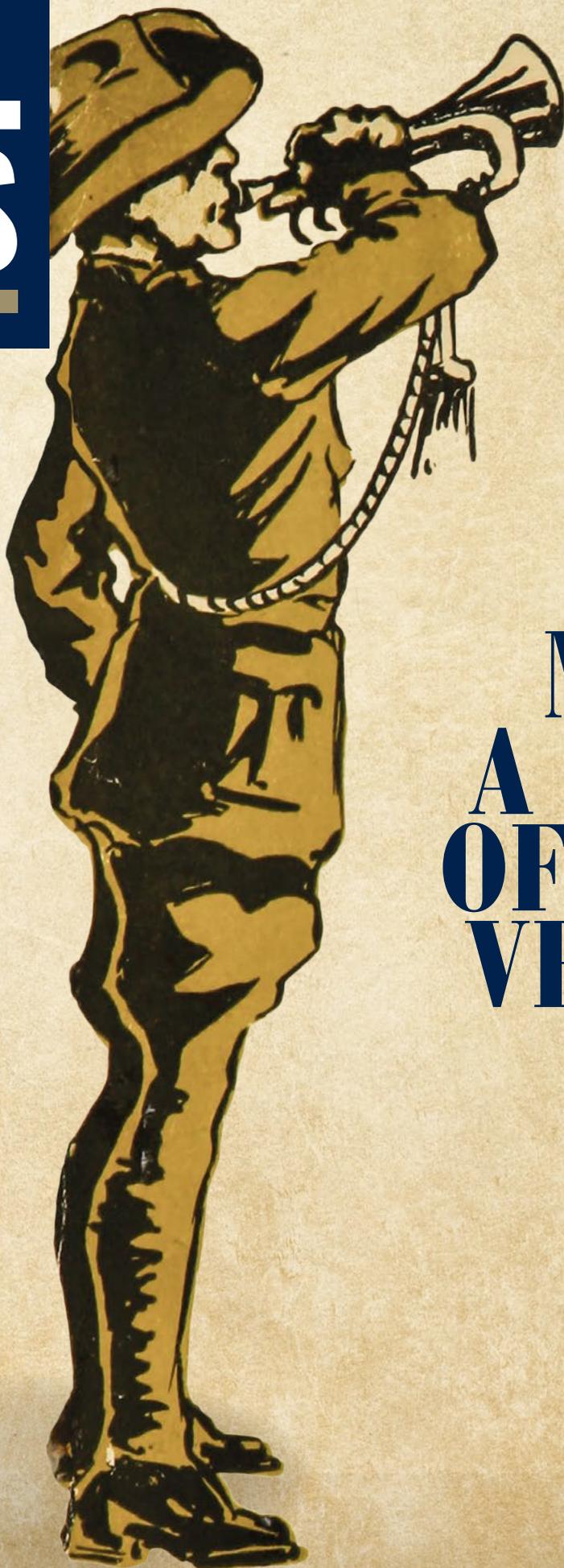


QUEENSLAND
RSL
NEWS



**MARKING
A CENTURY
OF TELLING
VETERANS'
STORIES**



RSL
Queensland

2025 // EDITION 01

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

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CALL US TO DISCUSS OUR SERVICE.

FEATURED TITLE:

Our Australia Day

Australia's prosperity is no accident; it stems from the foundation laid by our forebears. Australians enjoy safety, equality, and wealth, advantages many in other nations can only dream of.

This book is divided into five parts:

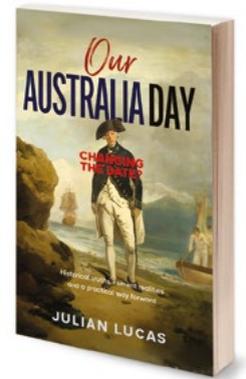
Part One covers colonialism during the First Fleet era, slavery, the Fleet's composition, and its journey.

Part Two argues that if Australia and its allies had lost the world wars, Aboriginals likely would have faced persecution and extinction.

Part Three examines Aboriginal life at the time of settlement, the impact of diseases, dispossession, and missionaries.

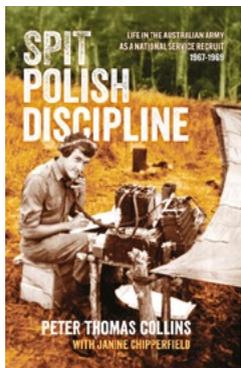
Part Four discusses the 'stolen generation' and compensation for the trauma caused by dispossession.

Part Five addresses moral concerns, the government's 'closing the gap' policy, the Uluru Statement, the Aboriginal flag, and efforts to improve the future for Aboriginals affected by cultural issues.



ISBN: 978-1-922958-89-1

RECENT RELEASES:



ISBN: 978-1-922958-93-8

Happy living life as an ordinary young Aussie bloke of 19, bank teller Peter Collins' life is thrown into chaos when he finds himself a 'lucky' winner in Australia's National Service Scheme lottery of 1967.

Follow Peter's journey as a Nasho as he undergoes Recruit and Infantry Training at 3TB Singleton where the often funny, sometimes humiliating, spit and polish tactics of army personnel leave him with a greater understanding of the importance of discipline and mateship.

Selected as part of the 6th Battalion's advance party to Vietnam in May 1969, Peter gets a crash course not only in jungle warfare but in the pub trade as he becomes the new steward of the Seldom Seen Inn, 6RAR Delta Company's (DCoy) boozier in Nui Dat. As he attempts to resume civilian life as an initially shunned Vietnam Veteran, Peter finds out that war cannot fail to scar the psyche or to have an insidious impact on all aspects of life.



ISBN: 978-1-922958-71-6

"The Chant from Monte Bello" examines the naval role, particularly that of the Royal Australian Navy (RAN), during the British Atomic tests conducted in the Monte Bello Islands in the 1950s. Through vivid storytelling, it explores the complexities of this historical event, showcasing both the positive and negative aspects.

Readers are immersed in the challenging and unsafe conditions faced by the Australian and British naval forces, offering a first hand perspective of their operations amidst the atomic testing.

