influence within RSL Sub Branches, with a big role to play in supporting younger veterans.

"It is a very big step to get out of the military. I was lost for a couple of years," John says.

"I think if we can talk to the younger guys – if they want to listen – and put 'em on tracks, that could help them.

"I'd tell them to just get involved with different things. Don't be afraid to go to reunions and talk about things that have bothered you. The pressure will ease, and you'll be more of a human than you would keeping it bottled up."

"WE'RE ALL ONE"

Vietnam Veterans' Day means a great deal to John and Des.

"It's a day that we can all come together and support each other, and remember mates who have died," Des explains.

"The ANZAC spirit was really alive in Vietnam, and I was so proud to be part of it," John reflects.

"As we've learned, we're all one Army and we need each other to survive.

"It's great on Vietnam Veterans' Day and ANZAC Day to walk into a pub or club and it's full of veterans from all corps, but we're all one, and you've all got your own stories to tell.

"I love it. It's something that really needs to keep on going." ←

OPPOSITE PAGE:

Vietnam veterans Des Kearton (an Army vehicle mechanic), left, and John Burns (a bombardier).

BELOW:

Vietnam veteran John Burns.





▲ Vietnam veterans honoured in Redlands

South Eastern District President Kerry Gallagher AM served as the guest speaker at Redlands RSL Sub Branch's Vietnam Veterans' Day service on Sunday 18 August. His heartfelt address resonated with those in attendance, especially when he honoured the Vietnam veterans from the Redlands area who were tragically killed in action.

▼ Vietnam Veterans' Day in Cardwell

Cardwell RSL Sub Branch's Vietnam Veterans' Day service. Pictured from left, are Robert Lang, Garry Hanson, Ken Winkley and Councillor Chris Littlemore from Cassowary Coast Regional Council.



▲ Service at Kokoda Barracks

Canungra RSL Sub Branch and the Kokoda Youth Foundation organised the inaugural Vietnam Veterans' Commemorative Day at the newly relocated Vietnam Veterans' Memorial at Kokoda Barracks. Veterans are pictured in front of the memorial.



▲ Cairns launches new documentary

Cairns RSL Sub Branch has released a documentary commemorating the 50th anniversary of the end of Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War. The documentary features the heartfelt stories of 14 Vietnam veterans and their families from across the Far Northern District, each sharing their unique experiences from their time in Vietnam. These personal accounts offer invaluable insights into the bravery, sacrifices and challenges faced by these veterans. The project was made possible through a DVA Saluting Their Service grant, along with the work of Studio Productions and the Cairns RSL Sub Branch. The documentary was launched on 9 August at Cairns Performing Arts Centre and can now be viewed online on Cairns RSL Sub Branch's YouTube channel. Three of the Vietnam veterans who feature in the documentary were pictured at the launch, from left, Lieutenant Colonel Colin Toll (Retd), Lieutenant Colonel Kel Ryan (Retd) and Colonel Peter Sibree AM MG (Retd).



▲ Hervey Bay pays its respects

Hervey Bay RSL Sub Branch President and Vietnam veteran Brian Tidyman proudly led the Vietnam Veterans' Day service at the cenotaph in Freedom Park. This year marks the first time this century that the Sub Branch has hosted the service, which was followed by a function at the club afterwards. The Sub Branch expressed appreciation to those who travelled to attend the service, together with 9RQR catafalque party, Chaplain Jeff Jarvis, bugler Geoff Harper and Hervey Bay RSL Pipe Band piper Duncan Birt.



▲ ANZAC Square service

John Burns was guest speaker at the Vietnam Veterans' Day ceremony at ANZAC Square in Brisbane. John is a proud First Nations man and the only Australian artilleryman to have served at both the Battle of Long Tan (1966) and the Battle of Coral & Balmoral (1968).



▲ Service honours sacrifice and courage

Rosewood RSL Sub Branch held a service to remember the sacrifice and courage of local Vietnam veterans on 17 August. Vietnam veterans who attended the commemorative service are pictured.



▲ Woodgate honours Vietnam veterans

Woodgate Beach RSL Sub Branch President Lex McKay is pictured with fellow Vietnam veterans at a commemorative service that was well attended by locals and visitors.



▼ Vietnam Veterans' Day in Miles

Miles RSL Sub Branch member and Vietnam veteran Roger Wickham, speaking at the Miles Vietnam Veterans' Day commemorative service on 18 August.



▼ Forest Lake honours Vietnam veterans

"After 54 years, this is the first time I have felt a heartfelt welcome home and thanks for our service," commented a Vietnam veteran at Forest Lake RSL Sub Branch's Vietnam Veterans' Day service. Approximately 70 members and their families attended the service in the Wacol Military Museum chapel, followed by a barbecue and cake in the clubhouse.



▲ Soil sample honours Long Tan

Former Army engineer Jim Straker has donated a memento of the Battle of Long Tan to Maleny RSL Sub Branch, recognising the importance of remembering those who have sacrificed in conflict. Although Jim was still in training during the 1966 battle, he later served in Vietnam and, in 2001, visited the Long Tan site with his wife, Kim, where they collected a soil sample from beneath the memorial cross. Now housed in the Maleny RSL, this soil serves as a powerful symbol of the courage and resilience demonstrated by Australian soldiers, ensuring their legacy is honoured and remembered. Jim Straker is pictured donating the soil sample to Chris Brooker from Maleny RSL Sub Branch. The full article originally appeared in the September 2024 issue of the Hinterland Times. Image: Judy Fredriksen, Hinterland Times.



105 years of dedication

GOONDIWINDI RSL SUB BRANCH MARKS ITS COMMITMENT TO VETERANS

For over a century, Goondiwindi RSL Sub Branch has been supporting local veterans and their families in their rural country town.

 **Olivia Lawrence**



Mayor Lawrence Springborg and Goondiwindi RSL Sub Branch President Bill Brasington cutting the cake at the anniversary event.

REFLECTING on their 105th anniversary this year, Goondiwindi RSL Sub Branch President Bill Brassington says the group is taking this time to celebrate their successes and the role the Sub Branch plays in the local community, while also looking towards the future.

"I've been President of the Sub Branch for four years now and I just admire the camaraderie we have within our membership and our small town," Bill says.

"I think we have the best community; the town is always there to help us with our initiatives or ideas, and we strive to help them in any way we can too.

"This anniversary represents a special milestone, and we hope the Sub Branch sees another 100 years supporting the community."

FOSTERING CARE, COMMEMORATION AND CAMARADERIE

Goondiwindi RSL Sub Branch is proud to operate its own military museum, which includes memorabilia from World War I through to more recent conflicts. With an influx of monuments

coming through the door, the Sub Branch recently secured a grant to expand the space.

"It's great to have a place where local veterans and their families can display treasured items," Bill says.

"The museum is also a space where veterans can come for a cup of tea, and the community is also encouraged to stop by to view the different memorabilia."

Along with cultivating connections between veterans and the community, Bill says the Sub Branch places an emphasis on providing wellbeing support to its 45 members.

"We have a combination of younger and older veterans within our Sub Branch so the needs of our members can vary," Bill explains.

"For example, a lot of our younger veterans served in Afghanistan, Iraq and Timor and some are unfortunately dealing with PTSD, so having our advocates connect them with the right services is one area of support we offer."

Driven by a strong commitment to providing care and support for local veterans, Bill says the Sub



Goondiwindi on ANZAC Day.

Branch also prioritises organising commemorative services throughout the year – ANZAC Day in particular brings large crowds, with upwards of 3,000 people.

"The Sub Branch prepares almost a year in advance and we work as a team by delegating tasks to each member so everyone can contribute and the commemoration runs smoothly."

HONOURING VETERANS

For the past three years, the Sub Branch has been involved in a grave dedication project for their local cemetery. Bill says the project holds great significance as they work to identify and honour the veterans' final resting place.

"We have enacted 19 headstones and plaques so far. There are around 360 veterans buried in this cemetery from various wars and conflicts, so it's important to us to make sure everyone is recognised and honoured," Bill explains.

In addition to this important

"I think we have the best community; the town is always there to help us with our initiatives or ideas, and we strive to help them in any way we can too."

project, Goondiwindi RSL Sub Branch is currently in the midst of implementing a new sandstone pillar memorial for the nearby town of Toobeah. Bill says the monument is scheduled to be ready before the end of 2024.

"The memorial honours four veterans from Toobeah who served in World Wars I and II.



"Not only did we want to acknowledge the service of local veterans, but we wanted to give residents a peaceful place of reflection where they too could pay their respects to our service people – both past and present." ←

ABOVE: Western District President Dennis Pollard speaking at the anniversary event.

A QUIET PLACE FOR REFLECTION

42nd 42

MEMORIAL GARDEN

Located behind Suncorp Stadium in Brisbane, the 42 for 42 Memorial Garden is a quiet place that honours those who have fallen during and after the Afghanistan conflict – but the commemorative space is much more than a place of reflection.

 *Jasmine Halley* |  *Matilda Dray*

42 for 42 President Sean Mulqueen and Redlands RSL Sub Branch Deputy President Ian Gray chat in the memorial garden.

FROM what started as a few mates wanting to honour those affected by the war in Afghanistan, 42 for 42 has grown into a veteran-initiated community that provides guidance, support and commemoration. The organisation honours the 41 Australian veterans who were killed in Afghanistan, those who died in training or took their own lives after serving in Afghanistan (collectively represented by the '42nd'), and their families.

42 for 42 President Sean Mulqueen says the organisation came about after the success of his first fundraiser at Suncorp Stadium in November 2016, the 42-Hour Challenge.

"The 42-Hour Challenge created an opportunity for everyone affected by the Afghanistan conflict to get together and meet. There was a real sense of community on the day," Sean says.



Redlands RSL Sub Branch Deputy President Ian Gray, left, and 42 for 42 President Sean Mulqueen.





If you need support, please reach out to **Open Arms** – Veterans and Families Counselling on **1800 011 046** or **Lifeline** crisis support on **13 11 14**.



CAPTION:
The garden features plaques dedicated to the fallen soldiers, each with a QR code that links to a biography lovingly written by family members, sharing personal stories of who they were.

"We created something unique and special that day and from there decided to continue building a community around us to support the families of the fallen and educate those who wanted to learn more about their service."

Shortly after the organisation was officially established, work towards building a memorial garden began.

"After the challenge, we wanted to create an official, lasting space that honoured and shared the stories of those who lost their life in Afghanistan and those who lost their life to suicide or pre-deployment training – a space where people and families could come together to reflect and learn about their sacrifice," Sean explains.

He says that it was important to him that the commemorative space also captured more personal details of the fallen.

"We asked the families of the fallen to write their loved one's bio for their plaques. We wanted them to include stories about who they were as a person – mate and soldier – not just their service history.

"We wanted to educate the people who visit that these were ordinary Australians who put on a uniform to serve their country."

Veterans and families had a hand in every aspect of the garden's creation, including the architectural design, landscaping, mural and construction.

"I thought it was a great opportunity to get veterans and their families involved so they could grieve but also pay their respects to those who had fallen. I wanted to ensure they felt a part of this project," Sean says.

"One of the uncles of the 41 fallen was our project manager, the landscape architect had done three tours of Afghanistan with the Special Forces, and even the mural artist had done artwork for veterans and Defence bases."

The construction process of the memorial garden took more than 14 working bees with volunteers from a variety of schools, organisations and community groups, including

Redlands RSL Sub Branch, coming together.

"Every part of the build – the shovelling, planting, etc. – was done by veterans, families or anyone who wanted to get involved in these weekend working bees. We would normally set up a barbecue and make a morning out of it, which is where Redlands RSL Sub Branch helped us out a lot," Sean says.

"They've always been supportive of our organisation from the beginning, whether it be helping out at the working bees, attending our Annual Luncheons or events, or just being there to lend a hand or assistance if we needed some help.

"There's a trust between our organisations; we know they're always there to support us without forcing anything."

Redlands RSL Sub Branch Deputy President Ian Gray says it was important to him that the Sub Branch supported the development of this garden.

"We take pride in how we support our fellow veteran community, and truly believe in the great cause 42 for 42 aspires to fulfil," Ian says.

"From their first Annual Luncheon in 2018, to the official opening of the memorial garden and beyond, we've made sure to always continue showing our support in whatever way we could."

While Redlands RSL Sub Branch continues to organise tours of the memorial garden for Sub Branch members, the space is also open for the public to visit, reflect and learn more about the Afghanistan conflict and those who lost their lives. 42 for 42 also offers tours of the space for groups of 10 or more.

"The garden was designed for all those who served; it's a place for people to reflect and educate themselves on the sacrifices made during the Afghanistan conflict," Sean says. ←

For more information on the 42 for 42 Memorial Garden, visit 42for42.org.au/the-memorial





MATES **4** MATES

THE QUARTERLY MAGAZINE
FOR OUR DEFENCE COMMUNITY

A snapshot of 2024.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE LAST 12 MONTHS
SUPPORTING VETERANS AND FAMILIES.

+ **UNVEILING OUR ABORIGINAL AND
TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER ARTWORK.**
HOW A LOCAL INDIGENOUS ARTIST AND VETERAN
BROUGHT THE LOCAL COMMUNITY TOGETHER.

Support your physical health these holidays.

HOW TO KEEP A BALANCE BETWEEN REST AND
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY.

+ **WALKING AROUND AUSTRALIA FOR VETERANS.**
A VETERAN'S STORY OF RAISING MONEY AND AWARENESS
ALONGSIDE HIS SERVICE DOG.



A message from Emma.

As we take the time to look back on 2024, it has been a year that has highlighted significant change and impact for both Mates4Mates and the Defence community.

I had the privilege of being a member of the stakeholder reference group for the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide and Mates4Mates provided both witness testimony and written submissions to the Commission over its three-year inquiry. In September of this year, the final report was handed down and tabled in Parliament following almost 6,000 submissions from current and ex-serving personnel and family members, and testimonies from hundreds of witnesses over the past three years.

The final report contains 122 recommendations to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for current-serving and ex-serving Defence Force personnel and to save lives. From all of us at Mates4Mates, we would like to extend our deepest appreciation for all those who came forward to submit evidence in this Royal Commission, and we hope to see change actioned moving forward.

Alongside this milestone in Australian Defence history, Mates4Mates celebrated the opening of a new Centre on the Sunshine Coast and the first birthday of the RSL Queensland Veteran & Family Wellbeing Centre in Stafford, Brisbane. I've had the pleasure of leading Mates4Mates through a growth period in 2023 and 2024, with expansion of our geographical reach and increases in clinical services available to the veteran community.

This has included introducing physiotherapy to Mates4Mates physical rehabilitation and wellbeing services and increasing our mental health support in Centre and via telehealth. Read more about this boost in services on page 3.

In September, Mates4Mates had the honour of hosting General Sir Peter Cosgrove, AK, CVO, MC, members of the Defence and veteran community, and other distinguished guests in the Northern Territory for an afternoon tea in acknowledgement of the 25th anniversary of the International Force East Timor (INTERFET). It was brilliant to see the Defence community come together at our Centre in Darwin to commemorate INTERFET and its impact.

Finally, I would like wish everyone a safe and happy holiday season. I acknowledge that this time of the year can be challenging for some within the Defence community, and Mates4Mates is here to provide support alongside other services including Open Arms and Lifeline. I look forward to seeing you all in the new year.

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**



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.

Where to find support.

All Mates4Mates centres will be closed from end of day on Tuesday, 24 December 2024 to Wednesday, 1 January 2025, re-opening on Thursday, 2 January 2025. If you need support over the holiday period, there are many organisations that offer 24-hour support:

Open Arms
1800 011 046

Lifeline
13 11 14

Suicide Call Back Service
1300 659 467

Expanding clinical services across Australia.

This year at Mates4Mates, we increased our clinical services offerings and grew our team of clinicians.

As Mates4Mates continues to support the veteran community to reconnect and recover, we expanded our physical rehabilitation and wellbeing services to introduce physiotherapy.

Alongside our exercise physiologists, our physiotherapists can support you in restoring and maintaining your physical function and mobility to aid in recovery from injuries, manage chronic conditions, and improve overall quality of life. You can now access

Mates4Mates physiotherapy services in Brisbane and on the Sunshine Coast.

In a boost to our mental health and wellbeing services, we also increased our team of psychologists in 2024, with new psychologists joining the team in Brisbane, the Northern Territory, Townsville, and the Sunshine Coast.

All Mates4Mates clinicians are available for appointments both in person and online via telehealth, where eligible.

To find out how the Mates4Mates clinical team can support you with your physical and mental health, contact us for a confidential chat on **1300 4 MATES (62 837)**.

Unveiling our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artwork.

The Mates4Mates Townsville community came together earlier this year during NAIDOC Week to unveil a commissioned piece of artwork by local Indigenous artist, Chris Gray.

Chris Gray is a veteran and proud Bundjalung man who worked alongside current and ex-serving Defence Force members, family members, and Mates4Mates staff to create a beautiful piece of art that now hangs proudly inside the Mates4Mates Townsville Centre, which is located on the land of the Bindal and Wulgurukaba peoples.

Mates4Mates Townsville Liaison Officer, Coco Quirke said when he came up with the idea to have Chris and the community do a collaborative art piece, he wanted to share an incredible culture with veterans and families.

**“When that painting got unveiled,
I knew in my heart that it’d be special,
but I didn’t think it would be that special.”**

— Coco Quirke, Mates4Mates Townsville Liaison Officer



Mates4Mates Regional Manager North Queensland, Marcia Morgan said that Chris has done a wonderful job capturing the story of mateship and camaraderie in his painting.