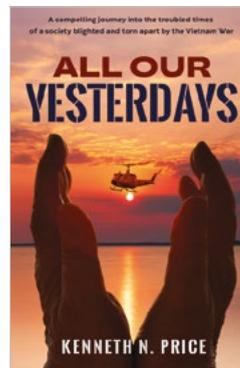
Ultimately, the book encourages readers to reflect and form their own conclusions about the impact of these testson the navies involved and their subsequent trajectory.



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. .



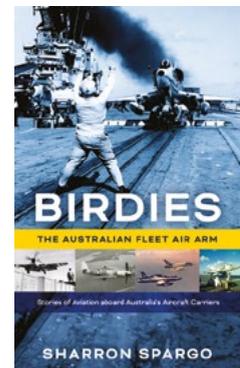
ISBN: 978-1-922958-84-6

Travel with Jason Freeman, a young Australian conscript, as he journeys from a loving home into the troubled times of a society blighted and torn apart by the Vietnam War.

Witness a young generation struggle with the changes being wrought upon it from an emerging sex, drugs, and rock 'n roll culture. Follow David, a young man from the old rich section of Melbourne society, as he successfully navigates all the challenges that his changing society throws at him.

Meet two young women of Melbourne, Sarah who shows us the dignity that comes from her compassion, and Clarissa who displays the confidence and independence of her new ideas. Watch as Nick and Toby try to lock themselves away from the personal suffering of their past.

This period became what John Kenneth Galbraith referred to as The Age of Uncertainty. An uncertainty that embraced the whole Free World.



ISBN: 978-1-922958-47-1

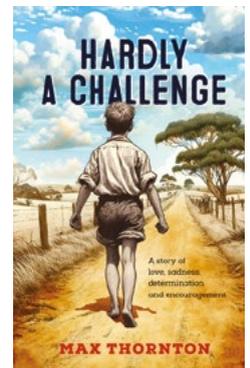
Quiet achievers in the most dangerous workplace in the world...

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: 978-1-922958-86-0

Hardly a Challenge gives the reader a first-class ticket to travel with an exceptionally persistent man from the early 1940s. It's a true account of the statement, 'To get the rainbow, you first have to weather the storm'.

You will share the best and worst with Max and his loved ones as they discover luck rarely comes free – you have to earn it, and you'll find some luck usually goes along for the ride. It shows the true meaning of Aussie grit and to never give up reaching for your dreams.

The reader will come face to face, along with Max, with people of no substance and utterly lacking in morals along with those of courage and compassion. This heartfelt story will bring a smile to the reader's face and a tear to their eye as life gives them examples of how it can bare its teeth.

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



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CELEBRATING A CENTURY OF VETERAN STORIES

This year, we reflect on the 100-year editorial journey that began as *The Queensland Digger*. Officially launched in April 1925, *The Queensland Digger* set in motion the publication that you're reading today. In the spirit of celebration, we showcase some highlights from previous editions and reflect on the people who brought them all to life.

40

BEHIND THE ZOO

The Veterans' Wildlife Studies Program gives veterans the opportunity to discover what it's like to be a zookeeper, while also connecting with nature, purpose and community.

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YOUNG VETERANS HONoured IN COTTON TREE CENOTAPH UPGRADE

Maroochydore RSL Sub Branch has played a proud role in upgrading its local place of remembrance.

55

CARINA MEN'S SHED CELEBRATES SUCCESS OF DEDICATED VETERANS' PROGRAM

Carina Men's Shed offers veterans an outlet for learning new skills and connecting with a supportive community.



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ROLLING TOGETHER

Mareeba veterans are boosting wellness through wheelbarrow racing.



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GLADSTONE WAR RELIC RESTORATION

A rusty Bofors gun is inspiring a future generation of tradies, mentored by local veterans.

64

UNCOVERING THE QUALITIES OF A COMPENSATION ADVOCATE

With a background in health, Chanara Hawkes has always wanted to help people but has now found her new purpose.

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EMBRACING THE COMMUNITY OF ST HELENS

After serving in the Defence Force for more than 25 years, Barbara Farren-Price understands the importance of building a sense of community.

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A VETERAN NETWORK CHAMPION FOR EX-SERVING PERSONNEL

Ken Orr's dedication to service has extended beyond his family's legacy through his active involvement with the Gold Coast Health Veteran Employee Network.

72

CHRONICLES ABOARD AUSTRALIAN CORVETTES DURING WORLD WAR II

World War II Navy veterans and Corvette-class crewmen Alan Grimmer and Allan Quartermaine reflect on their service aboard and ashore during the war and their experiences once they finally returned home.



This cover image was inspired by *The Queensland Digger* Vol 1. No. 1 published on 14 April 1925, featuring the iconic image of a bugler.

100 years of recognising veterans

THIS year, we celebrate the 100th birthday of *The Queensland Digger*, a remarkable record of our organisation's history, values and stories. For a century, the magazine has recognised our veterans, preserved our traditions and connected members across generations.

Its significance is deeply personal to many, like a soldier I met who serves in Melbourne. She told me that she's a member in Queensland because, in part, that means she receives *Queensland RSL News*, which connects her to her late father, a long-time member and avid reader, recalling memories of the magazine on their coffee table at home.

This milestone is a powerful reminder of how our magazine fosters belonging and preserves our shared legacy. A milestone the Prime Minister has recognised in his letter to us (see page 25).

TWO BOARD POSITIONS ARE UP FOR ELECTION

As you may be aware, two Board positions are up for election this year – Vice President (Vice Chair) and a Skills-based Director. Nominations are due to close at 5pm on Friday 21 March 2025 and the positions will be voted on by delegates at the Annual General Meeting on 21 June.

These positions are vitally important to the success of our organisation. They help set the leadership tone, advance our interests and demonstrate the behaviours and values of RSL Queensland.

I urge you to connect with fellow members to ensure your delegate is well-prepared to cast their vote on behalf of your Sub Branch.

ROYAL COMMISSION INTO DEFENCE AND VETERAN SUICIDE

The Federal Government's response to the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide, delivered in late 2024, marked a significant step forward, with 104 of 122 recommendations agreed to or agreed-in-principle. As I reflect on both the Royal Commission's report and the Government's response, it seems clear to me that to achieve a material reduction in the suicide rate, the focus needs to be on transition.

Four key recommendations are worth highlighting: DVA's role in supporting transition, enhancing civilian qualifications, providing separating members with a skills reference, and establishing a veteran wellbeing agency.

To assist transitioning veterans, RSL Queensland has three areas of focus. The RSL Employment Program helps veterans find meaningful work through career guidance, skill translation and interview coaching. Veteran-centric research, in partnership with Gallipoli Medical Research, seeks to understand the physical and mental impact of service, shaping better support tools. Advocacy remains a priority, ensuring veterans' needs are clearly communicated to key stakeholders.

I believe it is the right time for us to review the services that we offer. I intend to say more about this at our mid-year State Congress.

OUR PLANS FOR 2025

As we prepare for the year ahead, I wanted to call out three areas where most of my attention will be focused.

My main priority will be making sure that the leadership and tone of our organisation matches the nobility of our purpose. We are in the business of providing care,

commemoration and camaraderie to veterans and their families. It is imperative that this remains our focus in all that we do.

My second focus area will be building on commemorations. This year we will support the League to help our Sub Branches and the broader community mark the 110th ANZAC Day in April and the 80th anniversary of the end of WWII, known as Victory in the Pacific Day, in August.

My third goal is to continue developing a balanced and accurate veteran narrative. We are highly trained Australians who embody values like mateship, courage and humour.

While some mates need support, we as a group aren't broken. We continue to contribute to our communities and our country, and I look forward to discussing this further.

I also look forward to continuing my travels across the state, visiting more of the League through our 232-strong Sub Branch network to better understand what matters most to veterans in every corner of our state.

May the year ahead be productive and rewarding for all.

Stephen Day



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

Honouring our Vietnam Heroes



Endorsed by the
Defence Force Welfare
Association of Australia



VIETNAM MEMORIAL RING

- Plated in rhodium and 24K gold
- Poignantly engraved
- Free memorial booklet commemorating the Fallen



Those diggers who served in Vietnam fought with a diligence and tenacity that made Australia proud. The Australian Vietnam Forces National Memorial in Canberra remembers those who served their country in a profoundly moving way. Today the Memorial inspires the “Vietnam Memorial Ring”, available exclusively from The Bradford Exchange.

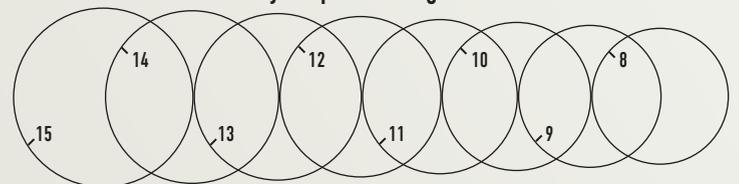
Expertly hand-crafted and plated in rhodium for maximum shine and brilliance, the ring’s design is inspired by the walls of the memorial, which feature images, inscriptions and quotes detailing the Vietnam experience. Our ring shows a hand reaching out to one of the walls to “feel” the emotion of the words that speak up for a generation of young diggers. The other wall is inscribed with “Lest We Forget” to commemorate those who fell in service of their country. Rich 24K gold plate enhances the scene. The inner band of the ring is finely engraved with the heartfelt words “Mateship, Loyalty and Remembrance”.

Available for a limited time only

A poignant tribute to our Vietnam heroes, the unique ring is an exceptional value at just 5 instalments of \$49.99 or \$249.95, plus \$19.99 postage and handling - backed by our 365-day return policy for complete peace of mind. Just go to bradford.com.au/141650 now, call (02) 9841 3311 anytime or return your coupon today.



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Reflecting, honouring and continuing our mission

YOU blink and 2024 is complete, making way for a new year filled with opportunities.

We ended the year on a high note, with growing membership and 700 Christmas hampers delivered to deserving recipients across Queensland, Tasmania and the Northern Territory. Thank you to everyone who contributed.

HONOURING CHRIS MCHUGH'S LEGACY

We were saddened by the recent passing of former RSL Queensland CEO Chris McHugh CSC. While I didn't personally know Chris, his tenure following a distinguished career in the Air Force had a lasting impact.

REMAINING RELEVANT TO THE VETERAN COMMUNITY

I'm often asked how RSL Queensland remains relevant to veterans. I must emphasise that RSL Queensland's role is to enable and support the work done by members across the League.

Rather than drawing a direct line from specific investments to outcomes, it's the combination of activities – some of which I'll address below – that makes the League a place where veterans see value.

Enhancing support for current serving

In recent years, we've increased our focus on supporting current serving members, partnering with Defence to build trusted relationships with serving members earlier in their careers.

We have embedded staff across several military establishments in response to Defence requests.

We've also supported brigades' Human Performance Frameworks, investing in wellbeing initiatives covering rehabilitation, mental health, resilience and physical health. These programs have evolved from centre-based delivery to broader outreach, enhancing engagement with serving members.

In addition to providing veteran-focused services that address key social concerns for separating members, such as compensation and employment services, RSL Queensland – in partnership with Gallipoli Medical Research – developed two key tools that help serving members understand what psychological factors may impede them from experiencing a positive transition. This proactive engagement with separating members enables RSL Queensland to help veterans achieve a better quality of life before they may face greater need.

Sharing the League's stories

We've made a concerted effort to 'tell' rather than 'sell', focusing on bringing the League's stories to life through our channels.

Our teams have been, and will continue to be, actively working with Sub Branches to share the stories of our members and highlight the role of the Sub Branches in the community. With 130,000 Queensland veterans yet to join the RSL, our goal is to connect with them by showcasing shared experiences and the impact of Sub Branches.

A secondary benefit is capturing and preserving the League's history, ensuring future generations

understand its significance. Our teams view this work as a privilege and thoroughly enjoy these engagements.

Investing in the League's future

We continue to invest in the League across Queensland and collaborating with our State Branch counterparts. Whether through the Chartable Objects Fund, District funding, merchandise, IT systems, grant support or service delivery, we believe these investments will help guide potential members to Sub Branches.

HONOURING A CENTURY

As we enter 2025, we celebrate the centenary of *The Queensland Digger*. For 100 years, our publications have preserved stories of service, camaraderie and community.