“Opportunities like this are about uniting our community in mateship through greater education and understanding of Indigenous culture and spirit,” Marcia said.

“Mates4Mates is committed to supporting all veterans and families; our team is here to welcome anyone who is in need of support.”

The Mates4Mates Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) through Reconciliation Australia guides our reconciliation journey across the organisation, ensuring recognition of Indigenous veterans and families who sadly did not receive that same respect in the past.

To view the Mates4Mates RAP, head to our website:
mates4mates.org.

A snapshot of 2024.

Throughout the year, Mates4Mates supported the veteran and Defence community across Australia through various opportunities including family fun days, fundraising and partnership events, and expanding our services.



Brisbane gets gaming.

The power of online gaming for veteran health and wellbeing was on display after two successful Veteran Gaming & Hobby Expos were held in Brisbane this year. We saw almost 200 veterans and family members join us across both events.

Tassie goes wandering.

This year, our Tasmanian team wandered west, meeting up with some new Mates in Wynyard, Burnie, and Devonport. We were thrilled to see so many members of the Defence and veteran communities come along for these monthly coffee catch ups at locations throughout the North West.



Growth on the coast.

In February, Mates4Mates added another permanent location to our growing community with the opening of the RSL Queensland Veteran & Family Wellbeing Centre in Maroochydore, where we're co-located. After several years of Mates4Mates providing outreach services to the Sunshine Coast, the Centre was warmly welcomed by locals.



Thanking our partners.

Mates4Mates partner, SHAPE held its 2024 ACT Annual Charity Golf Day in March, raising \$42,000 to support veterans and families to reconnect and recover. We would like to give a special thank you to all our partners who have helped to make a difference in the veteran community over the year.



Community efforts in the NT.

Our Top End team in the Northern Territory headed to the Tindal Rugby Fields with tongs in hand for a Defence community BBQ, joining other ex-serving organisations such as Open Arms, Soldier On, Network Tindal, and RSL Advocates to provide the local community with information on support services.



Family fun in Ipswich.

The Defence community came together in July for a day of family fun at the Mates4Mates Ipswich Community Fun Day. With a jumping castle, petting zoo, face painting, and a number of vendors to provide knowledge on veteran support services, it was a great day for the more than 150 Defence personnel, veterans and families who came along.

Back to the Bridge.

Mates4Mates returned for Bridge to Brisbane 2024 with a wonderful team of Mates, supporters, and staff crossing the finish line together to raise awareness for veterans and families, with more than \$5,600 received in donations!



Game day with the Dolphins.

Mates4Mates joined forces with the Dolphins NRL for two games during the 2024 season as the nominated charity partner for the 50-50 charity raffle. This saw Mates4Mates receive more than \$50,000 in fundraising efforts!

More physical health support.

To ensure that we are delivering the best possible service options to the veteran community, Mates4Mates physical rehabilitation services were expanded this year to include physiotherapy, with appointments available in Brisbane and on the Sunshine Coast.



Keeping connected.

For Veterans' Health Week in October, we saw the veteran community come together to celebrate this year's theme of 'Keep Connected' through a range of social connection activities and health and wellbeing events.



Meet a Mate (and his best friend Max).

Garth Murray is a Townsville veteran who has been accessing Mates4Mates services since he was medically discharged in 2017. Now, Garth is giving back to support other veterans and family members.

Garth, and his service dog Max, are walking around Australia for more than a year to raise money for Mates4Mates, Act for Kids, and the Brain Foundation.

Garth said he chose Mates4Mates as a way to give back to an ex-service organisation that helps veterans and families that need support.

"This is a fundraising walk, but it is also a way to work on my mental and physical health. I hope to possibly inspire others to attempt the 'impossible', to get out of your comfort zone and help others in the process," Garth said.

"Retired veterans can still achieve great things and make a difference, whether that's through volunteering, fundraising, or just connecting with another veteran who needs some social support."

— Garth Murray

Garth served in the Australian Army for 15 years and was deployed to Timor Leste and Iraq. In 2015, Garth was competing in a rugby union competition at Lavarack Barracks and suffered a broken neck and was diagnosed with adjustment disorder eight months later.

Two years later, Garth started accessing Mates4Mates services, including social connection activities and exercise physiology support.

Max's service dog training was conducted with Hounds 4 Healing at Mates4Mates Townsville, and when Garth's children were younger, they frequently enjoyed going along to Mates4Mates school holiday activities.

"When I was injured, Mates4Mates started as a neutral meeting place where I would see my rehabilitation consultant. It means so much more to me now that I am part of the community," Garth said.

Garth explained that the idea to walk around Australia was forged from seeing 'Captain Australia' on Facebook this year, a stage-four cancer survivor walking around Australia raising money for children's cancer.

"Last year I discovered that hiking was good for my mental health but hiking with Max was better. I thought doing my own lap would be win-win. Great for myself and Max, and great for the people who I could help support through fundraising," Garth said.

"Max enables me to give back to the community and the veteran community. I'm excited to start this walk and see the difference I can make for myself and for the veteran community."

To find out more and keep updated on Garth and Max's travels, visit their fundraising page here:





Balancing rest and physical activity over the holidays.

If you or someone you know is in crisis and needs immediate support over the holiday period, contact 000 or attend your nearest hospital.

For 24-hour support, phone

Open Arms: 1800 011 046

or **Lifeline: 13 11 14.**

✍ Written by Baxter Mahutonga, Mates4Mates Clinical Lead – Physical Rehabilitation and Physiotherapist

The holiday season is a time for many people to unwind from the year's stress. Taking time to rest and recover is essential to help you recharge both your physical and mental health.

Overworking yourself, even while enjoying the holiday festivities, can lead to burnout or intensify feelings of stress. While physical activity helps to maintain and boost our overall health, mood, and energy levels, it's important not to push yourself too hard in the heat of our Australian summer.

In Australia, the summer season provides a perfect opportunity to engage in outdoor activities like swimming, surfing, or hiking. It can be a great time to get outside, join family or friends at the beach, and enjoy some non-strenuous physical activity. Keeping active helps to balance the rich foods and sedentary activity that often comes with holiday celebrations. But keep in mind, it's crucial to find your balance between downtime and outdoor activities to avoid exhaustion or heat-related issues.

Exercise can help those facing mental health concerns who may find their symptoms are exacerbated by the approach of the holidays. Participating in exercise and movement triggers the release of endorphins, our natural mood lifters that help to reduce stress, anxiety, and PTSD symptoms. Exercise also provides a constructive way to channel feelings and energy, offering a distraction from distressing thoughts and creating healthy ways to manage emotional and psychological challenges.

Mates4Mates offers veterans and families access to our Skills for Recovery Programs that promote health and wellbeing amongst the community. These programs focus on fitness, wellness workshops, and educational sessions designed to support overall health.

We also offer physical rehabilitation and wellbeing services, supported by our exercise physiologists and physiotherapists who can help you to work toward your health and wellbeing goal in a way that is fit for your fitness level, body, and health concerns.

For more information about Mates4Mates services and how we can help to support you, reach out to us on **1300 4 MATES (62 837)** for a confidential chat.



Thank you.

Thank you for continuing to support veterans and families who access Mates4Mates services to reconnect and recover. Once again, we have seen the power of our community who are willing to support one another. From the entire team at Mates4Mates, thank you!

MATES4MATES

Here for those
impacted by service.



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

Find a way forward from
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OF THOSE WHO
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Christmas Hampers

SPREAD JOY THIS FESTIVE SEASON

Now in its fifth year, RSL Queensland's Christmas hamper project has delivered thousands of Christmas hampers to veterans and their families across Queensland, the Northern Territory and Tasmania since 2020. The hampers, filled with gifts, food and goodies from local and veteran-owned businesses, ensure veterans and their families have an extra special festive season. The project is a coveted tradition for RSL Queensland and will see 700 hampers packed for recipients in 2024.





ARMY VETERAN TURNS HIS PASSION INTO PURPOSE *this Christmas*



Army veteran Kerry Corney explains how woodturning has fulfilled his life after service ahead of his latest project for RSL Queensland's 2024 Christmas hampers.

 **Jasmine Halley** |  **Matilda Day**

ARMY veteran Kerry Corney decided to try his hand at woodturning almost seven years ago. Little did he know, the hobby would offer him more than just a few wooden items for around the house.

A NEW PURPOSE

After growing up in a military family, Kerry joined the Australian

Army at 19 and served for seven years. His service saw him involved in tours across Timor-Leste, Iraq and Afghanistan.

While Kerry found the transition to civilian life initially difficult, he found solace in an unassuming hobby.

"When I came home, I felt a bit lost. Working different jobs just didn't give me that same fulfilment

that I had when I was serving," Kerry says.

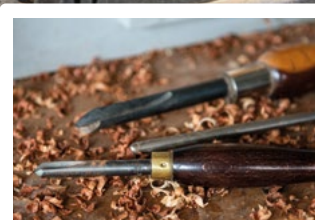
"That was until I decided to join in on my father-in-law's retirement hobby of woodturning.

"The process is quite complex but also therapeutic. The physical and mental aspects of woodturning keep you present, and having a tangible object at the end gives you a sense of accomplishment





Veteran Kerry Corney in his workshop with his two dogs, Ragen and Rosie.



YouTube



SCAN TO WATCH VIDEO



ABOVE:
Woodturning
requires
complete focus
on the task at
hand, which can
be a great stress
reliever.

BELOW:
Kerry crafted
700 bowls
for the RSL
Queensland
Christmas
hamper project,
his largest
undertaking
to date.

which is incredibly empowering.”
Kerry says the activity also gives
him a sense of mindfulness.
“The physical aspect is a great
stress reliever and engages all
the senses. It requires complete
focus on the task at hand, helping
to clear the mind and ease any

tension or worries you may have
at the time,” he says.

“You have to listen to how the
machine is running and how the
tool is cutting. You need to watch
where the tool and timber is at all
times and how the tool reacts to
the wood. You also need to feel the

tool in your hands and learn how
to present and move it across
the wood.”

THE POWER OF A HOBBY

Since discovering this hobby, Kerry
says that he has found his feet. He
stresses the importance of veterans





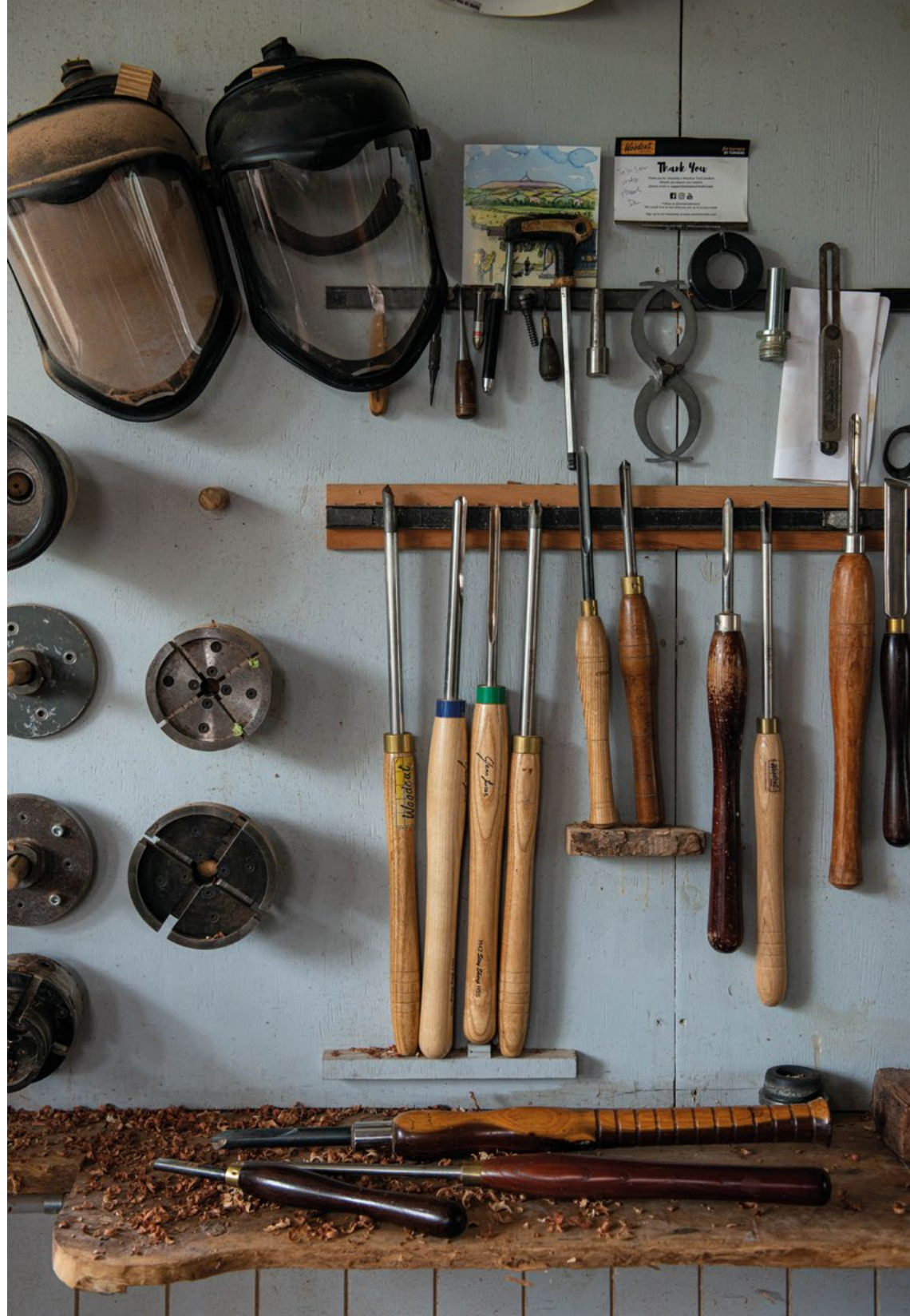
“Having a hobby like woodturning gives me a sense of purpose, routine and structure. It provides me with an outlet for stress and gives me a personal space where I feel safe and can just be myself.”

to pursue extra activities that can provide a beneficial physical or mental outlet.

“Having a hobby like woodturning gives me a sense of purpose, routine and structure. It provides me with an outlet for stress and gives me a personal space where I feel safe and can just be myself,” he explains.

“Hobbies like woodturning or woodworking, cycling, golf or martial arts also connect you to a larger community, which helps you avoid social isolation.

“The biggest thing for me is that hobbies help with identity. You lose a part of your identity when you leave Defence, and without woodturning, I would have lost direction.”



HIS LATEST PROJECT

Kerry has continued to perfect his woodturning skills in his spare time, and now enjoys capturing content of his creations and selling his pieces online.

This year, Kerry has embarked on his largest order to date – crafting 700 bespoke wooden key holder bowls for RSL Queensland’s Christmas hamper project.

“When RSL Queensland reached out to me about the project and

made the order, I was so excited to get involved. It’s the biggest order I’ve ever done and while it was a little daunting at first, to know my creations were going to be given to veterans and their families was all the motivation I needed,” he says.

“These bowls are so versatile and not one will be the same, so every recipient will receive a one-of-a-kind memento, which I think is really special.” ←

ABOVE:

Kerry believes hobbies like woodturning can connect people to a larger community, which can help avoid social isolation.



A PASSION FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

Researcher and veteran Dr Robert (Bob) Maher shares his passion for lifelong learning and volunteering.

 **Olivia Lawrence**

BELOW: Bob Maher handing over the keys to a mobile education and community engagement trailer (donated by Beaudesert RSL Sub Branch) to local fire brigade member Terry Watkins.



BOB has been an RSL member for more than 20 years and his extensive education, which includes two PhDs, has allowed the 85-year-old to volunteer for and contribute to various projects and initiatives with RSL South Eastern District.

The Beaudesert RSL Sub Branch member, who also served 12 months as Senior Vice President for RSL South Eastern District (SED) and three years as Vice President on the SED Board, says his fascination with study and volunteering has motivated him to

propose many different ideas over the years.

"I am committed to lifelong learning, and I believe we should never stop no matter our age," Bob says.

"I'd encourage all individuals to put their ideas forward and never underestimate their hard work, because one person has the ability to make a big impact within their local Sub Branch."

Serving in the Army in the 7th Signal Regiment in Cabarlah from 1958-1975 and participating in multiple deployments overseas, the Queensland veteran says his time in service was very enjoyable. After discharging, however, he didn't think to join his local RSL until some mates and a local Rotary club encouraged him to do so.

"When I decided to join the RSL in 2003, I had just started getting interested in the welfare and wellbeing space," Bob explains.

"I thought it was a fitting group to join and my time in the Army instilled a 'getting things done' attitude in me."

KNOWLEDGE IS POWER FOR DR MAHER

One of Bob's largest pieces of work he has created was a 600-page

research paper on the history of RSL South Eastern District (SED) from 1926-2007.

"I volunteered many hours of my time over two years to complete it and I uncovered amazing findings about the District," Bob says.

"I believe the research paper is a great tool of reference for the District and can act as a good model to follow for achieving some of the goals and priorities that exist today.

"SED's dedication to Australian society was way ahead of its time. What they were trying to achieve when it came to addressing Defence and veteran issues, education, employment, multiculturalism and lobbying to all levels of government was outstanding."

ADVOCATING FOR VETERANS

In addition to the research paper, the Beaudesert local is also proud of the insights he has shared to help advance veteran welfare and wellbeing.

"I'm the type of person that if I identify a problem, I want to find a solution – but it's important that the research is proven and valid," Bob explains.



Bob's research continues today, with his most recent project being a commemorations document that has been presented to his District. The document showcases information of 18 commemorative anniversaries, which he hopes could be utilised for Sub Branch services throughout the year.

"All of our battles, conflicts and peacekeeping operations have a different history and background. I wanted to create a document to highlight them so individuals and

the broader public can learn more about these significant dates as well as veterans' experiences."

CELEBRATING VOLUNTEERS

With a vision to acknowledge and recognise the efforts of community volunteers, Bob – with the help of Beaudesert RSL Sub Branch – established the Australian Volunteers Memorial in July 2021. The memorial, located in Beaudesert, honours the millions of hours donated by volunteers

around Australia from the past 100 years.

Bob says the memorial was enacted in conjunction with the 100th birthday of Beaudesert RSL Sub Branch. It features a large 'V' structure displaying a variety of volunteer-based organisations as well as plinths containing plaques remembering war volunteers.

"It is a small tribute to say thank you to the volunteers in our community and recognise their significant contribution to society," Bob says. ←

ABOVE: Bob and other community members pictured in front of the Australian Volunteers Memorial. Bob served in the Army in the 7th Signal Regiment in Cabarlah from 1958-1975 and participated in multiple deployments overseas.



Defence Service
Nurses RSL
Sub Branch
President Ann
Bramwell.

COURAGE AND COMPASSION FOR 85 YEARS: CELEBRATING THE LEGACY OF DEFENCE SERVICE NURSES RSL SUB BRANCH

In 2024, Defence Service Nurses RSL Sub Branch celebrates the 85th anniversary of becoming an official RSL Sub Branch.

 **Olivia Lawrence** |  **Matilda Dray**

DEFENCE nurses have delivered an array of aid to service personnel since 1899, forming a vital part of the Australian Defence Force and veteran community as a pillar of support for those injured during service and for their ongoing care.

Representing some of those veterans is Defence Service Nurses RSL Sub Branch, which is proud to celebrate 85 years since receiving its charter to become an official Sub Branch of RSL Queensland in 1939.

This anniversary not only symbolises a proud moment for Defence nurses, but also marks 125 years since nurses first served in the Australian Defence Force.

Taking the opportunity to reflect on the Sub Branch's beginnings, Defence Service Nurses RSL Sub Branch President Ann Bramwell says it means so much having an RSL Sub Branch, especially for nurses to build connections and to provide tailored support.

She also emphasises that acquiring the charter was a remarkable achievement by Defence nurses and RSL

Queensland, considering women were not always acknowledged in the same way as men when it came to their service.

"Following the end of World War I, many nurses were told to just go home and start families, despite having witnessed and

experienced difficult conditions on the battlefield," Ann says.

"However, nurses were not discouraged, and a Sub Branch membership was applied for in 1933, which was successful, and the charter was signed in 1939."

AN EXPANDING COMMUNITY

The Sub Branch originally represented Army nurses, but after World War II, nurses from the Royal Australian Navy and Air Force also joined. The South Eastern Sub Branch then became a tri-service group providing care, commemoration and camaraderie for Defence nurses.

"We originally formed under the name of Returned Sisters Sub Branch (RSSILA) but in 2003 we changed the name to Defence Service Nurses to better reflect nurses who served at home as well as overseas, and the men who also came into the nursing profession in the 1970s," Ann says.

Today, Defence Service Nurses RSL Sub

BELOW:

Using technology (such as internet-based conferencing) has allowed the Sub Branch to evolve and connect with more people.

INSET: The commemorative medal made to celebrate the 85th anniversary.



RIGHT:
Defence nurses
hats over the
years.

BELOW:
The Charter of
Membership for
the Returned
Sisters Sub
Branch, dated
1 January 1939
(now known
as the Defence
Service Nurses
RSL Sub
Branch).



Branch remains one of only two dedicated nurse Sub Branches in the country (the other is based in Victoria) representing an expanding network of nurses who served in the Australian Defence Force.

“Our membership sits at 70 and is growing with Defence nurses around Queensland becoming members,” Ann explains.

“To cater for this, we have established internet-based conferencing, so members who cannot attend in person can join online and thus participate in the meeting discussions and feel a sense of camaraderie.

“Utilising technology has really allowed our Sub Branch to evolve and connect with more people, and it’s something we want to continue to take advantage of.”

MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIPS

In addition to leveraging technology, Defence Nurses RSL Sub Branch also maintains strong connections within its membership through regular updates, lunches every second month and social events.

“Catching up with each other over lunch before our meetings allows us to socialise and have that camaraderie with one another,” Ann says.

“Once a year we have a special Defence Service Nurses Birthday Luncheon, where we invite guest speakers to share their story and experiences. ANZAC Day also provides an opportunity for our members and current serving nurses to march together, remembering those who have gone before.

“It’s great because it brings together different generations of nurses, allowing us to bond and discuss how nursing has changed within Defence over the years, as well as share our stories and learn from each other.”

Inspired by these conversations, Ann last year launched a magazine titled *A Year in Review* to keep others informed about the Sub Branch and to encourage more nurses to join.

“The magazine describes who we are, what we do and the types of initiatives



with which we are involved in throughout the year,” Ann says.

Alongside the magazine, with assistance from the Department of Veterans’ Affairs’ Saluting Their Service Grant Program, the Sub Branch has also developed guest speaker and educational packages for Sub Branches and schools.

“We have created five different presentations about topics relating to Defence nurses, which can be presented by one of our members or sent out to Sub Branches or teachers for them to incorporate into their lessons,” Ann explains.

“The presentations are a particularly useful offering for rural and remote schools that may not have any Defence nurses nearby who can share their stories.”

**FUTURE-FOCUSED
AND INSPIRED**

Reflecting on the past 85 years, the Sub Branch is also very proud





of the support it has provided to initiatives related to nursing and other ex-service organisations.

"We recently reprinted a book called *Moreton Bay in WWII* and are selling the copies through a local bookstore. All proceeds were donated to the Vivian Bullwinkel statue that was erected in Canberra in 2023," Ann says.

"Now that it has been completed, further proceeds are being donated to help support the 21 postgraduate scholarships offered by the Australian College of Nursing through their Bullwinkel Project.

"We also support the Carolyn Lister Scholarship, which assists in the training of a nurse from the

Kokoda area in Papua New Guinea. These are just some of the projects we are passionate about."

Ann says it has been a privilege to build on the foundations set by previous RSL Sub Branch Presidents and continue the growth of their network of Defence nurses.

"Each President has brought something different into the Sub Branch. I think my contribution has been the increasing move into technology and spreading our wings to be even more inclusive of regional, rural and remote areas," Ann says.

"We support not only current and past serving nurses, but also our Sub Branch colleagues in these areas in any way that we can.

"I am honoured to be in this role and it's a privilege to meet others and learn more about their stories or how nurses have made an impact within Defence and the broader veteran community." ←

ABOVE:
Defence Service Nurses RSL Sub Branch President Ann Bramwell says the RSL Sub Branch helps nurses to build connections and provide tailored support to each other.

INSET:
Ann stands in the memorial forecourt of the RSL South Eastern District building, where the Defence Service Nurses RSL Sub Branch has an office.

VETERANS' HEALTH WEEK

VETERANS WERE ENCOURAGED TO GET SOCIAL, GET ACTIVE, GET CREATIVE AND GET INFORMED DURING VETERANS' HEALTH WEEK.

A **YEARLY** initiative from the Department of Veterans' Affairs, Veterans' Health Week is all about promoting good health and wellbeing among veterans and their families. Free or subsidised events were held Australia-wide, all based on this year's theme of 'Keep Connected'. From social lunches to organic farming workshops, health expos and much more, there was something for everyone.



Australian Government
Department of Veterans' Affairs

VETERANS'
Health Week

13-20 OCTOBER 2024

keep connected



RSL
Queensland

5 ESSENTIAL HEALTH TIPS FOR VETERANS

Could your sleep, mood or general wellbeing be better? Developed by RSL Queensland and Gallipoli Medical Research (GMR), **RSL Be:Well** is a free, secure online program full of research-backed resources on how to tackle a variety of veteran health challenges. Check out these five key tips.



FOOD CAN HELP YOU FIGHT PAIN, FATIGUE AND LOW MOOD

BE:FOOD POSITIVE MODULE

Your diet can influence not only your health but also your mood, pain and energy. Research shows that processed foods worsen inflammation and fatigue, while a Mediterranean-style diet can reduce pain and boost energy, and gut-friendly foods can improve your mood.



THINK BRIGHTER, SLEEP TIGHTER

BE:SLEEP SAVVY MODULE

More than 60% of transitioned and regular ADF members experience sleep difficulties, ranging from fatigue to insomnia, which can impact daily functioning. Cognitive Behavioural Therapy for Insomnia (CBT-I) is the recommended long-term treatment to address the thoughts, behaviours and factors that contribute to sleep issues.



DEEP BREATHING CAN HELP DEFUSE ANGER

BE:SELF CONTROLLED MODULES A AND B

Irritability is a common issue among more than half of Australia's ex-serving population. Anger can be managed effectively with techniques like controlled breathing, which calms the body and reduces stress, helping to prevent it from escalating into aggression or negatively impacting relationships and wellbeing.



NAMING YOUR FEELINGS CAN TAME YOUR FEELINGS

BE:MOOD WISE MODULE

Avoiding tough emotions like anger or sadness can lead to unhealthy coping methods. Recognising and accurately identifying emotions, as psychiatrist Dr Dan Siegel's 'Name it to tame it' technique suggests, can reduce their intensity, improve understanding, and help address underlying needs for better mental health and relationships.



FIND A JOB THAT FITS YOUR VALUES

BE:SET FOR WORK MODULE

Whether you recently left Defence or did so decades ago, aligning your core values – such as achievement, collaboration and flexibility – with your career and workplace culture is key to finding a fulfilling civilian career that brings purpose, satisfaction and wellbeing.

SAILING TOWARDS A NEW HORIZON

Following an accident that left Air Force veteran Sharon Dalton as a wheelchair user, she found an unexpected new passion in sailing.

Jasmine Halley

IF you had told Air Force veteran Sharon Dalton three years ago that she would be considering going to the Sailing World Championships in 2025, she would never have believed you.

Sharon had always been an active person and loved the water, but after becoming a wheelchair user eight years ago, she was forced to discontinue her lifestyle as she knew it.

"After the accident I became really involved with archery, pistol shooting, swimming and modified indoor rowing, and had even planned to get into the Invictus Games. But then my arms started failing so I couldn't continue doing these things that I loved," Sharon says.

"Being in a wheelchair is limiting. While there are a lot of social sporting activities out there for veterans, I found it difficult to find ones that were of interest to me and were completely accessible.

"I started to feel lost and wanted to find something that made me enjoy life again."

A NEW CHAPTER

Two years ago, when Sharon came across an online post about Saltwater Veterans Sailing Project, things began to look up.

"I remember seeing a post about a sailing program for veterans, so I reached out for more info," Sharon recalls.

"Within 10 minutes I was on



Air Force veteran Sharon Dalton.



PICTURED: Run in partnership by RSL Queensland and Saltwater Veterans Sailing Project, and supported by Sailability Mooloolaba, the RSL Rec Connect sailing activity offers veterans a one-day sailing program that teaches the basics of how to sail in a supportive, friendly environment.



"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."

ABOVE: Following an accident that left Air Force veteran Sharon Dalton as a wheelchair user, she found an unexpected new passion in sailing.

the phone to Scott Reynolds, the founder, for about an hour discussing what he wants the program to be and grow into, and how he wants it to support the veteran community.

"It was inspiring to hear his vision and when he told me it was completely accessible, it was like another world opened up."

Run in partnership by RSL Queensland and Saltwater Veterans Sailing Project, and supported by Sailability Mooloolaba, this RSL Rec Connect sailing activity offers veterans a one-day sailing program that teaches the basics of how to sail in a supportive, friendly environment.

Sharon says it was exciting to

try something new and was blown away by the level of support she received.

"I didn't know anything about sailing when I first signed up, but there were lovely volunteers in the boat with you that showed you the ropes," she explains.

"They also used a sling that hoisted me from my wheelchair and lowered me into the boat, and then I was able to sail just like everyone else!

"There was such a strong sense of teamwork I'd never experienced before. If my arms were failing, someone else in the boat would be there to help and there'd be no impact on our trajectory.

"Being in the boat that first time made me forget about what I couldn't do and instead focus on what I could do."

Last June, Sharon attended the latest sailing activity through RSL Rec Connect and said it was the most popular one yet.

"There were so many more people this time around! It was great to see how much the program and our sailing community had grown," Sharon says.

"Veterans brought more of their family members and children along. It was heartwarming to see

so many new faces ready to get out there on the water.

"Of course, there were some less experienced people at the start of the activity when we were running through the initial safety briefing, but once everyone got out on the water, their confidence grew, and their laughter and excitement was heard by all. This is what this event is all about, positive social interaction.

"Once we got off the water you couldn't wipe the smiles off everyone, and it was great to hear how they all went.

"It made me reflect on how impactful these social activities are to our wellbeing. Even if you discovered sailing wasn't for you, you might've come away with some great connections."

FINDING HER COMMUNITY

Sharon found sailing was, in fact, for her and is thankful for her new community of likeminded people.

"Thanks to this program, I've been able to connect with other sailing organisations including Sailability Mooloolaba and the Mooloolaba Yacht Club, which have enabled me to further my sailing journey and be welcomed by other yacht clubs and Sailability teams around Australia. I'm now considering the World Championships in Sydney next year," she says.

"I'm so grateful that I have finally found something I love to do and such a wonderful community, but it wouldn't have been possible if I hadn't put myself out there in the first place.

"It's important to surround yourself with a network of people who want to lift you up and see you succeed, but you've got to take that first step and reach out.

"I encourage veterans to get out of their comfort zone and try something new. You never know where or who it might lead you to." ←

To see a wide range of veteran community events coming up across Queensland, visit rslqld.org/whats-on





HONOURING THOSE WHO DEFENDED AUSTRALIA



Each year, on the first Wednesday of September, Australia remembers the brave men and women who defended our nation during World War II.

THE Battle for Australia Commemoration Committee (Qld) hosted a ceremony in Chermside on 4 September to observe Battle for Australia Day. Thousands of Australians fought across the South and South West Pacific, engaging in

fierce battles to repel Japanese forces and prevent an invasion of mainland Australia. The commemoration date coincides with the anniversary of the Allied victory at the Battle of Milne Bay (25 August to 7 September 1942), which marked the first defeat of Japanese land forces and a critical turning point in the war.

The name 'Battle for Australia' is drawn from Prime Minister John Curtin's speech, delivered on 16 February 1942, the day after the Fall of Singapore. Among the notable events commemorated are the bombing of Darwin, attacks on Sydney Harbour, Newcastle and Broome, the Battle of the Coral Sea and the Kokoda Campaign.

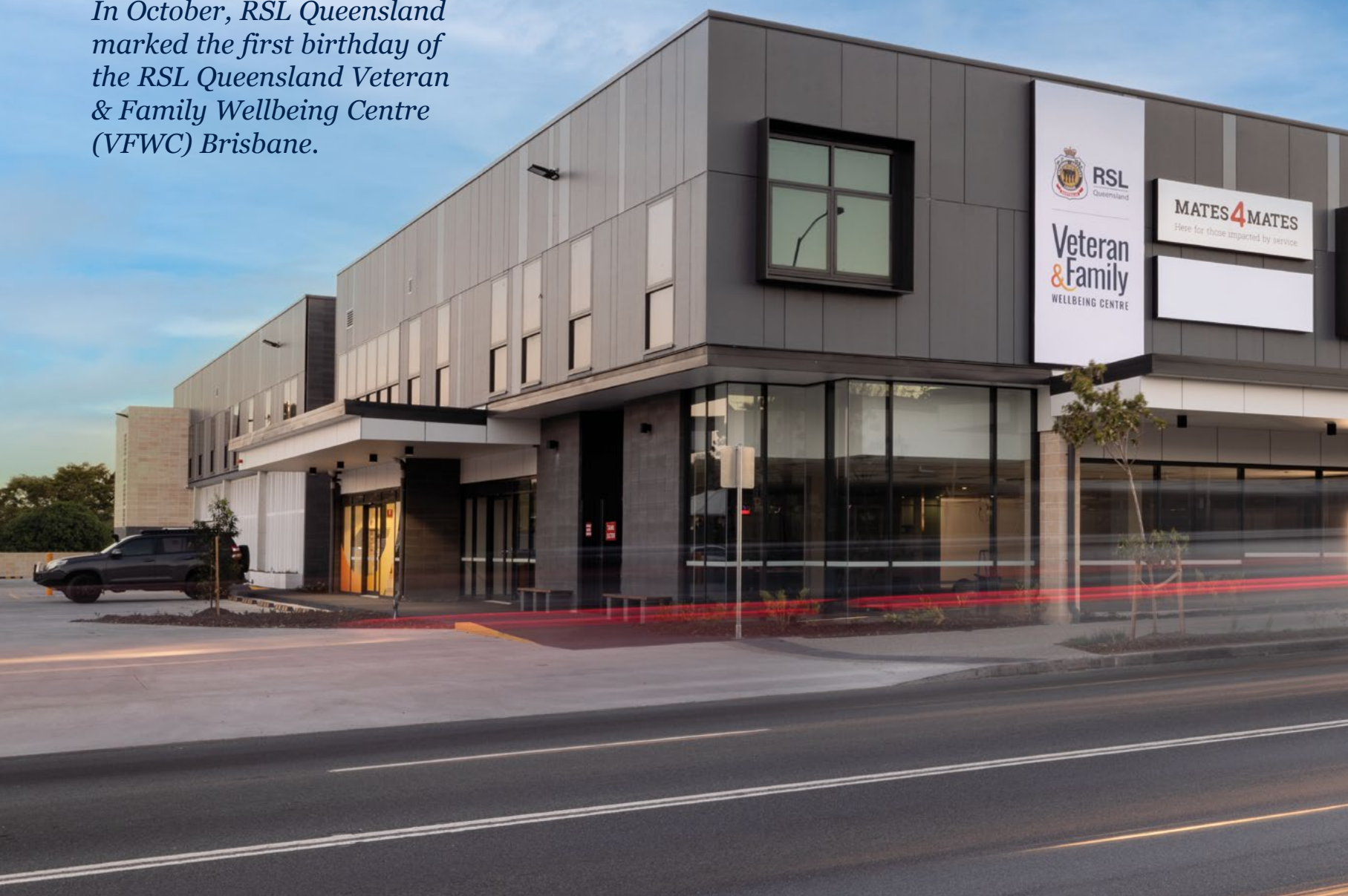
Australia lost 39,657 soldiers, sailors and airmen during WWII. Many more nurses, civilians and other non-combatants also perished. On Battle for Australia Day, we remember their service and sacrifice. ✦

ABOVE: Members of the Defence community gathered in Chermside on 4 September for a commemorative service.