This edition features a special tribute, including a partial reprint of the first edition. Our growing membership reflects the RSL's ongoing relevance as we honour our origins while looking to the future.

Robert Skoda



RSL Queensland Chief Executive Officer Robert Skoda



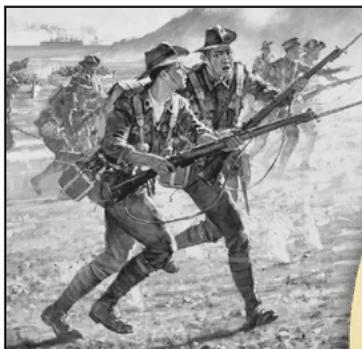
Endorsed by the
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WORLD WAR I HEROES HONOURED



Centenary of the End of the First World War Remembered

Historic 24-carat gold-layered coin collection honours those who served



A generation experienced the horrors of war on an unprecedented scale



At the Western Front, in France and in the Middle East, Allied soldiers served with courage and honour

'End of WW1 Centenary Commemorative Collection'

Our debt to those who fought and fell in the 'war to end all wars' is immeasurable - making it more important than ever that we remember their courage with a lasting commemoration. To ensure their sacrifice is not forgotten, a very special crown coin collection has been released: 'The Centenary of the End of World War 1 Golden Crown' - a fully layered with pure 24-carat gold collector's edition coin. The design honours the fallen with a moving, raised relief portrait of a digger remembering his mate, set against a backdrop of the rising sun. In the foreground, a field of poppies, the symbol of remembrance, are created in hand-applied red enamel, providing a vibrant contrast to the pure, 24-carat gold.

It creates a touching counterpoint to the hallowed words 'Lest We Forget' from

Laurence Binyon's poem 'For the Fallen' which forms the Ode of Remembrance. Poppies, crafted in vibrant enamel, have been inspired by John McCrae's moving poem In Flanders Fields, symbolising our eternal respect and remembrance of our fallen heroes. Struck to a high specification and layered in pure 24-carat gold, only 19,999 numbered issues will ever be minted. Issue One is available now for only \$39.99 - a saving of \$50.00 - plus \$9.99 postage and handling. Due to the extreme limitation, only the earliest responders will successfully secure this proof coin honouring our World War I heroes. A Certificate of Authenticity detailing important provenant information pertaining to the coin, will be issued with each edition of the collection. Peak collector interest

is all but assured for this commemoration to those who served and with the potential of a swift, early sell out of the 'Centenary of the End of World War 1 Golden Crown Commemorative Collection'.

Order Issue One, 'Centenary of the End of World War 1' Golden Crown now for just \$39.99 - a saving of \$50.00 - plus \$9.99 postage and handling.

By ordering now, you will have priority access to further coins in 'Centenary of the End of World War 1 Golden Crown Commemorative Collection'. Each issue shipped to you will be charged using the original payment method you use to place your order, so no need to order each item

separately. When you choose a collection, subsequent issues will be automatically sent to you at regular intervals for just \$89.99 plus \$9.99 postage and handling per coin. However, you only pay for those items that you love, and you may cancel at any time, totally obligation free. You get to see each coin before you pay for it. Our Risk-Free Subscription Plan means you don't have to worry about missing out on each new coin as they're released. Even better, you're never under any obligation to keep any coin you don't love. Collect as many as you like and if you're not entirely happy you can cancel your collection at any time by calling 02 9841 3311.



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Shown larger than actual size of 38.6mm



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The impact of our services in 2024

RSL Queensland is here to help you and your family every step of the way by providing care, commemoration and camaraderie.



“

The consideration and attention to detail when interacting with a client. The genuine care and interest extended when discussing and listening, and assistance given. – *Veteran*

”

“

Understanding advocates who know the DVA complex process and get it done! Communication is great and get better than ever expected results. Well done to all concerned, especially my advocates who went beyond the call of duty. – *Veteran*

”

“

My wellbeing advocate was highly responsive to my needs and concerns and also provided exceptional support and guidance throughout for me and my family. He was a lifeline during a very difficult time. His support and guidance were invaluable. I appreciate his time greatly. – *Veteran partner*

”

In 2024, thousands of veterans and their families were supported through a range of impactful services and programs to help in real and meaningful ways.



7,304 veterans and their families supported

by our services to improve their health and wellbeing.



358 jobs secured

in meaningful employment for veterans and their partners.



7,465 incoming enquiries

handled, referring veterans and their families to services that suit their needs.



6,152 claims and appeals

submitted to the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA).



2,386 individuals welcomed

and supported across our Veteran & Family Wellbeing Centres in Brisbane, Cairns, the Sunshine Coast and Townsville.



238 veterans and their families housed

in safe, permanent accommodation they can call home.



1,043 nights in short-term accommodation

provided for veterans and their families travelling from regional areas for medical treatment.



RSL
Queensland

Strengthening our League in 2025

AS we commence 2025 and our Annual General Meetings (AGMs) across the League, it's a good time to reflect on key themes from last year.

At our 2024 State Congress, we focused on camaraderie and the vital role Sub Branches play in enabling and delivering a safe and welcoming environment for veterans, members and their families.

We also touched on the basic principles of 'being a good human', giving each other a 'fair go', and listening to each other with respect and without judgement.

If we stick to these basic principles, approach issues respectfully and place our organisation and its people before ourselves, I'm confident we can contribute to a constructive and effective League in 2025.

This year, I'd like to continue focusing on our individual and collective capacity across the League and offer four guiding principles for us to consider:

- 1. Individual responsibility** – at all levels of the organisation, understand that our choices and actions can have consequences, both positive and negative. How can we all make positive changes?
- 2. Appropriate governance** – not all Sub Branches operate the same way or require the same level of governance throughout the year. Is your Sub Branch doing too much or too little?
- 3. One team** – not all decisions will meet everyone's expectations, but once a formal decision has been made, it's important to support the organisation. If you have concerns, consider discussing them constructively rather than continuing to push for a different outcome.
- 4. Veteran focus** – we should look beyond our current membership to ensure we are creating an environment that welcomes all veterans.

Iain Carty



**RSL QUEENSLAND STATE
SECRETARY IAIN CARTY CSM**

MAIL BOX

SEEKING INFORMATION ABOUT THE OHAMA COAL MINE

I READ with interest the article 'Honouring the memory of the Sandakan prisoners of war' in *Queensland RSL News* Ed 4 2024 pages 24-25. I have read many books on the subject.

My father (QX22576 – 2/19 Battalion) was among many POWs in the coal mines of Ohama on the island of Honshu during World War II. While there are lots of books on the steelworks and the shipyards, I can find almost no information about the coal mine.

Can anyone help me with information? Please contact me via 0435 383 936 or pickwildave@bigpond.com.

Allan Dempsey
Laidley RSL Sub Branch

CORRECTION TO PHOTO CAPTION

IN *Queensland RSL News* Ed 4 2024 we included a photo of Vietnam veterans at the Oakey RSL Sub Branch Vietnam Veterans' Day service (page 45).

The order of the names was incorrect and should have read "from left to right, Lance Weise, Owen Keane and Colin Schulz". We apologise for this error.



Learn more at anzacspirit.com.au

ABOVE: Members of the 41st Battalion march through the streets of Brisbane on ANZAC Day, 1916. (AWM: P07316.001)

ANZAC DAY 2025: 110 YEARS SINCE GALLIPOLI

ON ANZAC Day 2025 we will commemorate a significant anniversary – 110 years since the Gallipoli landing of 25 April 1915. The Gallipoli landings were the first major military action of World War I that involved Australian and New Zealand forces. Anticipated as a swift

operation to remove Turkey from the war, the campaign extended into an eight-month ordeal, resulting in more than 8,700 Australian fatalities and 19,441 wounded.

The acronym 'ANZAC' stands for Australian and New Zealand Army Corps. It first appeared in military records in early 1915.

The inaugural ANZAC Day was officially recognised in 1916, providing a collective moment for the nation to mourn its fallen.

Canon David Garland, an Anglican priest from Brisbane, contributed to the local order of service used in Brisbane after the war.

Over the years, ANZAC Day has evolved to honour all Australians who have served.

As we approach this milestone, we thank the hundreds of RSL Sub Branch volunteers who are working tirelessly to prepare for ANZAC Day commemorations. ←

RSL QUEENSLAND MEMBERS RECOGNISED

A number of veterans and RSL Queensland members have been recognised for their outstanding service to the community.

2025 AUSTRALIA DAY HONOURS LIST

Congratulations to the RSL Queensland members who have been named in the Australia Day 2025 Honours List.

Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in the General Division:

- **Gary Lex Gibson,**
Springfield Lakes
- **Jennifer Marian Waldron,**
Bullyard

RSL Queensland would also like to recognise **Founder and President of 42 for 42, Sean Mulqueen,** who was also awarded an OAM in the General Division.

2025 AUSTRALIA DAY ACHIEVEMENT MEDALLIONS

This year, as part of the 2025 Australia Day Achievement Medallion awarded by RSL Australia, 14 recipients from RSL Queensland were recognised for the exceptional work they do within the RSL community.

Congratulations to:

- **Barbara Farren-Price,** St Helens RSL Sub Branch
- **Barry Vains OAM,** RSL Central Queensland District
- **Bruce Alladice,** Cunnamulla RSL Sub Branch
- **Christopher Silvester,** Mudgeeraba-Robina RSL Sub Branch
- **Deborah Scott-Ranson,** RSL Queensland State Branch
- **Graeme Davis,** Tiara RSL Sub Branch
- **Ian Gray,** RSL South Eastern District
- **John and Naomi Enchong,** RSL Sunshine Coast and Regional District
- **John Eyles,** Bowen RSL Sub Branch
- **Judy Alterator,** RSL South Eastern District
- **Karron Carney,** Ipswich Railway RSL Sub Branch
- **Kenneth Roma,** Kedron-Wavell RSL Sub Branch
- **Lloyd Williams,** Weipa RSL Sub Branch
- **Louise Swanborough,** RSL Queensland State Branch



RSL CEOS FROM ACROSS AUSTRALIA GATHER IN BRISBANE

IN November 2024, RSL State Branch CEOs from across the country came together to reinforce our ongoing commitment to veterans and their families.

It's positive to see proactive collaboration and alignment

between the State Branches and to have the opportunity to collectively discuss outcomes that best support the veteran community.

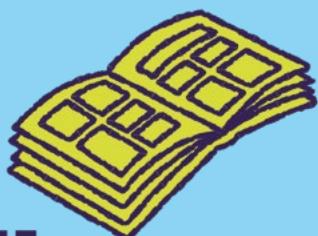
We look forward to continuing this collaboration in support of the wider

veteran and Defence community.

Pictured from left to right: RSL Tasmania CEO John Hardy, RSL New South Wales CEO Giles Hurst, RSL Western Australia CEO Stephen Barton, RSL ACT

CEO Kimberley Hicks, RSL Queensland CEO Robert Skoda, RSL Victoria CEO Sue Cattermole and RSL Australia CEO Phil Winter. RSL South Australia/Northern Territory CEO Tara Belton joined by video link. ←

**COMMUNITY &
WORKSHOPS &
STORIES &
LOCAL HISTORY &
TECH HELP &
LARGE PRINT &
AUDIOBOOKS &
FAMILY HISTORY &
BELONGING &
SO MUCH MORE**



**HOW
DO YOU
LIBRARY?**

#howdoyoulibrary



Discover more at your library

There are more than 325 public libraries and Indigenous Knowledge Centres (IKCs) across Queensland. In every bustling city and regional town, libraries and IKCs are social, cultural and digital hubs that offer much more than you think.

Libraries are places for everyone to connect to knowledge, ideas, technology, creativity, history, activities, community and so much more

- Connect with your community through workshops, events, bookclubs and more. Many libraries host dedicated seniors' programs.
- Libraries hold an extraordinary variety of materials in their collections, including veteran biographies and autobiographies. Many libraries offer online, outreach or home delivery services to support members who may be unable to get into a library.
- Dive deeper into the past with searches of local records and newspaper articles and photos. Many libraries have their own local studies collections.
- Access the digital world through access to free wifi or on a public computer. Many libraries also offer tech support or training sessions.
- Did you know that libraries also hold collections of larger print books to make it easier for people with sight impairment?
- Access recordings of books from every genre. Listening to audiobooks while occupied with other tasks is a great way to enjoy stories.
- Unearth the family tree. There's always a fascinating connection to make. Use the local library's free Ancestry subscription to investigate your family history.