LEFT: Battle for Australia Commemoration Committee (Qld) President MAJ Pat O'Keeffe OAM (ret'd).

RSL Queensland Veteran & Family Wellbeing Centre Brisbane celebrates first birthday

In October, RSL Queensland marked the first birthday of the RSL Queensland Veteran & Family Wellbeing Centre (VFWC) Brisbane.



THIS significant milestone recognised the many achievements of the Centre, which has helped veterans and their families over the past 12 months.

Located in Stafford – a stone’s throw away from Gallipoli Barracks – the Centre provides a multitude of services for veterans

and their families including DVA advocacy assistance, employment support, physical rehabilitation, mental health services and social connection activities.

RSL Queensland Deputy CEO – Veteran Services Troy Watson says the purpose-built Centre was designed to centralise holistic

support services that assist the growing needs of the veteran community.

“Queensland is home to the largest population of current and ex-serving Australian Defence Force members, so it was vital that we established a space where veterans and their families could



access tailored practical support, assistance and social connection," Troy says.

Over the last year, the Centre has steadily grown its service offering and the number of ex-service organisations operating in the building, which has resulted in more veterans and their families

accessing its services each day.

"The Brisbane-based Centre has become popular within the local veteran community. Over the past year, we've seen more than 1,228 veterans and their families walk through the doors to access services or engage in social activities," Troy says.

"It has been a privilege to work alongside Mates4Mates and see the Centre expand its services by engaging with and uplifting other ex-service organisations – witnessing this growth has been encouraging.

"Since opening, we have been proud to welcome representatives from the Department of Veterans' Affairs, local, state and federal Government, and Defence to share our range of services available to veterans and their families at the Centre."

In addition, the Centre has opened its doors for local community groups, ex-service organisations and Defence to host their own social events, information sessions and training days, just to name a few.

Along with the expansion of services from both organisations,

ABOVE:
One-year
celebrations
at the RSL
Queensland
VFWC in
Stafford in
October 2024.



ABOVE:
Mates4Mates and RSL Queensland Brisbane Gaming and Hobby Expo, held at VFWC in October 2024.

BELOW RIGHT:
Her Excellency the Honourable Dr Jeannette Young AC PSM, Governor of Queensland chats with other guests at the official opening of the VFWC in 2023.

Mates4Mates CEO Emma Whitehead says the Centre has ensured more veterans and families can access more support, more often.

"This year, the Centre has supported the health and wellbeing of all those who walked through its doors. While Mates4Mates has provided mental health and physical rehabilitation services, the social connection offered by the Centre also played a vital role," Emma says.

"It has been so fulfilling to see many veterans and their family

members take part in these events and come away visibly lifted. Improving overall physical, mental and social health and wellbeing is exactly what this Centre is all about."

Feedback from Centre clients has been extremely positive.

"The Centre provides a very welcoming space with dedicated and caring staff members who provide a wide range of complimentary services for the care of veterans and their families," one client shared.

"It has so many things on offer

between Mates4Mates activities and fitness sessions, the gym, access to specialities and other support networks such as Open Arms all in the same building," another said.

With an existing network of services already available across the state, Troy says RSL Queensland is looking forward to expanding RSL Queensland's Veteran & Family Wellbeing Centres.

"The Brisbane-based Centre is our flagship of the network, and I hope our Centres continue to be a welcoming place to connect and elevate the veteran community over the next year and beyond," he says.

"The support these Centres provide is important, and we want to ensure more communities across Queensland have direct access to these services and events as we open up more Centres in the future." ←

FAST FACTS

In its first 12 months, the VFWC Brisbane has:

- welcomed more than 1,228 clients (of these, 22% were partners or family members of veterans)
- delivered more than 2,345 physical rehabilitation sessions (including yoga, exercise physiology and personal training)
- provided 1,518 occasions of mental health support services
- cooked barbecues for 978 people
- welcomed 538 people for a chat over breakfasts, morning teas or lunches



EMPOWERING SUCCESS

Mackay RSL Sub Branch champions local cadet helping veterans

With a thriving membership of more than 250 ex-serving members, Mackay RSL Sub Branch is continuing to grow its impact by promoting veteran and Defence focused initiatives within their community.

 **Olivia Lawrence**

PRESIDENT of Mackay RSL Sub Branch Ken Higgins OAM says the group members are passionate about honouring the past, present and future when it comes to how they support veterans.

With that mission as their guiding principle, Ken says he didn't hesitate to help local 16-year-old Cadet Sergeant Murray Macgroarty when he approached him with the goal of walking 382 kilometres, the equivalent distance of Mackay to Townsville, to raise funds and awareness for veteran homelessness.

"We had our first meeting with Murray a few years ago at his cadet unit and I was so proud to talk to him about what he wanted

to accomplish alongside his dad Scott and Army Cadet Staff Major John Zimmerman," Ken says.

Ken was excited to support Murray's idea, especially since the Vietnam veteran undertook a similar challenge 26 years ago to support veteran welfare. Ken walked just under 400 kilometres from Kitchen Dam to the City Square in Townsville ahead of the 25th anniversary of Vietnam Veterans' Day in 1998.

"It's one of those achievements that definitely isn't easy, but gets the word out there," Ken says.

"I think Murray has become a catalyst for the next generation in being aware that some veterans may be floundering. He's also a link

between the old and the young because we've got to remember that our veteran community is a big demographic."

Murray originally thought of doing such a walk just for fun, but after learning about a line of inquiry on Defence and veterans' homelessness through the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide, he had a specific purpose and motivator to pursue it.

"I wanted to spike awareness for problems that aren't always talked about or aren't dealt with a lot, even though they're discussed within the veteran community," Murray says.

Over the course of just nine days during the June-July school holidays this year, Murray achieved



Cadet Sergeant
Murray Macgroaty
(16) and Mackay
RSL Sub Branch
President Ken
Higgins OAM.
Supported by
the Sub Branch,
Murray walked
382 km to raise
funds for veteran
homelessness.



his goal in an event he named Just Keep Marching. Walking 22 laps around Mackay's Blue Water Trail, he connected with homeless veterans along the way and has raised \$21,000 to date.

"Some days it felt like I couldn't really stand at all, but I knew that for every step, for every ache, every pain that I had, it would hopefully someday, somehow take away a little bit of pain, a little bit of ache, or a little bit of a problem from a veteran in need," Murray says.

Murray's mother Cynthia Macgroarty says she admires how Mackay RSL Sub Branch, particularly Ken, had a can-do attitude from the start in relation to her son's ambitions.

"They echo the same drive that Murray has, and I couldn't ask for a better role model in the RSL as a service," Cynthia says.

"The RSL just said 'Yes, we will do this,' and that's such a lovely permission for a young man who really believes he can change the world."

Along with helping Murray and his parents plan the event, during the nine-day walk Mackay RSL Sub Branch set up a meeting spot at the end of the trail so people could stop by, have a chat or donate to the cause. And after the event finished, the Sub Branch raised an additional \$5,000 by selling raffle tickets at their local shopping centre.

"Since the walk has finished, we've had people come back



saying they want to be involved in the RSL as a non-League member, which has been great, and we have encouraged them to become social members," Ken says.

Ken says it was also special to organise all three cadet units and local veterans to come on the second last day to walk alongside Murray. Among the local veterans, Ken was thrilled to have Victoria Cross recipient Keith Payne VC AM in attendance too.

"There were a lot of people who joined Murray on portions of his walk including his mates from school, his family and the community, but we wanted to give him some additional motivation on those final days. He has been massively supported and I think we, as an RSL Sub Branch, were so proud to be part of that journey and the conversations it's sparked among the community and beyond."

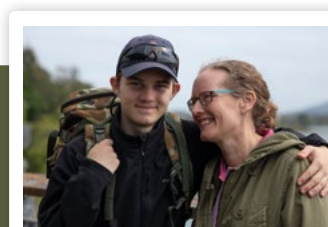
The funds raised by Just Keep Marching will be thoughtfully distributed by Murray and Mackay RSL Sub Branch to local veterans in need of housing support.

"You don't have to be in the city to do these things. You can be in



the regional areas, people will stop and take notice if they can see you're doing something positive," Ken says.

"The more that we connect with our mates, our comrades that served as well as their families, the better the RSL will be for years to come." ←



YouTube



SCAN TO WATCH VIDEO

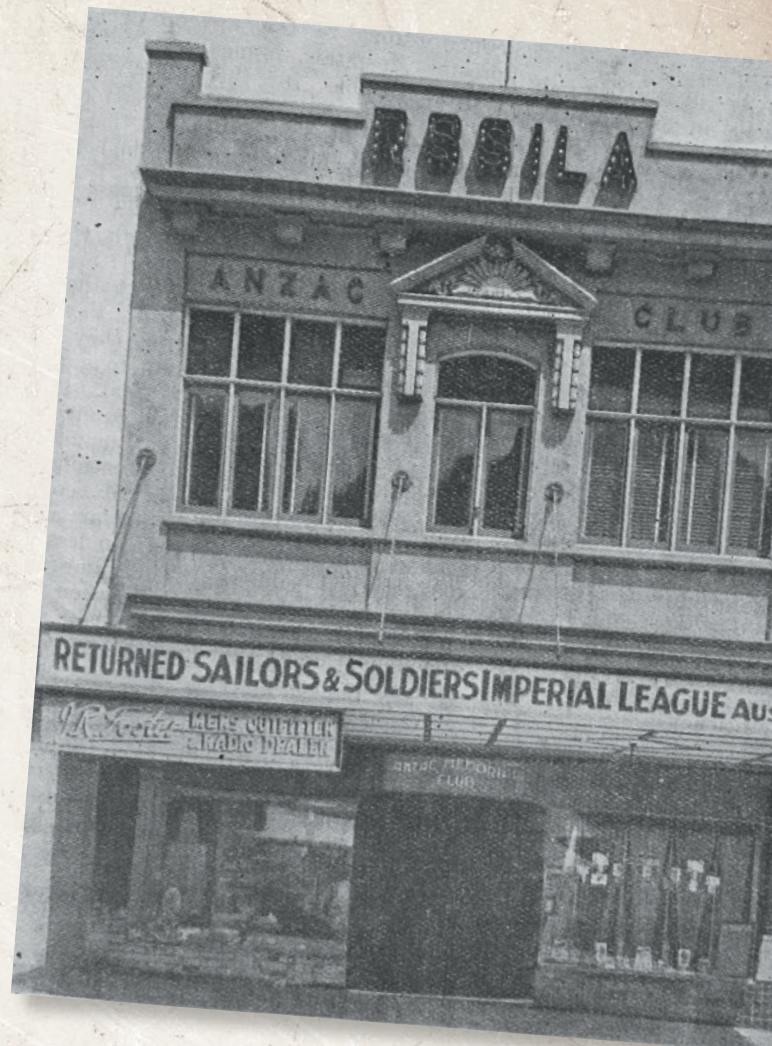
TOP LEFT: Keith Payne VC AM speaks with the gathered crowds.

TOP RIGHT: Murray wanted to bring awareness to issues such as veteran homelessness, which aren't always discussed by the wider community.

INSET: Fellow cadets, friends, family, community members and veterans joined Murray for sections of the walk to provide added motivation.

A HOME FOR THE LEAGUE: QUEENSLAND'S FIRST ANZAC HOUSE (1924-1945) *Part 2*

This year marks the centenary of the establishment of Anzac House as the permanent home of the RSL in Queensland. In this, the second of a two-part series, we will look at the construction and opening of the Returned Sailors and Soldiers Imperial League of Australia's (RSSILA) first Anzac House.



ABOVE: Master Harry Clark and Miss Ethel Hill at the club's opening. The RSSILA conducted a ballot to select two children from among the hundreds who had lost their father during the war. (Telegraph, 18 December 1924, 12 - Photographer unknown)

Dr Susan E. M. Kellett

IN January 1920, the Mayor of Brisbane called a public meeting to explore how best to commemorate Queensland's sacrifice and service in the Great War (now commonly known as World War I). A good representation of returned men attended, including Brisbane RSSILA Sub Branch President William Worley.

Worley proposed that, in addition to a monument, "a building in which returned soldiers could be housed" would serve as a viable option. As an example, he cited Anzac House, the Victorian headquarters of the League, which had recently opened in Melbourne.

SUPPORTING THE SERVICE COMMUNITY

During and in the years immediately after WWI, the RSSILA opposed the expenditure of funds on local war memorials as it believed the nation should first contribute to the needs of those who had served: its

returned community. Rather than commemorative monuments, the League perceived memorial halls and clubrooms to be suitable forms of remembrance that provided amenities for returned men as well as visibility of the fledgling League at state and local levels.

The RSSILA benefited greatly from elevated levels of patriotic sentiment between 1917 and 1919. In some areas, generous community donations provided the League with clubrooms at little to no cost.

In Brisbane in 1917, women raised funds for a Residential Club – the League's first state headquarters. In Melbourne, generous donations from government and private businesses, along with a major public fundraising appeal, raised £39,000 for the RSSILA's Victorian headquarters.

PERMISSION TO USE THE PROTECTED WORD 'ANZAC'

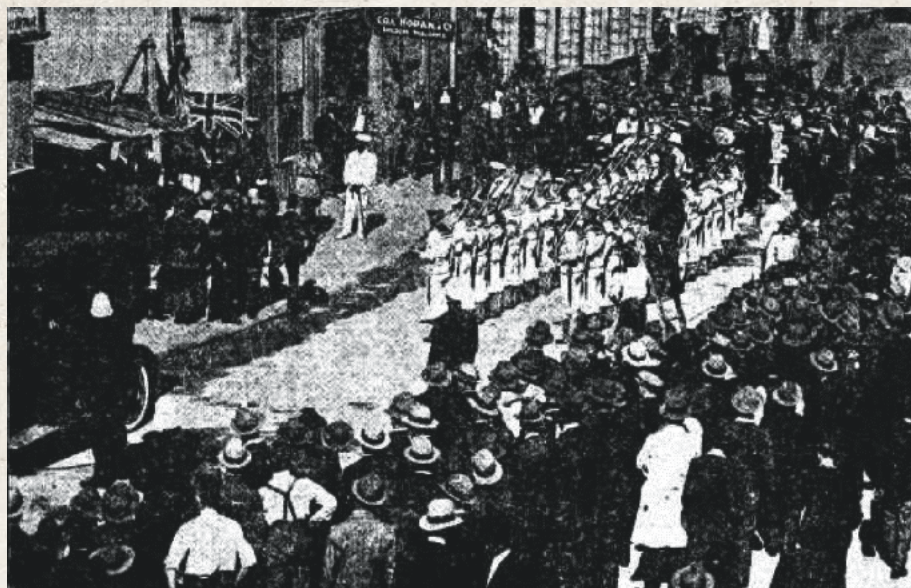
The League purchased a property at 151 Collins Street and sought permission to use the protected

word 'Anzac' from the Federal Government. In August 1919, the Victorian Branch of the League relocated to the first of two Collins Street premises that would bear the name 'Anzac House.'

The concept of its own Anzac House continued to gain traction within the RSSILA in Queensland. In early 1921, a meeting of Brisbane (now South-Eastern) District delegates resolved that State Branch should support "the erection of an Anzac House in the metropolis to serve as a memorial to the fallen... [and] ...to be the permanent headquarters of the RSSILA in Queensland".

However, with the war over, public sentiment had shifted. Anzac Square was to be the location of Queensland's national monument, but a grieving state now perceived the expression of its profound sacrifice to be as important as the service of those who had returned.

The League's first headquarters – the Residential Club – was ill-suited to its needs and, following a public scandal, sold in 1922 for



LEFT: Governor-General Lord Henry Forster laying the foundation stone of the Elizabeth Street premises on Anzac Day, 1925. (Telegraph, 26 April 1924, 17 – Photographer unknown)

INSET: Anzac House as it appeared in 1945 when it sold for approximately £15,000. (Telegraph, 4 August 1945, 3).