Drop in to your local library to discover how much more there is for you and your family.

STATE LIBRARY
QUEENSLAND



Queensland
Government

2025 RSL REC CONNECT EVENTS ANNOUNCED

From camel tours to sandblasting, this year's RSL Rec Connect events are not to be missed! Check out what's on.

KEEN to learn a new craft, go on a new adventure, or make new friends? Then don't miss these fun, free events on offer through RSL Rec Connect.

RSL Rec Connect offers a diverse calendar of recreational events for veterans, Defence members, and their families throughout

the year. It's a great way to boost your wellbeing and get to know others in the veteran and Defence community.

SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

From outdoor activities and excursions to creative, hands-on workshops, there's something for all interests and fitness levels.

Event registrations will open four to six weeks before each event, so keep your eyes peeled for an event in your region!

NEW FRIENDS, HAPPY MEMORIES

Melissa Sullivan has attended kayaking and woodcarving events with her mum June and her veteran dad Steve. "I really enjoy the diversity

of activities on offer," she says.

"I also enjoy the conversations, and the happiness it creates for my dad. He's had health issues over the last few years and Mum has taken on a carer role.

"Rec Connect gives all of us a relaxed, enjoyable way to socialise and try new activities that we mightn't otherwise try. You also get to learn about other services that RSL Queensland can provide.

"I highly rate the Rec Connect program and look forward to joining other events in the future. The RSL Queensland team is always very welcoming and ensure you take away happy memories."

KEY DETAILS

RSL Rec Connect events are held throughout the year in various locations across Queensland. Veterans, current serving Defence, and family members are welcome.

There's no cost to attend Rec Connect events, thanks to RSL Queensland. ←



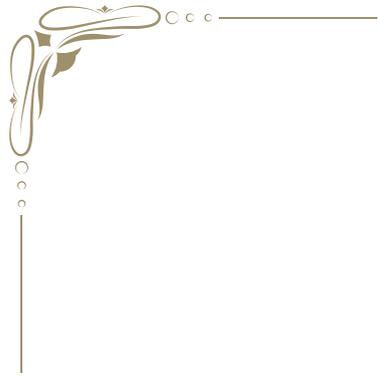
[LEARN MORE](#)



THIS YEAR'S EVENT LINE-UP* FEATURES:

DATE	ACTIVITY	LOCATION
February	Terrarium workshop	Brisbane
March	Billabong Sanctuary zoo tour	Townsville
March	Clay workshop	Gympie
May	Camel tour	Ipswich
July	Archery and giant swing	Joyner
August	Sandblasting	Ipswich

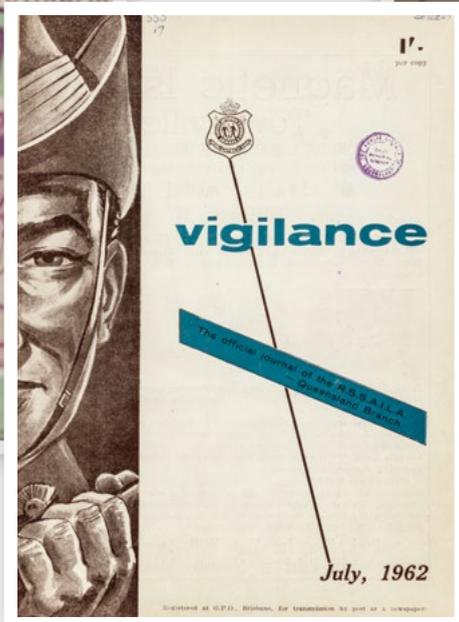
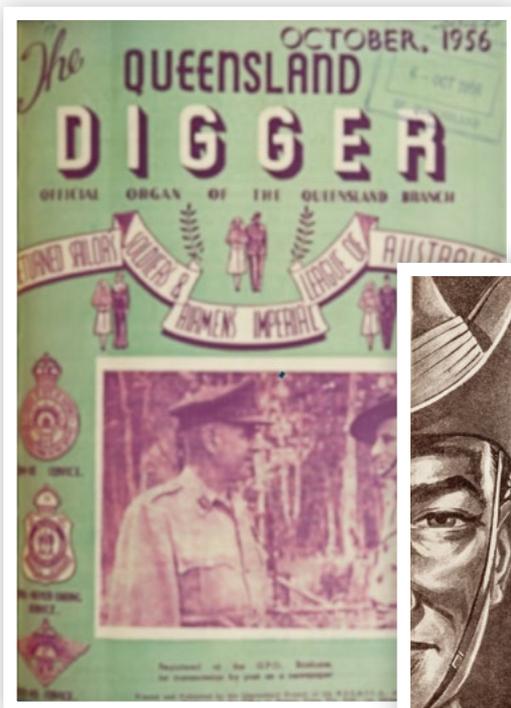
**Please note, this event schedule is subject to change, with several more events to be added throughout the year.*



Celebrating a century of veteran stories

*A reflection of the 100-year editorial
journey that began as The Queensland
Digger in 1925 and evolved to today's
Queensland RSL News.*





Welcome to this very special edition of *Queensland RSL News*. In 2025, our magazine celebrates 100 years of veteran storytelling – a significant anniversary that very few periodicals have reached.

This milestone is therefore one we are extremely proud of, and one to which we owe the loyalty of our readers from the Queensland veteran community and beyond.

Queensland RSL News' longevity is a shining testament to your unwavering support, and it has been our honour to play a part in preserving your legacy and recognising your service.

In the spirit of celebration, we are excited to showcase some highlights from previous editions and reflect on the people who brought them all to life.

The history of our member magazine

RSL Queensland (then the Returned Sailors and Soldiers Imperial League of Australia (RSSILA) Queensland Branch) has been writing and publishing veterans' stories since around 1918, originally under the title *The Crusader*.

However, it wasn't until 1924 that the seed was planted for a formal member magazine to begin circulation, following the success of a special one-off periodical called *The Queensland Digger*. Officially launched in April 1925, *The Queensland Digger* set in motion the publication that you're reading today.