FAR LEFT: Anzac House, 189-191 Elizabeth Street, (c.1924). Note the foundation stone at the far lower right of the shop fronts. The two-storey structure was initially known as the Anzac Memorial Club before quickly assuming the name Anzac House. RSSILA architect (and returned man) Thomas Pye designed the building. (Queensland Digger – Photographer unknown).

LEFT: The first Anzac House as it appears today. In the latter part of the 20th century, the façade and interior of the building were extensively remodelled. However, if you look up at the ceiling in the Fast Times store, the original wooden flooring of the assembly hall remains visible (Author's image 2024).

£9,000. The RSSILA now had the means to independently establish its own state headquarters.

FOUNDATION STONE LAID IN 1924

The following year, land was purchased at 189-191 Elizabeth Street. In January 1924, tenders called for the construction of a brick and concrete structure. The Residential Club's foundation stone was inscribed with a second dedication, and on Anzac Day 1924 it was ceremoniously laid by Governor-General Lord Henry Forster.

The RSSILA initially called its headquarters the Anzac Memorial Club. This may have reflected the League's hope that it might still benefit from public funding.

Construction was quoted at £10,500 and did not include

furnishings. The League's Ladies Committee swung into action, with a schedule of social events that raised another £1,000. A final £2,000 came courtesy of an Anzac Art Union.

CHILDREN OF RETURNED MEN TO OPEN MEMORIALS

It was not unusual for a vice-regal guest to open significant commemorative structures after WWI. However, at its 1922 State Conference, the RSSILA resolved that "children of deceased sailors and soldiers should participate in the opening of memorial halls, or the unveiling of war memorials as... no person is more entitled to such honour that those who lost their father in the Great War".

On 12 December 1924, State Governor Sir Matthew Nathan presented a gold key to Miss Ethel Hill. After Ethel unlocked the entrance's decorative iron gates, Master Harry Clark swung them inwards, and the Anzac Memorial Club was officially declared open.

Queensland State Branch, Brisbane District, Brisbane RSSILA Sub Branch and the Fathers' Association occupied offices on the ground floor of the building. Two shop frontages shaded by a cantilevered awning provided retail space for a menswear/radio dealership as well as rooms for the RSSILA's Anzac Café.

RETURNED SISTERS INVITED TO THE OPENING

Back in 1917, the League attracted considerable criticism when it excluded returned nurses from the Residential Club.

This time, the RSSILA specifically invited returned sisters to the building's opening so they could inspect their Queensland War Nurses' Room on the first floor. This level also housed a lounge, billiards room, library and assembly hall, with the latter used regularly for meetings, unit reunions and social events.

Within a brief period, the Elizabeth Street building adopted the name Anzac House. The RSSILA soon outgrew its headquarters, and a second storey was added in 1928. Further additions and improvements occurred eight years later.

In 1939, with Australia again committed to war, the League looked ahead to a new generation of returned men swelling its ranks. With a larger Anzac House now needed, the RSSILA announced the sale of its Elizabeth Street premises in 1944 and began raising funds and making plans for a new Anzac House. It would be nearly 60 years until the organisation purchased the current Anzac House building on St Paul's Terrace, which officially opened on 2 July 2003. ←



COMMUNITY



Aramac's new ANZAC sunset memorial

New Zealand Army veteran Sarah Lima has designed a new war memorial in Aramac that captures the enduring spirit of the ANZACs and the town's stunning sunsets. Inspired by her own experiences and service, Sarah created a peaceful space for reflection that honours all who have served in times of crisis, both at home and abroad. The memorial is oriented towards the setting sun, symbolising the Ode of Remembrance and paying tribute to both people and animals who have served.

This memorial is unique in its universal appeal, avoiding specific names to resonate with all visitors. It embodies the ANZAC spirit qualities of endurance, courage and mateship, while also reflecting broader community values. By blending Aramac's natural beauty with the legacy of the ANZACs, the memorial seeks to connect the past with future generations, fostering a deeper appreciation of community heritage. Pictured in front of the memorial, from left, are Barcaldine Region Councillors Cr Bob O'Brien and Cr Linda Penna, Sarah Lima, Aramac-Muttaburra District Manager Paula Coulton and Barcaldine Regional Council CEO Daniel Bradford.

Kokoda Day memorial service

The 82nd Anniversary Kokoda Day Memorial Service, held in Broadbeach on 8 August was organised by the Rotary Club of Broadwater Southport in collaboration with Surfers Paradise RSL Sub Branch and affiliated WWII units. The service, hosted at the Rotary Kokoda Memorial Wall in Cascade Gardens, commemorated the courage and sacrifice of the men who fought during the Kokoda Campaign. Notable attendees included His Excellency John Ma'o Kali, PNG High Commissioner to Australia, who highlighted the enduring bond between Papua New Guinea and Australia.

The event featured honour rolls, musical tributes and ceremonial activities, with Wendy Taylor representing RSL Queensland. The Rotary Kokoda Memorial Wall, a significant tribute constructed in 2008, tells the story of the Kokoda Campaign and stands as a testament to the bravery of those who served. Pictured, from left, The Southport School Chaplain Reverend John Dougherty, New Guinea Rifle Association Vice President Bob Collins, Federal Member for Moncrieff Angie Bell MP, Papua New Guinea High Commissioner to Australia His Excellency John Ma'o Kali CMG OBE and Papua New Guinea Consul General Reatau Rau.



Help for horses in Ukraine

The Australian War Animal Memorial Organisation continues to support animals affected by the conflict in Ukraine, providing horse rugs for use on farms and by the police and military. Ukraine still uses horses in the agricultural industry and there are more than 100,000 horses in the country, many of them caught up in the war, without proper care, shelter or the ability to flee to safety. Horse owners, riding schools, athletes, breeders and professionals are in desperate conditions. During winter, zoos also use horse rugs to protect zebras, mules and llamas.





WWI ANZAC grave discovered where Vincent Van Gogh is also buried

During a recent Mat McLachlan Battlefield Tour, Australians discovered the grave of WWI ANZAC Harry Cossen in a French communal cemetery in Auvers-sur-Oise, where Vincent Van Gogh is also buried. Cossen, from South Gippsland, Victoria, died at 18 in 1916 after being swept off a train heading to the front lines.

The locals buried him with full military honours, marking his grave with a unique marble column instead of a standard Commonwealth War Graves headstone. This rare find in a communal cemetery, rather than an official Commonwealth War Graves site, underscores the respect paid by the French and led to a special service by the tour group to honour Cossen.



AWAMO and Royal Australian Mint collaborate on war animals coin

The Royal Australian Mint worked with Australian War Animal Memorial Organisation President Nigel Allsop to develop the War Animals Remembrance – Purple Poppy commemorative coin. Nigel provided key research and documentation that guided the coin's design and packaging.

The \$2 coin – released in October – honours the often-overlooked contributions of animals in war. Included on the box are these words: "Throughout history, in war and peacetime, animals and mankind have worked alongside each other. As swift mounts, beasts of burden, messengers, protectors, detectors and mascots; boosting morale. Our war animals have demonstrated true valour and an enduring partnership with humans – the bond is unbreakable, their sacrifice is great."



80th anniversary at UQ Gatton Campus

In late August, 130 guests gathered at The University of Queensland Gatton Campus to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the US Army's 105th General Hospital. Originally the Queensland Agricultural College, the campus was transformed into a major military hospital after the Battle of the Coral Sea in 1942. Staffed by Harvard doctors and nurses, the hospital treated over 19,000 wounded servicemen, handling severe burns, tropical diseases and battle fatigue.

Despite harsh conditions, the American soldiers integrated with the local community, sparking romances and making lifelong connections. The hospital left a legacy of medical advances, particularly in tropical disease treatment and psychotherapy. Pictured at the event, from left, the Hon Shayne Neumann MP, Mark Pace, Rear Admiral Sonya Bennett, Professor Stuart Carney, Ron Swanwick and Ralph Epstein.



Sunshine Coast bowlers shine at National Diggers Carnival

Mark Payne, President of Sunshine Coast Zone RSL Bowls, has expressed his gratitude to West Dubbo and Dubbo Macquarie Clubs for hosting the highly successful National Diggers Carnival. Twelve bowlers from the Sunshine Coast Zone made the trip to Dubbo, competing against both current and ex-serving veterans. The event concluded with the RAAF team, led by Gerard Harkins, claiming the top prize of \$2,100. Sunshine Coast teams also had a strong showing, with The Beach Boys finishing 3rd, The 3 Ps 5th and The Navy White Mafia taking the consolation prize.

Payne praised the event's organisation and called on more current and former service men and women to get involved in bowls for future tournaments. Money raised from this tournament was given to the Starlight Foundation. The Beach Boys are pictured at the event, from left, Mark Payne (Club Maroochy), Roy Howard (Pelican Waters), Mal Overend (Club Maroochy) and organiser Eric Chamberlain.

49th annual Golden Rivet Competition

The Naval Association of Australia's (NAA) 49th annual Golden Rivet Competition took place on 14 September at Ipswich CSI, hosted by the Ipswich & West Moreton Sub Section and last year's winners, Redcliffe. The event featured teams competing in darts and indoor bowls, with participants, mostly over 70, showing a range of skills and sportsmanship.

NAA teams from Redcliffe, Bundamba, Pine Rivers, Navy Women (WRANS), and State NA competed, with State NA emerging as the winners. Ipswich Mayor Teresa Harding, a strong supporter of veterans, presented the trophy. The event was supported by local MPs and sponsors, with the next competition set for 13 September 2025. Mayor Teresa Harding (second from left) is pictured with competition winners, from left, Marg Dean, Pat Nuss, Bernie Franklin and Kaye T Morgan.



Daughter writes book about her WWII pilot father

Author Penny de Jong wrote *Flying with Fred* about her late father, World War II pilot Fred 'Shiny' Bright, who was born and raised in Toowoomba. Fred had a lifelong passion for planes and as a young boy met famous Australian aviator Charles Kingsford Smith. Penny shares her father's love of flying and came to know him better through writing this book. Fred survived flying 1,015 hours during WWII, returning safely to Australia in 1945, unaware that his wartime experiences would have a profound effect on those closest to him for the rest of his life. His 462 Squadron Middle East aircrew exemplified the fierce loyalty shown in perilous situations. As their skipper, Fred helped maintain a sense of calm among his crew with his sardonic humour.

Fred trained in Australia, Canada and Britain, and flew a range of aircraft including Gipsy Moths, Fleets, Wellingtons, Halifaxes, Fairchildes, Ansons, Douglases, Liberators, Defiants and Dakotas. His wartime operational missions were flown over the Mediterranean from North Africa. Penny recalls that her father regularly attended ANZAC Day Dawn Services and marches, and enjoyed catching up with other returned soldiers at his local RSL. Fred passed away from cancer in the mid-1970s.



First National War Widows Day commemorated

On 19 October 2024, the Australian War Widows (AWW) commemorated National War Widows Day for the first time. To mark the day, several iconic Brisbane landmarks were illuminated in blue and white, including Brisbane City Hall (pictured). Queensland and New South Wales began state commemorations of this day in 2022, with South Australia, Western Australia and the Australian Capital Territory marking the day in 2023. A national commemoration allows all war widows across Australia to be part of this day to acknowledge and honour their sacrifices due to the loss of their loved ones.

Membership to the Australian War Widows Queensland (AWWQ) is open to war widows with a Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) Gold Card, which means that the death of their husband or partner has been accepted as being due to war causes. Associate membership to AWWQ is also available to Defence widows and family members of veterans.

"A National War Widows Day will provide a focus for the Australian community on the sacrifices of widows whose loved ones gave their lives for their country. It will also raise awareness about Australian War Widows Inc and the network of resources and support available to war and Defence widows around the country," AWW National President Jenny Gregory OAM said. To learn more, email admin@warwidowsqld.org.au or visit warwidowsqld.org.au



Honouring veteran courage

Western Suburbs District Rugby League Football Club hosted its 2024 ANZAC Day Round on 27 April this year, dedicating the round to previous players who served for our country.

The club's annual tradition not only reflects on different veteran players each year, but now awards the Most Courageous Player award, dedicated to the late William "Bill" Morgan Malin, a WWII veteran who died in the horrific Sandakan prisoner of war camp. Bill's legacy was forgotten at the club for many years but returned in 2023 through the dedication of the perpetual and memorial trophies in his honour. The perpetual trophy, held in the photo by Wests Old Boys' Association Secretary Nigel Cox, is awarded to the most courageous player of the club's most senior team.



MATESHIP



Jack Connors honoured on his 106th birthday

Long-time Coorparoo RSL Sub Branch member Jack Connors celebrated his 106th birthday at their monthly lunch on 30 October. Jack was born on 29 October 1918 and served in World War II as an artilleryman in heavy mortars. He was awarded the 75th Anniversary WWII Commemorative Medallion in recognition of his service. In a further tribute to his decades of dedication to the RSL, Jack received certificates marking 30 and 60 years of commitment to the organisation. The celebrations culminated with Jack blowing out his birthday candles, joined by Coorparoo RSL Sub Branch Vice President Ricky Skott and South Eastern District Vice President Brian Daley, who thanked him for his exceptional service.

Service honours Korean War veterans

Wreath layers at the Hervey Bay RSL Sub Branch Korean Veterans' Day service were, from left, Michelle Govers (representing Fraser Coast Regional Council), Hervey Bay RSL Sub Branch Deputy President Brad Gray, Member for Hervey Bay Adrian Tantari MP, David Lee (representing The Hon Keith Pitt Federal Member for Hinkler), and Sub Branch Committee Member Simon Morley (representing Korean War veterans). The service was held on 27 July at the Cenotaph at Freedom Park, with the contributions of HMAS ANZAC and 77SQN mentioned.



Century celebration for Tramways

Member Kevin Hansen is pictured cutting the cake at Tramways RSL Sub Branch's centenary lunch. Tramways RSL Sub Branch was formed in 1920, shortly after World War I, by ex-servicemen employed by the Brisbane City Council Transport Department. The name "Tramways" reflects the diverse roles of its members, who were tram and bus drivers, conductors, mechanics, electricians and other transport workers. The Sub Branch was officially chartered on 18 June 1924, and its membership now spans from Beenleigh to Ipswich and the northern suburbs of Brisbane to the Redcliffe Peninsula.

Over the years, the Sub Branch has moved through various meeting locations, beginning in Wickham Terrace near St. Andrew's Hospital, then to the Brisbane City Council Administration Building during Expo 88, and later to the Queensland Irish Club. Since then, the Tramways RSL Sub Branch has found a permanent home at Geebung RSL, where meetings are still held today, thanks to the hospitality extended by the Geebung RSL community.





Photo honouring animals during WWI

On behalf of the Far East Strategic Reserve Association (QLD), Navy veteran Rudi Bianchi presented a thoughtful framed photograph and poem to RSL Queensland State President Major General Stephen Day DSC AM, which will be housed at our State Branch office. The framed piece illustrates the tremendous service and sacrifice of animals during World War I.

Rudi, who is also a member of Holland Park-Mt Gravatt RSL Sub Branch, grew up in Mena Creek Queensland near the small town of South Johnstone. Growing up around horses, he developed a love for animals and wanted to have a print made to honour their significant contributions in times of war.



Ipswich connects past and present across continents

Ipswich RSL Sub Branch recently honoured Frank George Russell, a distinguished RAAF veteran who served during World War II and the Vietnam War and passed away in 2015. Frank's service spanned from 1941 to 1976, including being part of the first contingent to bring the C-130 aircraft to Australia.

His grandson, Dave Russell, reached out from the USA, seeking to understand how Australia commemorates its veterans and assistance in obtaining copies of his grandfather's medals and a folded Australian flag. Ipswich RSL Sub Branch stepped in, not only facilitating these requests but also enlisting the help of local businesses to create a shadow box that would be sent to the USA.

In a touching addition, a Quilt of Valour was presented to Master Sergeant Emily Luzum, who will deliver it to Dave. "Words can't fully express how much this means to me and our family," Dave said of the Sub Branch's extraordinary efforts. "Seeing his legacy honoured in this way brings back so many memories of the wisdom, kindness and strength he shared."

Pictured, from left, are Commander 110th Expeditionary Bomb Squadron, Lieutenant Colonel Justin Meyer, Master Sergeant Emily Luzum (also from the 110th Expeditionary Bomb Squadron), Ipswich RSL Sub Branch Secretary Debbie Wadwell and Officer Commanding, No 82 Wing Group Captain Paul Jarvis. They are pictured at RAAF Base Amberley in front of the B2 Spirit bomber that flew the box and quilt to the USA.



Queensland Governor visits Surat

The Governor of Queensland Her Excellency the Honourable Dr Jeannette Young AC PSM and her husband Professor Graeme Nimmo RFD visited Surat recently for the Cobb and Co Festival. The festival celebrated the 100-year anniversary of the last journey of a Cobb & Co coach in Australia from Surat to Yuleba in south west Queensland.

While in Surat, one of Dr Young's priorities was to lay a wreath in tribute to the fallen at the cenotaph in Memorial Park, and she requested that Surat RSL Sub Branch members join her. Pictured, from left, Queensland Police SGT Mark Perske, Sub Branch President Loren Clanchy, Past President Michael Clanchy, Dr Young, Professor Nimmo and Sub Branch Deputy President Rod Gray. Members of the public also gathered to pay tribute during the informal ceremony.



Korean Veterans' Day in Gracemere

Korean Veterans' Day was commemorated at Gracemere and District RSL Sub Branch with a small wreath-laying service and lunch at Gracemere Hotel. For Korean War veterans Geoff Arnold and Bob Hay (both from 3 RAR), the highlight of the day was talking to younger veterans.

Pictured, from left, W02 Iago Walker (Training WO, Capricornia Company, 31st/42nd Battalion the Royal Queensland Regiment), Gracemere and District RSL Sub Branch President Tony Harris (ex-infantry, RAR), Michael Fraser (3 RAR), Korean veteran Bob Hay (3 RAR), Vietnam veteran Albert Powell MBE, Barry Lollback (ex-5th/7th Battalion, RAR), and (seated) Korean veteran Geoff Arnold (3 RAR).

Southport opens at new location

Southport RSL Sub Branch celebrated its official opening at Southport Bowls Club on Saturday 24 August. The ceremony was led by RSL Queensland State President Major General Stephen Day DSC AM and marked by a wreath-laying ceremony. Following this, he conducted the official opening inside the Bowls Club and presented certificates of recognition to John and Sandy Riebeling, acknowledging their outstanding dedication to the Sub Branch.

The new Sub Branch location also houses Southport Veteran Support Centre, now in its 30th year, which operates every Tuesday and Thursday. A special highlight of the day was the attendance of 104-year-old Florence Drury, a WWII veteran who served in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force. Pictured, from left, John Riebeling, Florence Drury and Stephen Day.

Mick Purser honoured with WWII anniversary medallion just weeks before his passing

WWII veteran and longstanding Murgon RSL Sub Branch member Mick Purser was honoured in a special ceremony just weeks before his passing at 101 years old. Wide Bay and Burnett District President Neville Tarry presented Mick with the WWII anniversary medallion at Murgon RSL Sub Branch, a moment he had eagerly anticipated, and which brought him great joy. Known for his dedication to veterans and his community, Mick passed away on 26 August 2024, leaving behind a legacy of service and camaraderie that will be remembered and cherished.





Goondiwindi fires up the barbecue for a good cause

Goondiwindi RSL Sub Branch members have been serving up more than just sizzling sausages – they've been dishing out support for deserving groups in the community. In recent months, the Sub Branch has shown off its culinary chops, starting with a series of sausage sizzles outside the local hardware store. Proceeds went to the 147 Australian Cadet Unit Goondiwindi Cadets, helping to foster the next generation of local leaders.

Next, members took their barbecue to the cricket grounds to feed both the Scootaville veterans and the girls' cricket team. Among those they were cheering for was Bob Collins, one of their own Goondiwindi RSL Sub Branch members, who took part in the match. With great food and even better camaraderie, the event was a home run for everyone involved. Pictured, from left, Greg Rixon, Gerard Thom, Terry Farrell and Russell Billsborough.

A mission to honour forgotten veterans

Gympie RSL Sub Branch member Tanya Easterby (pictured with fellow member Doug Campbell) has made it her mission to honour veterans buried in Pomona Cemetery. Earlier this year, Tanya revisited the cemetery and was saddened by the condition of many veterans' graves. Some were unmarked, while others had civilian plaques without any recognition of military service. Determined to restore their dignity, Tanya pledged to ensure every veteran received the respect they deserved in their final resting place.

Since then, she has recorded the details of all service personnel at Pomona Cemetery, with six veterans already approved for official commemoration by the Office of Australian War Graves. For those whose graves remain unmarked, Tanya is actively pursuing grants to provide proper headstones or plaques. In the meantime, she has placed temporary commemorative vases at each grave to ensure that no veteran is left without recognition. Tanya's dedication stems from a promise made 25 years ago when she helped commemorate WWII veteran Colin Parr and other service men and women from the Federal/Skyring Creek area. Today, her work continues, driven by the belief that all veterans, regardless of their circumstances, should be remembered and honoured for their service.



Governor attends SED service

The Governor of Queensland Her Excellency the Honourable Dr Jeannette Young AC PSM and Professor Graeme Nimmo RFD were guests at RSL South Eastern District's Victory in the Pacific service on 10 August.





Taken during construction of a bridge at the Ford Brighton Jan 1 on the left at bottom of bridge the tide there has a rise & fall of about 13' Long the gun-boats on the boys who are working on bottom Jan are working on a board of wood standing there is some mud there

Rediscovered WWI souvenirs

In 2017, Ravenshoe RSL Sub Branch secured a community grant to renovate their hall, which included updating the kitchen and flooring. During the restoration, they discovered a small box labelled "Dads" behind a display cabinet. Inside was a treasure trove of souvenirs from Richard Rock, who served with the Australian Imperial Force during WWI.

Richard enlisted in 1916, was gassed towards the war's end, recovered and continued to serve until his discharge in 1919. Richard kept a diary, photographs, and everyday items that vividly document his service. The Sub Branch has over 100 items, which have now been photographed by a local museum.

Felix Parker honoured for 50 years of membership

Felix Parker OAM was recently honoured with a 50-year Membership Certificate for his dedication to the RSL across multiple states. Born in Inverell, NSW, in 1942, Felix served 27 years in the Air Force, retiring as Wing Commander. Since joining Queanbeyan RSL Sub Branch in 1969, his commitment to the RSL has spanned several locations, including Marrickville, Sunnybank, Lowood and Middle Ridge.

Felix has also been deeply involved in community service, including roles with Ipswich Legacy, Lowood Lions and Meals on Wheels, and was awarded Citizen of the Year by the Esk Shire Council in 1996. For his contributions, Felix was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in 2001. He remains an active committee member of Harlaxton RSL Sub Branch today. Felix, centre, was presented with the certificate by Western District President Dennis Pollard, left, and Harlaxton RSL Sub Branch President Tim McCrorey, right.



Touching visit to Hamburg Cemetery

Kuttabul RSL Sub Branch member Bruce Wolsey recently visited the WWI grave of his great-uncle Leslie Bastin Franks, who died during World War I. Leslie, a Lance Corporal in B Company, London Regiment (Queen Victoria's Rifles), was wounded and taken prisoner in the Somme, ultimately dying from his injuries in a POW hospital on 30 July 1916 at age 26. On 30 July 2024, Bruce visited Ohlsdorf Cemetery in Hamburg, Germany, where Leslie is interred.

The well-maintained cemetery, surrounded by trees and cared for by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, offers a peaceful setting. Bruce found poppies near his accommodation, laid them on Leslie's headstone, and recited the Ode. Hamburg Ohlsdorf Cemetery is the largest non-military cemetery in the world, housing three Commonwealth war graves plots with a total of 708 World War I servicemen, as well as burials from World War II and post-war eras.



Family fun and festivities

South Eastern District hosted its annual Community Family Day on 28 September at the Western Districts Rugby Football Club. This event was a hit with families, offering a day packed with fun and entertainment. Attendees enjoyed free show rides, a variety of food trucks, military equipment displays and performances by the Army Band. The event also featured an animal nursery, cadets from the Navy, Army and Air Force, RSL Sub Branch displays and Veteran Gaming Australia.



WWII veteran celebrates 100th birthday surrounded by family and RSL community

On 24 September, Maryborough RSL Sub Branch President Mel Stephens, board members and State Deputy President Wendy Taylor, had the honour of attending WWII veteran Geoffrey Hawken's 100th birthday celebration. Geoff, who enlisted in 1942 in Gan Gan, NSW, and served with the 2/5 Battalion until April 1946, was surrounded by family members who travelled far to mark this special milestone. He was presented with certificates from RSL Queensland and the Department of Veterans' Affairs, recognising his service. Additionally, the Sub Branch gifted him a set of Army Hat Badges, which, according to his daughter Suzanne, filled him with joy.

World War II medallion for 99-year-old veteran

Bowen RSL Sub Branch member Wally Horn was presented with his World War II medallion by Roger Hine. Wally celebrated his 99th birthday on 16 August.



A changing of the guard

Major Dave Simmons (Retd) has stepped down as President of Springwood Tri Services RSL Sub Branch after years of dedicated service. Recognised for his leadership, Dave was honoured with a special presentation on ANZAC Day.

With 20 years in the Army and a key role in Queensland Health and hospitals, Dave brought his expertise to Springwood Tri Services in 2016, serving as Welfare Officer, Vice President and President. His wife, Andrea Simmons, a former Army nurse and operating theatre nurse, has also shown remarkable dedication to both country and community. Together, they leave a lasting legacy.





Nine Quilts of Valour presented

Crows Nest RSL Sub Branch and Quilts of Valour (QOV) have been busy, recently presenting handmade quilts to nine veterans. This initiative, in collaboration with the Craft Nest Sewing Club, honours and supports veterans and their families by providing quilts that symbolise gratitude, care and comfort. These quilts serve as tangible reminders of appreciation, offering warmth and solace to veterans recovering from injuries or facing hardships.

The presentations, often held at the Sub Branch or delivered directly to the recipients' homes, highlight the dedication of Crows Nest RSL Sub Branch, QOV Coordinator Laticia Hollman and local volunteers in recognising the service and sacrifices of Australian veterans. Veteran George Hunt is pictured receiving a quilt from Crows Nest RSL Sub Branch welfare officer Mark Berkovich, President Greg Watt and QOV coordinator Laticia Hollman.

Young boy's generosity sparks ongoing community support

Twelve years ago, Caleb Ward (then 11 years old) requested extra money at softball games. It was revealed that he was sharing his food with a local homeless man. His father, Ron Ward, was initially concerned but proud of Caleb's generosity. This sparked an annual community event to support the homeless. It now includes an annual sleepout in Queens Park and recently expanded to support veterans with essential-filled backpacks.

Blackbutt RSL Sub Branch distributed 15 of these backpacks to families in need in their local area. Pictured, from left, Redbank RSL Sub Branch President Paul 'Bear' Sinclair, Caleb Ward, Redbank RSL Sub Branch Vice President John Trehwella and Brett Clifford.



Nebo Auxiliary keeps ANZAC spirit alive

Nebo RSL Sub Branch, established in 1944, was sustained largely through the efforts of Bill Bruce, who served as both secretary and president for over six decades. With dwindling membership leading to the Sub Branch's closure in 2016, Bill's dedication continued, including his instrumental role in establishing the Nebo Citizens Auxiliary in 2012. This Auxiliary enabled the community to continue holding ANZAC and Remembrance Day ceremonies, enhancing the remembrance of local veterans.

Over the years, the Auxiliary undertook extensive projects, including restoring photos of veterans displayed in Nebo's Memorial Hall. In 2021, the Auxiliary collaborated with Nebo State School to create an ANZAC garden, a tribute maintained by the students, fostering remembrance in the next generation. Although the Nebo community mourned the loss of Bill Bruce on Remembrance Day 2023 at 106 years old, his legacy endures through the Auxiliary's ongoing projects. They aim to compile a booklet of local digger stories and establish an outdoor honour board for the Memorial Hall. The Auxiliary's efforts ensure that Nebo's ANZAC spirit remains vibrant, honouring past sacrifices and inspiring future generations to carry the legacy forward.

105-year anniversary celebrations

On 15 September, Sherwood-Indooroopilly RSL Sub Branch celebrated its 105th anniversary with a lunch attended by 60 members. During the event, guest speaker RSL Queensland State President Major General Stephen Day DSC AM shared his vision around mateship. The Sub Branch first opened its doors in September 1919 as Sherwood RSL Sub Branch, with just over 80 members.

Now, 105 years later, Sherwood-Indooroopilly RSL Sub Branch supports over 360 members. Sub Branch President Glenn Mostyn is pictured with Pam and Ron McElwaine OAM RDF ED. Ron is a past president and Life Member who was awarded a 30-year certificate at the event.



Bulimba organises family bowls day

Bulimba District RSL Sub Branch held its annual Christmas in July Barefoot Bowls Battle of the Branches Family Day at Bulimba Memorial Bowls Club on 28 July. Members attended from Bulimba, Coorparoo and Redlands RSL Sub Branches.

The winning team was Max and Pauline from Bulimba. The event was supported by the Department of Veterans' Affairs, representatives from DVA Insurance and Fuel for Life. Members are already looking forward to next year's challenge, which will hopefully involve even more Sub Branches.



Celebrating a significant birthday for WWII Army veteran

A celebration with cupcakes, candles and camaraderie marked Kawana Waters RSL Sub Branch member and WWII veteran Adrian Nall's 103rd birthday on Wednesday 30 October. Adrian served as a Signals Officer and Lieutenant with the 55th Battalion and 55/53 Battalion in Papua New Guinea during WWII. He was part of Australia's armed forces who defended bravely against the Imperial Japanese Army along the Kokoda Track.

For his 103rd birthday, Arcare Aged Care Facility in Birtinya along with the Kawana Waters RSL Sub Branch, hosted a celebration for his family, friends and fellow residents. "To honour a veteran that served so long ago and in such a terrible area such as Kokoda is just incredible. He is a very special person who wears his medals every day; he is so proud of his service," said Kawana Waters Deputy President Gary Penney.

Pictured, from left, Paula Pidgeon, Kawana Waters RSL Sub Branch President Jeff Pidgeon, Adrian Nall, RSL Queensland State Deputy President Wendy Taylor, Kawana Waters RSL Sub Branch Secretary David Adams, Kawana Waters RSL Sub Branch Deputy President Gary Penney and Jeffery Oliver. Adrian passed away peacefully in his sleep on 12 November.

From Army driver to high seas voyager

Pine Rivers RSL Sub Branch member Mark Raison, a former Australian Army driver with 19 years of service, had long dreamed of embarking on a sailing adventure. During his time in the Army, he was involved with the ADF Academy sailing club and although he had organised several self-sailing holidays during his time, they never materialised. That changed when he was selected to join the Lo Spirito Di Stella catamaran for the Brisbane to Cairns leg of the Wheels on Waves (WoW) World Tour 2023-2025.

Despite the intense, non-stop five-day journey, with shifts of two hours on and four hours off, along with kitchen and cleaning duties, Mark found the experience exhilarating. The trip fulfilled his sailing aspirations, offering him the chance to work alongside full-time sailors, including members of the Italian Defence Force, as the crew filmed a documentary for Italian public broadcasting. After nearly three decades of advocacy for the RSL and specialising in DVA matters as a paralegal, this adventure was a meaningful personal achievement for Mark.





If you or someone you know needs support, please contact
Open Arms on **1800 011 046** or Lifeline on **13 11 14**.

RESEARCH ALIGNS WITH ROYAL COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

The final report from the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide acknowledges two major turning points for every member of the Australian Defence Force (ADF): recruitment and transition.

THE TWO MAJOR LIFE TRANSITIONS

Transition refers to the journey of a veteran and their family from an ADF service-centred life to a predominantly civilian life. This process begins well before the official departure from the ADF and can extend long after, often bringing profound changes and leading to feelings of lost purpose and identity.

Many ex-serving members struggle to secure civilian employment and maintain social connections. Transition itself can place a considerable burden on the individual, increasing the risk of psychological disorders and suicide – especially for those who are medically or involuntarily discharged.

With Australian research indicating that around 78% of transitioning members face challenges leaving military service and 50% reporting difficulties reintegrating into civilian life – even up to 10 years post-separation – addressing risk factors and strengthening protective factors is critical.

The Royal Commission has called for improved early intervention and prevention of mental health problems among current and

ex-serving Defence members through evidence-based programs.

GMR AND RSL QUEENSLAND'S TOOLS SUPPORT SMOOTHER TRANSITIONS

Gallipoli Medical Research's (GMR), M-CARM (Military to Civilian Adjustment Measure) and MT-READY (Mental Readiness for Military Transition Scale) tools, developed in partnership with RSL Queensland, are examples of the expert research translated into tools that will have a real and lasting impact on improving the health and wellbeing of the veteran community.

The Royal Commission also highlighted the importance of enhancing current screening tools to assess the psychosocial readiness of Defence members for their transition and adjustment to civilian life. The report recognised the M-CARM and MT-READY psychosocial tools created by the GMR / RSL Queensland partnership as notable examples.

The Commission has further recommended expanding existing screening tools and processes to "assess members' psychosocial readiness for transition, focusing on areas such as purpose and connection, help-seeking

behaviours, beliefs about civilians, and regimentation and adaptability." These areas were specifically recognised as vital for readiness to transition, validating GMR's M-CARM research.

SHAPING FUTURE VETERAN SUPPORT

GMR's Research Lead – Military Families, Associate Professor Miranda Van Hooff, was on the Lived Experience and Research Advisory Committee for the Royal Commission and has closely followed the proceedings and findings.

"The research and planning that we're already doing is consistent with a number of the Royal Commission's recommendations," Assoc Prof Van Hooff says.

GMR continues to develop a growing body of research dedicated to understanding, defining, measuring and improving transition and reintegration outcomes for ADF members.

"As an organisation dedicated to advancing medical research and finding tangible solutions to the complex health challenges faced by our veteran community, we acknowledge the gravity of the recommendations put forth by the Royal Commission," GMR CEO Miriam Kent says.

The M-CARM tool, its companion online training program Go Beyond and MT-Ready were developed over a seven-year program of research in partnership with RSL Queensland. These tools are available online and free of charge, Australia-wide.

BELOW:
GMR's Research
Lead – Military
Families
Associate
Professor
Miranda
Van Hooff.