For more than 40 years, the journal covered everything from the homecoming of Australia's WWI and WWII soldiers to the opening of Brisbane's Shrine of Remembrance and Eternal Flame, the groundbreaking formation of the RSL Art Union (now the Dream Home Art Union), and the pageantry of the first RSL Girl in a Million Quest.

In 1962, *The Queensland Digger* changed its name to *Vigilance* and, after a hiatus from 1967 until 1989, made a comeback as *Queensland RSL News*.

Since then, the magazine has promoted the launch of numerous

veteran services and Mates4Mates, commemorated dozens of ANZAC and Remembrance Days, and celebrated RSL Queensland's 100th anniversary.

Since 1925, we have proudly produced hundreds of editions containing thousands of stories, and to this day, *Queensland RSL News* continues to inform, connect and engage countless veterans, family members, friends and advocates across the country.

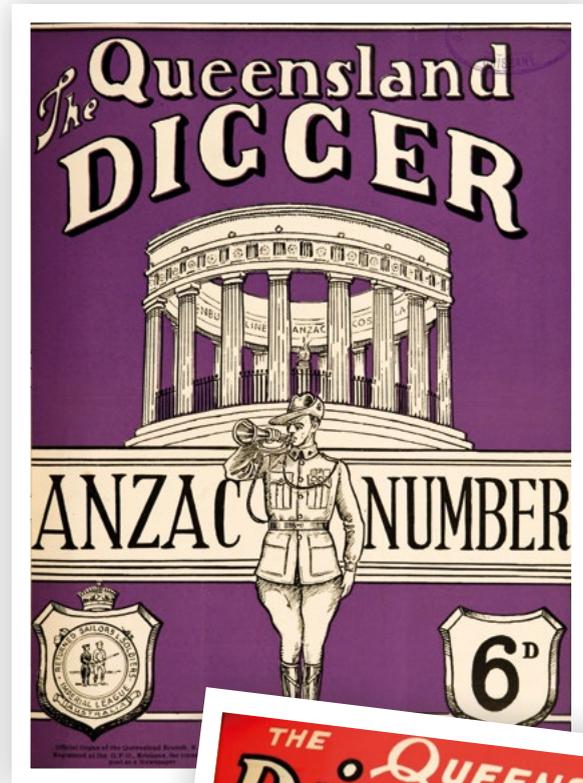
A space for community and connection

Perhaps most importantly, our centenary is an opportunity to reflect on this magazine's role in uniting RSL Queensland members and the broader veteran community. The long road from *The Queensland Digger* to *Queensland RSL News* has undoubtedly been paved by those who have generously shared their stories, knowledge and ideas with us and for that, we are eternally grateful.

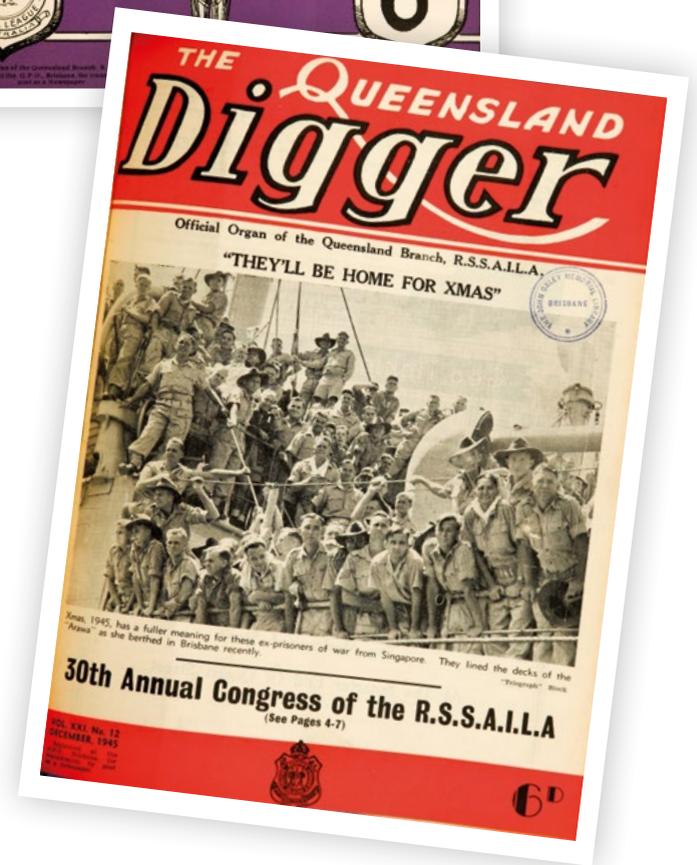


RSL Queensland's member magazines over the years: *The Queensland Digger* (1925 to 1962), *Vigilance* (1962 to 1967) and *Queensland RSL News* (1989 to the present).

An advertisement for the Dream Home Art Union in an early edition of *The Queensland Digger*.



The *Queensland Digger* from April 1948 shows the Shrine of Remembrance in Brisbane.



This cover of *The Queensland Digger* in December 1945 shows ex-prisoners of war returning home to Australia from Singapore on board the *Arawa*.

We acknowledge that each contributor has shown courage in sharing a part of themselves with our community.

By reading their stories, we have felt their pride and pain; we have learnt about moments of triumph and tragedy; and we have commemorated the fallen and honoured the living.

Our contributors' constant willingness to publicly share their wisdom and experience has often been motivated by a sense of camaraderie and connection to you, our readers.

Whether you have personally experienced or have supported someone who has navigated the unique challenges that come with dutifully serving your country, these stories are for you.

In bringing us closer together, we can confidently say that *Queensland*

RSL News remains a publication that recognises the contributions of veterans and is dedicated to honouring their service.

Preserving our history

Not only has our member magazine published hundreds of these incredible veteran stories over the

years; it has also played a leading role in preserving RSL Queensland's rich history.

To truly appreciate this milestone, we need to go back to 1925. Alongside this edition that you're reading, you'll find a partial reprint of the very first edition of *The Queensland Digger*, published on

“We are proud of how far we have come – our magazine has not only shared stories, provided resources, and kept Queensland’s military history alive, but it has also remained adaptable and relevant by adhering to RSL Queensland’s and, by extension, the veteran community’s core values.”