BACKED BY
RESEARCH BY

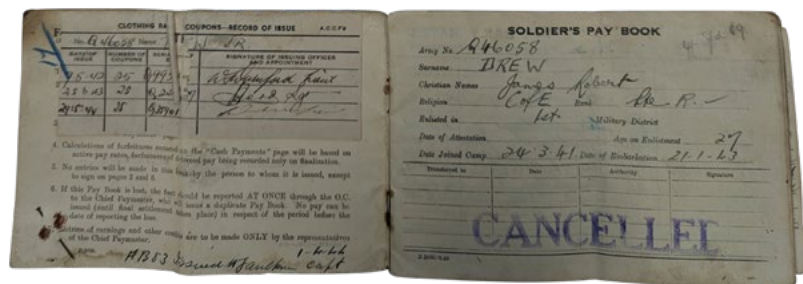


GALLIPOLI
MEDICAL RESEARCH
Research with Impact



Learn more at m-carm.org.

COMMUNITY CONNECT



WWII SOLDIER'S PAY BOOK FOUND

A soldier's pay book relating to the service of World War II veteran James Robert Drew has been handed to the Hervey Bay RSL Sub Branch. The Sub Branch would like to pass this artefact on to the soldier's family. For more details, please contact Memorabilia Officer Simon Morley at subbranch@herveybayrsl.com.au.



DO YOU KNOW THE NAMES OF THESE SOLDIERS?

The Enoggera and District Historical Society holds this image of three young World War I recruits in its collection. The Society doesn't know who these young men are but wonders if perhaps two of them are brothers. Does anyone know their names? The archives are held in the Memorial Hall, Enoggera, close by Gallipoli Barracks. If you have any information, please contact the secretary via historycentral@protonmail.com.

CAN YOU HELP REUNITE THIS TREASURED LOCKET WITH ITS RIGHTFUL FAMILY?

Do the faces in this antique locket look familiar? Vicki Wyatt was handed this precious keepsake during her travels in Peru, South America, and entrusted with the mission of returning it to Australia. Now, she hopes to reunite it with its long-lost family. If you recognise these two individuals or have any information, please get in touch with Vicki at viksplanet@gmail.com or 0423 540 720. Let's bring this locket home!



REUNIONS

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.

OFFICER TRAINING UNIT, SCHEYVILLE

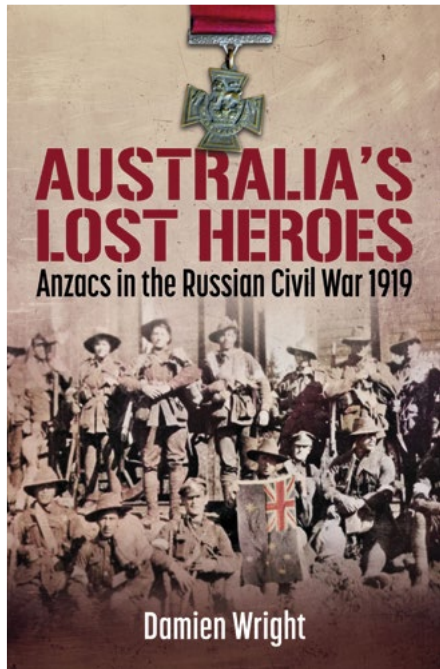
A 60th anniversary reunion will be held by the very first class of OTU Scheyville, Class 1/65, from 14 – 18 July 2025 at Maroochydhore on Queensland's Sunshine Coast.

The focus will be on Wednesday 16 July 2025, the anniversary of arrival at OTU Scheyville in 1965. This day will include a commemorative service, graduate lunch and a gala dinner. Other activities are planned during the week. All graduates from Class 1/65 as well as wives/partners are welcome.

They also want to hear from any directive staff who were mentors and instructors of that Class in the second half of 1965. Please contact either Laurie Muller via 0418 788 493 or lcsmuller@bigpond.net.au, or David Beasley via 0409 441 123 or dugara@bigpond.net.au.

WIN

AUSTRALIA'S LOST HEROES



This book is both an engaging military history and an enthralling mystery. *Australia's Lost Heroes* tells the astonishing little-known story of the Australian soldiers who fought the Red Army in Russia in 1919 and the personal odyssey, 100 years later, to locate and identify the lost grave of Victoria Cross hero Sergeant Samuel Pearse VC MM.

The ANZAC volunteers fought an arduous campaign punctuated by fierce ambushes in thick forest, swamps and marshes, and attacks on fortified bunkers. They also had to fight a war within, avoiding the treachery and mutiny of White Russian 'allies'. Remarkably, two Australians were awarded the Victoria Cross, one posthumously. Yet, unlike the reverence, recognition and commemoration afforded to WWI soldiers, not only do the deeds of ANZACs in Russia remain unrecognised, but their graves also lie lost and forgotten.

Follow the author's journey to a remote corner of Russia with the grandson of Samuel Pearse in the hope of identifying the lost grave. Guided by a Russian battlefield archaeologist, they discover an astonishing clue which may resolve the mystery of an Australian hero missing for 100 years.

Australia's Lost Heroes by Damien Wright is published by Big Sky Publishing (RRP: \$32.99).

FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN one of four copies of *Australia's Lost Heroes*, email your name, address and contact number to editor@rslqld.org (with the subject 'Australia's Lost Heroes') or post to 'Australia's Lost Heroes', PO Box 629, Spring Hill Qld 4004. Competition closes 15 January 2025.

STOP SCREAMING, I'M SCARED TOO

Stop screaming, I'm scared too! is not what you'd expect to see on the back of a loadmaster's helmet in a Chinook helicopter flying over southern Afghanistan, but for Rod Henderson it sums up his 22 years of service as a soldier in the Australian Army.

During the busiest period in the Army's history, Rod was deployed to East Timor, Papua New Guinea, Pakistan and Afghanistan. In Australia, he was involved in counter terrorism operations and disaster recovery. From an infantry paratrooper to Chinook loadmaster and Black Hawk door gunner, Rod reveals an enthralling and unique perspective of service.

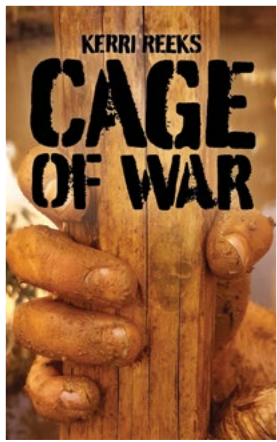
Whether it is 'right place, wrong time' or just unlucky, he found himself in a series of life-threatening and traumatic events. Each one took a toll. Accepting the physical injuries and mental health challenges from his service, Rod found healing in the hallowed halls of the Australian War Memorial.

This is not the story of a general or a Special Forces hero. It is the extraordinary memoir of a regular Australian soldier. Like so many others who have served their country with honour and distinction, the little-known stories of ordinary soldiers deserve to be told.

Stop Screaming, I'm Scared Too by Rod Henderson is published by Big Sky Publishing (RRP: \$32.99).

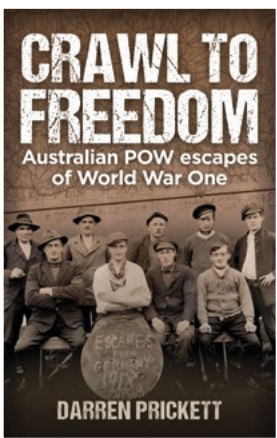
FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN one of four copies of *Stop Screaming, I'm Scared Too*, email your name, address and contact number to editor@rslqld.org (with the subject 'Stop Screaming, I'm Scared Too') or post to 'Stop Screaming, I'm Scared Too' PO Box 629, Spring Hill Qld 4004. Competition closes 15 January 2025.





FOR YOUR CHANCE

TO WIN one of four copies of *Cage of War*, email your name, address and contact number to editor@rslqld.org (with the subject 'Cage of War') or post to 'Cage of War', PO Box 629, Spring Hill Qld 4004. Competition closes 15 January 2025.



FOR YOUR CHANCE

TO WIN one of four copies of *Crawl to Freedom*, email your name, address and contact number to editor@rslqld.org (with the subject 'Crawl to Freedom') or post to 'Crawl to Freedom', PO Box 629, Spring Hill Qld 4004. Competition closes 15 January 2025.

CAGE OF WAR

Australian soldier James 'Ned' Kelly is captured in Vietnam in the late 1960s by the Viet Cong. He's held alongside others in a bamboo cage, embedded into the Mekong riverbank. They are rescued, seemingly by US special forces, but the rescuers are part of a rogue CIA team called 'Tiger Hunts', which is involved in clandestine war tourism.

Kelly is rehabilitated at their base of operations, an estate on a rubber plantation near the Laos border. While recovering, he meets a mysterious woman who will eventually lead him further into danger.

Although he remains sceptical, he is left with little choice but to join the estate's operations. Kelly doesn't take long to realise things are very wrong at this jungle base, including theft of foreign aid, drug trafficking, political assassinations and war crimes.

Kelly is trapped in this 'cage of war' until a tiger hunt goes wrong, and Kelly is wounded, left for dead. Again, he is rescued and finally sent back home to Australia.

Discharged from the Army, he settles down in the scenic Adelaide Hills, but an explosive chain of murderous events threatens his life, family and friends. Can Ned ever be free of this 'Cage of War'?

Cage of War by Kerri Reeks is published by Moonglow Publishing (RRP: \$19).

CRAWL TO FREEDOM

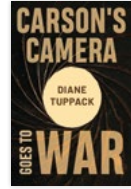
During World War I, more than 4,000 Australian servicemen were taken prisoner. Individual stories of these men are often told from the perspective of life as a prisoner of war (POW). It could be assumed that the Australian POWs of WWI passed quietly into captivity. The opposite was in fact the case.

Many ANZACs attempted escape, with over 40 successfully making their way to England or across the battlefields of Western Europe to allied lines – to ultimately score home runs! *Crawl to Freedom* is a collection of stories of those successful home runs.

From enlistment to capture, the journeys and efforts of the escapees are forensically explored as the ANZACs fight for their freedom. The astonishing stories tell of mateship, courage and determination in the face of adversity. These soldiers succeeded in overcoming their hardships to fulfil their ingenious endeavours to escape.

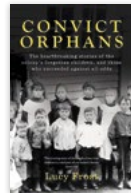
Crawl to Freedom by Darren Prickett is published by Big Sky Publishing (RRP: \$32.99).

QUEENSLAND RSL NEWS WINNERS EDITION 3, 2024



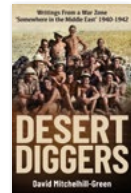
CARSON'S CAMERA GOES TO WAR

N Wales, Hampden
W Stephen, Bargara
L Hillberg, Alderley
P Harrison, Annandale



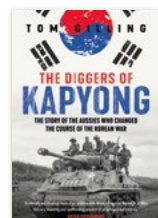
CONVICT ORPHANS

M Smith, Stones Corner
A Hutchinson, Delaneys Creek
T Fawcett, Bungadoo
W Davies, Hollywell



DESERT DIGGERS

M Sforcina, Maclean
D Lulham, Tarragindi
D Carroll, Bundaberg North
G Dugdale, West End



THE DIGGERS OF KAPYONG

E O'Brien, Tolga
J Fredrick, Meadowbrook
I Whisker, Cooroy
B Brown, Bapaume

** 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
Ablin	Pearl	100816	Hervey Bay Sub Branch
Acton	Leslie	R37517	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Adams-White	Frederick	2/5947	Proston Sub Branch
Agnew	John	1731530	Emu Park Sub Branch
Ahern	John	R45948	Townsville Sub Branch
Albrecht*	Samuel	29793	Redlands Sub Branch
Alcock	Errol	O216432	Ipswich Sub Branch
Alderton	Kevin	3793313	Burleigh Heads Sub Branch
Arnold	Geoffrey	2/8045	Gracemere & District Sub Branch
Awcock	Pamela	W113566	Greenbank Sub Branch
Baines	Geoffrey	3796757	Emu Park Sub Branch
Baker	Peter	A28657	Ipswich Sub Branch
Baker	William	15963	Nambour Sub Branch
Baker*	Kevin	B3915	Caloundra Sub Branch
Barlow	Dorothy	QFX60470	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Barlow	Trevor	1733266	Bundaberg Sub Branch
Barnett	Paul	R134701	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Bazley	Keith	R111990	Southport Sub Branch
Beahan	Allan	125028	Harlaxton Sub Branch
Beard	Raymond	1201375	Kuranda Sub Branch
Beasley	James	A223548	Bribie Island Sub Branch
Beattie	Percival	VX63462	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Beaverson	Ernest	R51020	Sherwood-Indooroopilly Sub Branch
Beckett	Graham	1/720512	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Bell	Colin	1736755	Wynnum Sub Branch
Bellas*	Jim	Q266421	Hellenic Sub Branch
Bengtsen	Maureen	F1/1852	Gympie Sub Branch
Bird	Brent	24050775	Bundaberg Sub Branch
Bird	Stephen	18451	Ipswich Sub Branch
Black	Jeffrey	R42735	Redcliffe Sub Branch

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	SERVICE NUMBER	SUB BRANCH
Blanch*	Hardie	NX53111	Caloundra Sub Branch
Bolton	Leslie	28501	Stanthorpe Sub Branch
Booth	Leigh	1731752	Currumbin/Palm Beach Sub Branch
Bowman	Denis	116712	Redlands Sub Branch
Brack	Anthony	214517	Cairns Sub Branch
Bray	Kenneth	2/748851	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Briggs	Harold	A5515	Hervey Bay Sub Branch
Brodie	Harold	QX52838	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Brown	Peter	72152	Hervey Bay Sub Branch
Brown	Ian	5638NS	Bribie Island Sub Branch
Brown*	Charles	73713	Runaway Bay Sub Branch
Browne	John	NX132799	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Brunker	Ian	A221861	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Bryant	John	2/8850	Cooktown Sub Branch
Bryson	Colin	A14492	Townsville Sub Branch
Bullen	Eileen	NF410600	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Bullock	Ronald	A39569	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Burgess	Kenneth	1202563	Bray Park-Strathpine Sub Branch
Burnard	William	486	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Burrage	Peter	4334111	Beenleigh & District Sub Branch
Burrows*	Colin	02460	Currumbin/Palm Beach Sub Branch
Burton	Michael	A100167	Cooroy-Pomona Sub Branch
Byrne	Robert	2/724850	Redlands Sub Branch
Byrne	Kevin	48095	Warwick Sub Branch
Carey	Edward	A116444	Clifton Sub Branch
Carson	Robert	632976	Surfers Paradise Sub Branch

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	SERVICE NUMBER	SUB BRANCH
Cartwright	James	SSX833100	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Clapham	Albert	N20695	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Close	Barry	1730790	Unattached List
Clothier	Bruce	127208	Taroom Sub Branch
Colgan*	Charles	2/732990	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Collins	Kevin	R127685	Hervey Bay Sub Branch
Collyer	Dennis	C3026	Coorparoo & Districts Sub Branch
Colombus	Laurie	NZ645011	Hervey Bay Sub Branch
Connelly*	Reginald	B2024	Caloundra Sub Branch
Connor	Matthew	181863	Magnetic Island Sub Branch
Conyers	Gary	2183866	Maryborough Sub Branch
Cook	Maud	2161791	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Cooke*	Donald	1/717740	Maryborough Sub Branch
Crabb	Betty	ACW101591	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Cumberland	Brian	A313650	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Cunningham	Robert	6410021	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Curtis	Gwenydd	W169283	Tamborine Mountain Sub Branch
Davidson	Alan	S119666	Gladstone Sub Branch
Davis	Geoffrey	2/759236	Stanthorpe Sub Branch
Davis	Kevin	15375	Yeronga-Dutton Park Sub Branch
Deed	Raymond	1921	Sherwood-Indooroopilly Sub Branch
Deeks*	John	105	Boonah Sub Branch
Desmond	Joseph	A13423	Ipswich Sub Branch
Dillon	Raymond	A216785	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Dobie	Raymond	15553	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	SERVICE NUMBER	SUB BRANCH
Donaldson	Graeme	A38145	Maroochydore Sub Branch
Downes	Joyce	NF452646	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Doyle	Aidan	B5684	Surfers Paradise Sub Branch
Drinkwater	George	22413590	North Gold Coast Sub Branch
Eacott*	Carolyn	1950012	Sherwood-Indooroopilly Sub Branch
Eagle	Terrence	1/710598	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Eastick*	John	PM3927	Cardwell Sub Branch
Easton	Cecil	1/709092	St George Sub Branch
Edwards	Garry	8439830	Nundah-Northgate Sub Branch
Eggleton	William	R53280	Redlands Sub Branch
Eldridge	Lester	3/2170	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Ellis	Keith	WO587141	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Evans	Anthony	3177907	Mapleton Sub Branch
Ewart	Malcolm	214801	Hervey Bay Sub Branch
Fahy	Terry	P/K975322	Beenleigh & District Sub Branch
Fairhead	Barry	55029	Magnetic Island Sub Branch
Fathers	Geoffrey	R36558	Runaway Bay Sub Branch
Fitzallan	Patrick	133625	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Fogarty	Walter	A29730	Hervey Bay Sub Branch
Forbes	Craig	186964	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Franghis	Dimitri	A322459	Nanango Sub Branch
Frawley	Brian	1802211	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Ganter*	Clarence	1/706444	Rockhampton Sub Branch
Gehringer	John	QX46868	Townsville Sub Branch
Gibson	Russell	1/706541	Finch Hatton Sub Branch

LAST POST

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	SERVICE NUMBER	SUB BRANCH
Gierke	John	1/10322	Sherwood-Indooroopilly Sub Branch
Gilbert	Dorothy	VF508235	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Gosselin	Christian	032087	Rosewood Sub Branch
Granata	Ernest	1706002	Townsville Sub Branch
Graves	John	R94022	Bribie Island Sub Branch
Gray	David	22496199	Maryborough Sub Branch
Green	Terrence	1/709428	Beenleigh & District Sub Branch
Green	Raymond	541402	Sherwood-Indooroopilly Sub Branch
Griffiths*	Clifford	1119	Toowoomba Sub Branch
Guilfoyle	John	1/717921	Pine Rivers District Sub Branch
Gunning*	Wayne	S132451	Millmerran Sub Branch
Haines	Noel	V213482	Redcliffe Sub Branch
Hansen	Desmond	15699	Maryborough Sub Branch
Harvey*	Jean	F1/160	Redcliffe Sub Branch
Hawkins	Neville	2/757912	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Heppes*	Jadwiga	1922/112/ IV	Redcliffe Sub Branch
Herbert	Edward	13023	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Hill	Arthur	A217862	Hervey Bay Sub Branch
Hill	Nicholas	3207834 / 8229097	Unattached List
Holland	Clifford	46716	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Honeywill*	John	QX32818	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Hoy*	Bernard	1704523	Wynnum Sub Branch
Hudson	Alan	28294	Currumbin/Palm Beach Sub Branch
Hudson	Robert	2111733	Cooroy-Pomona Sub Branch
Hunt*	Lindsay	NX170589	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	SERVICE NUMBER	SUB BRANCH
Hunter*	R	QX28528	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Hutchinson*	Mary	VF396699	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Hutton*	Myrtle	QF266894	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Jeffreys*	Darcy	124508	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Jones	Kenneth	A1746	Kawana Waters Sub Branch
Jones*	Russell	58374	Gracemere & District Sub Branch
Jordon	Dennis	NX84564	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Jorgensen*	Christian	168182	Cooroy-Pomona Sub Branch
Kapernick	Noel	1/703899	Murgon Sub Branch
Kehl	Albert	129154	Herbert River Sub Branch
Kemp	Norman	R94979	Nanango Sub Branch
Kent	Reginald	151353	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Kent	Michael	1733343	Greenbank Sub Branch
Kiely	Ronald	129429	Townsville Sub Branch
King	Reginald	327306	Greenbank Sub Branch
King	Lynn	QX40467	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
King*	Paul	2/759891	Wynnum Sub Branch
Knudsen	Colin	A17893	Hervey Bay Sub Branch
Kopelke	Owen	111379	Wynnum Sub Branch
Korrel	Daniel	R121460	Goodna Sub Branch
Krivohlavy	Zdenek	5302424	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Lalor*	Gregory	QX33979	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Larking	Michael	22705846	Bribie Island Sub Branch
Lawrence	Arthur	151308	Clermont Sub Branch
Leather-barrow	Frank	R57059	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Lee	Eric	27006414	Maroochydore Sub Branch

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	SERVICE NUMBER	SUB BRANCH
Lee	William	213510	Pine Rivers District Sub Branch
Leonard*	Frank	1456	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Lettice	Ian	129516/ 130416	Townsville Sub Branch
Levick*	Harold	453081	Holland Park Mt Gravatt Sub Branch
Ling	Irene	F18272	Redlands Sub Branch
Lingard*	Albert	QX44572	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Little	Raymond	VX74291	Maryborough Sub Branch
Little	Robert	1/720685	Hervey Bay Sub Branch
Love	Keith	A11756	Stanthorpe Sub Branch
Lynch*	Mary	100823	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
MacFarlane	Ralph	VX60887	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Macintyre	Michael	22191472	Geebung Zillmere Bald Hills Aspley Sub Branch
Mackay*	William	3/92435	Ravenshoe Sub Branch
MacLennan	Donald	VX125107	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
MacLulich	Neil	1/701148	Gympie Sub Branch
Manning	Robert	4715699	Kawana Waters Sub Branch
Martin	Trevor	A18291 (441156)	Tamborine Mountain Sub Branch
Mathews	Noel	NZ344910	Bribie Island Sub Branch
McClelland	Douglas	QX45192	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
McCormack	Rodney	18852	Springwood Tri Services RSL Sub Branch
Mccormick*	Francis	75240	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
McDonald	Donald	431572	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
McDowall	Robert	Q27015	Toowong Sub Branch
McGee	James	16579	Killarney Sub Branch
Mcgilvery*	Esther	99261	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	SERVICE NUMBER	SUB BRANCH
McKenzie*	Gwen	VF388745	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
McKie*	William	1/702729	Unattached List
McLeod	Patricia	F28089	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Mcrae*	Norma	VF346734	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Menadue	Ernest	453085	Gaythorne Sub Branch
Millers (nee Worth)	Olive	W19534	Bundaberg Sub Branch
Millican	Colin	1733239	Kingaroy/Memerambi Sub Branch
Mills	Frank	266326	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Minhinnett	Frank	1/13384	Centenary Suburbs Sub Branch
Minney	Malcolm	4/1736	Greenbank Sub Branch
Miscamble	Desmond	13447	Redlands Sub Branch
Mitchell*	Terence	111091	Edmonton Sub Branch
Moore	Kenneth	A27426	Burleigh Heads Sub Branch
Moore	Leonard	2/737214	Kawana Waters Sub Branch
Moore*	Leonard	14267546	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Morrison	John	13816	Gaythorne Sub Branch
Muhling	Malcolm	1202076	Blackbutt Sub Branch
Muller	Mark	8256103	Thuringowa Sub Branch
Mullings	Roland	1201607	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Mullings	Roland	14200	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Munro	Ronald	408915	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Murphy	James	A14892	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Mynott	George	VX501314	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Narramore	Phillip	R94081	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Neale	Walter	A112681	Bribie Island Sub Branch

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LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	SERVICE NUMBER	SUB BRANCH
New*	Roy	QX56227	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Nichols*	Guilford	QX56984	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Nichols*	Clifford	453293	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Nielsen*	Mervyn	Q122004	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Noll	Elsie	105577	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Nuss	Stewart	1733367	Esk Sub Branch
Oliver	Robert	22837594	Ipswich Railway Sub Branch
Olsen	Anthony	R50509	Gympie Sub Branch
O'Neill	Matthew	1/706413	Finch Hatton Sub Branch
O'Shea	Shaun	A58104	Hervey Bay Sub Branch
O'Shea*	Kevin	QX44096	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
O'Shea*	Bevin	16594	Greenbank Sub Branch
Owen	Frank	23352056	Hervey Bay Sub Branch
Padey*	Kenneth	214255	Redlands Sub Branch
Page	Brian	36023	Yeronga-Dutton Park Sub Branch
Palfery	Patricia	NF454891	Sunnybank Sub Branch
Palmer	Horace	22637326	Kenmore/Moggill Sub Branch
Parry	Merfyn	R46334	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Parsons	Ernest	23584984	Macleay Island Sub Branch
Patterson	Joseph	215511	Southport Sub Branch
Paul	Francis	1/709836	Marian Sub Branch
Pepper*	Vera	99297	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Perry	Robert	A110989	Redcliffe Sub Branch
Pethybridge	Richard	NX136076	Bundaberg Sub Branch
Pettigrew	Michael	0316344	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Pezet*	Harold	58463	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	SERVICE NUMBER	SUB BRANCH
Picking	Norman	A115463	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Podmore*	Thomas	Q1181	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Poor	Gregory	A180238	Blackbutt Sub Branch
Porter*	James	QX23877	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Powell*	Betty	QF144126	Maroochydore Sub Branch
Pratt	Barry	R58176	Currumbin/Palm Beach Sub Branch
Preston	Barry	37940	Townsville Sub Branch
Preston*	John	2411837	RSL QLD State Branch
Price	Leslie	1/729015	Hervey Bay Sub Branch
Friday	Phillip	A12767	Townsville Sub Branch
Primrose	John	1/61887	Finch Hatton Sub Branch
Pringle	Norman	2/86500	North Gold Coast Sub Branch
Ptasznik	Marian	1434	Holland Park Mt Gravatt Sub Branch
Purcell	Ralph	22309243	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Purser	Alfred	43670	Murgon Sub Branch
Quane	John	1732773	Coorparoo & Districts Sub Branch
Quayle*	Henry	QX43467	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Quealy	Matthew	57007	Mareeba Sub Branch
Reinking*	Leendert	200830020	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Reynolds*	Edward	S2293	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Richards	Kenneth	42924	Bribie Island Sub Branch
Richards*	Wilfred	–	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Rickard*	Guy	433152	Townsville Sub Branch
Riddell*	Barry	214089	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Rinkin	Donald	R47954	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Roberts	William	3/6788	Caloundra Sub Branch

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	SERVICE NUMBER	SUB BRANCH
Roberts	David	E431365	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Robinson	James	08493	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Robson	Geoffrey	A116033	Redlands Sub Branch
Rohov	Michael	A222844	Currumbin/Palm Beach Sub Branch
Ross	Grahame	3969	Townsville Sub Branch
Rowan	Margaret	W/308428	Forest Lake & Districts Sub Branch Inc
Rowbotham	Geoffrey	170924	Ipswich Sub Branch
Rowbottom	Peter	A314601	Ipswich Sub Branch
Ruxton	John	N3873/ NX505783	Springwood Tri Services RSL Sub Branch
Sargeant	Graham	223705	Southport Sub Branch
Savieri	Peter	32421	Hervey Bay Sub Branch
Scammell	Toby	180096	Home Hill Sub Branch
Schafer	William	155999	Tully Sub Branch
Scutts	Thomas	A216411	Hervey Bay Sub Branch
Shaw*	Glen	A100963	Wynnum Sub Branch
Sheardown*	Charles	402213	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Shoesmith	John	421404	Sherwood-Indooroopilly Sub Branch
Shute*	Robert	75865	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Sillett*	Ronald	24547	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Simmonds*	Edward	QX37210	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Simmons	Evelyn	F28051	Tewantin/Noosa Sub Branch
Simpson	David	R62697	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Sinton	William	31698	Allora Sub Branch
Smart*	William	NX149336	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Smith	Jeffrey	08688	Kenmore/Moggill Sub Branch
Smith*	George	1624616	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	SERVICE NUMBER	SUB BRANCH
Smith*	John	B4985	Pine Rivers District Sub Branch
Smith*	Dora	QF141658	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Smoothy*	Norman	1/713675	Proston Sub Branch
Snape	William	1733663	Gemfields Sub Branch
Stafford*	Brian	33760601	Southport Sub Branch
Stannard	Jack	41767	Rosewood Sub Branch
Stapleton	Lindsay	VX134716	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Starkoff	Lynn	113598	Hervey Bay Sub Branch
Steadman	Ivan	2/765602	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Steele	William	18826	Bundaberg Sub Branch
Stephens	Donald	O218999	Tewantin/Noosa Sub Branch
Stevens	David	8181778	Hervey Bay Sub Branch
Stevens	David	A235854	Hervey Bay Sub Branch
Stewart	Gregory	109727	Maryborough Sub Branch
Stick	Charles	1/715877	Bundaberg Sub Branch
Strahan*	Valerie	108116	Southport Sub Branch
Sturt	Walter	JX430038	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Tangye	Alan	3636NS	Farleigh & Northern Beaches Sub Branch
Tawns	Hugh	1204268	Isis Sub Branch
Taylor	Leslie	3/1625	Mudgeeraba-Robina Sub Branch
Thomas	Leslie	1900326	Redcliffe Sub Branch
Thompson	Ellen	W14759	Beenleigh & District Sub Branch
Thompson	James	289674 / 8247670	Kawana Waters Sub Branch
Thygesen	Charles	1700138	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Tildesley	Henry	R332952	Gaythorne Sub Branch
Tinsey	Keith	CJ/ X720416	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Titely*	Albert	961999	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch

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LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	SERVICE NUMBER	SUB BRANCH
Tomkins	John	1/00214	Greenbank Sub Branch
Tomlinson	John	2/742601	Tamborine Mountain Sub Branch
Trail*	Archibald	77880	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Trethowan	Alma	VF397436	Currumbin/Palm Beach Sub Branch
Tuahine	John	E41841	Redcliffe Sub Branch
Tunney*	Jack	Q302284	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Turnell	Beresford	33100	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Vandersee*	Clarice	QF271585	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Verity	Margaret	W/219501	Redcliffe Sub Branch
Vidler	Shirley	F1/8	Bayside South Sub Branch
Volter	John	147245	Bray Park-Strathpine Sub Branch
Walker	Graham	NX120983 (N205626)	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Wallace*	Patricia	QF142465	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Wallace*	Lloyd	B2535	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Walpole	Robert	A38902	Beachmere Sub Branch Inc
Wanklyn	Peter	S112734	Cooktown Sub Branch
Warr	Douglas	1/709313	Warwick Sub Branch
Waters	Richard	B5191	Currumbin/Palm Beach Sub Branch
Waters*	Cecil	QX16216	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Watson	Kevin	R117445	Gin Gin Sub Branch
Watson*	Frederick	102673	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Watterson	Neville	A219168	Helidon Sub Branch
Weaver	Geoffrey	R51013	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Webster-Young*	Crayston	626161	Cairns Sub Branch
Wendorf*	Melville	Q18957	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Weston*	Norman	QX21518	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	SERVICE NUMBER	SUB BRANCH
White*	Lesley	QF270773	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
White*	Frank	6399712	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
White*	Malcolm	2742367	Palmwoods & District Chapter of the Sunshine Coast & Regional District
Wilkinson	John	0223864	Runaway Bay Sub Branch
Williams	William	R29944	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Williams	Trevor	22896454	Hervey Bay Sub Branch
Williams	Roy	NX132835 (N103262)	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Williams*	James	A61263	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Williams*	Arthur	351389	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Williams*	John	Q153958	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Williamson	Colin	14282	Sherwood-Indooroopilly Sub Branch
Wiltshier*	Trevor	73369	Beenleigh & District Sub Branch
Winkle*	Leslie	QX42467	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Winter	William	1/722024	Bundaberg Sub Branch
Wintle	Geoffrey	A11592	Currumbin/Palm Beach Sub Branch
Wiseman	Graham	A17097	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Witt	Robert	R50295	Greenbank Sub Branch
Wolf	Harry	A120018	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Wolverson*	Norman	24000999	Tewantin/Noosa Sub Branch
Wootton	Thomas	A18852	Beenleigh & District Sub Branch
Yates*	William	1713682	Springsure Sub Branch
Zeidler	Maxwell	R45192	Ipswich Railway Sub Branch
Zeller	Peter	1/729298	Beenleigh & District Sub Branch

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FEATURED TITLE:

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.

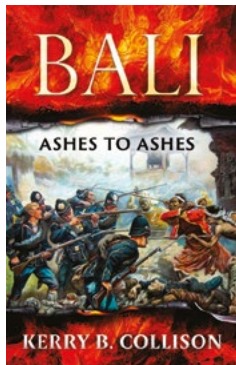
Providing simple health care in nearby villages gives her a sense of purpose, but then personal tragedy strikes, testing her to her limits. Unexpected new relationships, born in part of the tragedy, help her through her grief and encourage her to stay.

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.



ISBN: 978-1-922958-65-5

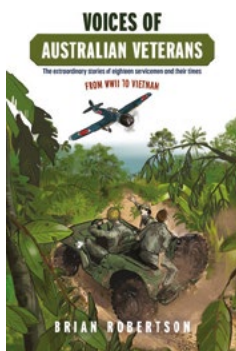
RECENT RELEASES:



ISBN: 978-1-922958-45-7

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.

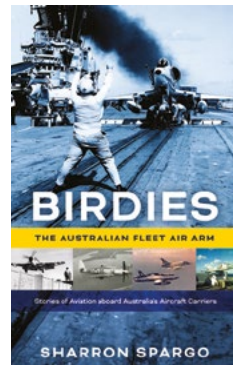
Five chapters offer an Australian perspective on world affairs from 1940 to 1970.



ISBN: 978-1-922958-09-9

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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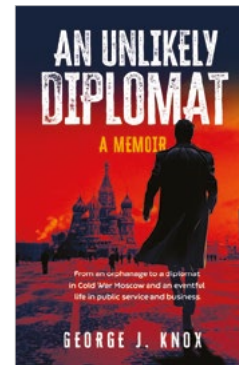
Quiet achievers in the most dangerous workplace in the world...

They are the 'Birdies' – the proud members of a unique fighting force unknown to the majority of Australians whose land and lives they have long protected.

Officially known as the Australian Fleet Air Arm, they have operated as an aviation component of the Royal Australian Navy since 1947.

Their "airfields" are the decks of purpose built aircraft carriers, landing strips pitching and rolling in deep blue water.

This fascinating book places these quiet achievers, the Birdies, in their rightful place in Australia's naval and aviation history.

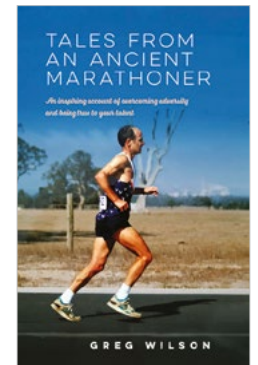


ISBN: 978-1-922958-21-1

WARD OF THE STATE – AIR FORCE – BRITISH NUCLEAR TESTS VETERAN – COLD WAR DIPLOMAT – BUSINESS

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.

This is an inspiring account of overcoming adversity and being true to your talent.



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