15 April 1925 (this only applies to those on the RSL Queensland mailing list).

It’s remarkable to see how far our organisation has come, while staying true to its founding values. This first edition marked the start of what would become a cornerstone of RSL Queensland’s communication and a trusted voice for veterans.

In the pages that lie ahead, you’ll learn about the evolution of RSL Queensland’s member magazine over the past century, and how conservation teams from the State Library of Queensland are working with us to preserve and digitise our collections for future generations.

Your trip down memory lane includes anniversary well-wishes from Australian Prime Minister Hon. Anthony Albanese MP, RSL Queensland CEO Robert Skoda and RSL Queensland State President Major General Stephen Day DSC AM.

Our celebrations continue as we share the spotlight with WWII veteran Eric Geldard OAM of Miles RSL Sub Branch and the team at Redlands RSL Sub Branch, both blowing out 100 candles alongside us in 2025.

More centenary stories will be shared throughout the year as we revisit the archives, so keep an eye on your letterbox and RSL Queensland’s website over the coming months for these exciting features.

Our legacy as a voice for veterans

Ultimately, marking a century of publication cements the enduring



legacy of *The Queensland Digger*, *Vigilance* and now *Queensland RSL News* as a voice for RSL Queensland and its members. We are proud of how far we have come – our magazine has not only shared stories, provided resources, and kept Queensland’s military history alive, but it has also remained adaptable and relevant by adhering to RSL Queensland’s and, by extension, the veteran community’s core values.

While the content within each edition has progressed considerably since 1925, care for our veterans,

camaraderie among our community, and commemoration of service have remained at the magazine’s heart.

As we spend 2025 reflecting on our history and celebrating our success, we also encourage you to join us in upholding these values.

Check in with the veterans in your life, attend your local commemoration services and pass down a legacy of service to your children and grandchildren. Your ongoing support will help us take on the next 100 years with a sense of hope and anticipation for what lies ahead.

Thanks to our readers

As we look towards the future, we extend our deepest thanks to you, our readers, for being the driving force behind the success of RSL Queensland’s member magazine. Whether you joined us during the days of *The Queensland Digger*, *Vigilance* or more recently as *Queensland RSL News*, it is you who have allowed us to reach this incredible milestone of 100 years.

We hope you continue on this journey with us and, as always, if you know of a story that you would like to see included in upcoming editions of *Queensland RSL News*, please reach out to our editorial team at editor@rslqld.org

The first official edition of *The Queensland Digger* was published on 15 April 1925. Alongside this edition of *Queensland RSL News* that you’re reading, you’ll find a partial reprint of the very first edition.



Rebuilding the League

The first 10 years of The Queensland Digger

In 2025, Queensland RSL News celebrates a centenary of telling the stories of Queensland’s veteran community. The publication’s lineage can be traced back to April 1925, when The Queensland Digger was officially issued.

Dr Susan E. M. Kellett



AT this time, League membership was in crisis. *The Queensland Digger* performed a crucial role in rebuilding the Returned Sailors and Soldiers Imperial League of Australia (RSSILA) in Queensland over the first 10 years of its publication.

A critical drop in membership
By 1918, the RSSILA was the representative voice of the returned community in Australia. With the return of troops to Australia after WWI, support for the League surged. Membership in Queensland peaked at 15,000 in November 1919 and, nationwide, the RSSILA was 114,700 strong.

By the end of 1920, many State Branches were publishing their own journals: *The Bayonet* in Victoria; *The Soldier* in New South Wales; and, in Queensland, *The Crusader*.

However, the recruitment successes of 1919 could not be sustained. In 1920, 53.5% of Queensland members did not renew their subscription and membership plunged from 15,000 to 6,967 men.

This trend played out across the nation and continued to spiral

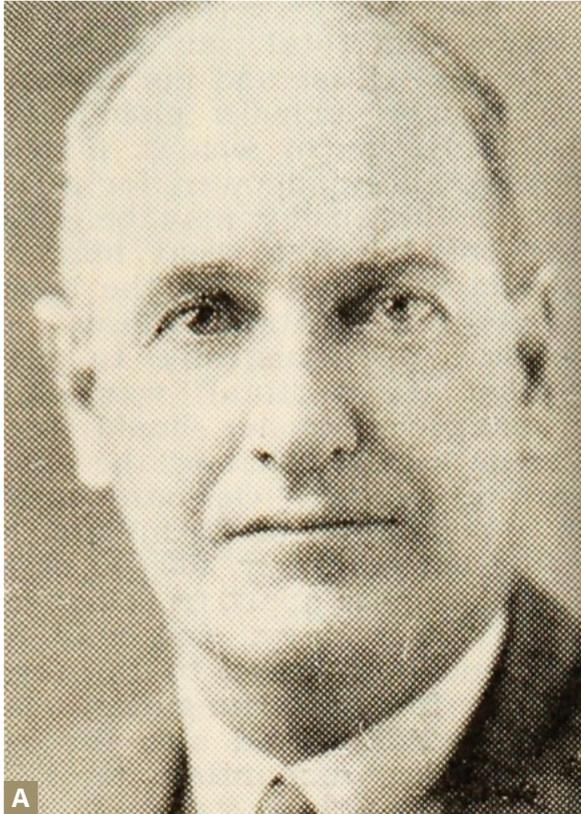
downwards until 1925, when only 20% of those recruited in 1919 remained financial. The political authority of the Federal Branch (now RSL Australia) remained unchanged, despite these losses. At a State, District and Sub Branch level, however, the reduction in both manpower and revenue seriously compromised the operations of the League.

The Crusader (1919-1924)

When *The Crusader* was first published in 1919, membership was soaring and the League held great hopes for its weekly publication. However, *The Crusader* was quickly beset with problems after it began publishing articles that were aggressively political in tone.

This conflicted with the non-partisan approach of the League and alienated many members. Advertisers withdrew their support, rival associations used *The Crusader's* content to publicly criticise the RSSILA, members called for its axing and the publication failed to engage with a dwindling League membership.

Details of Hubert Fraser East’s first membership campaign. *The Queensland Digger*, May 1925.



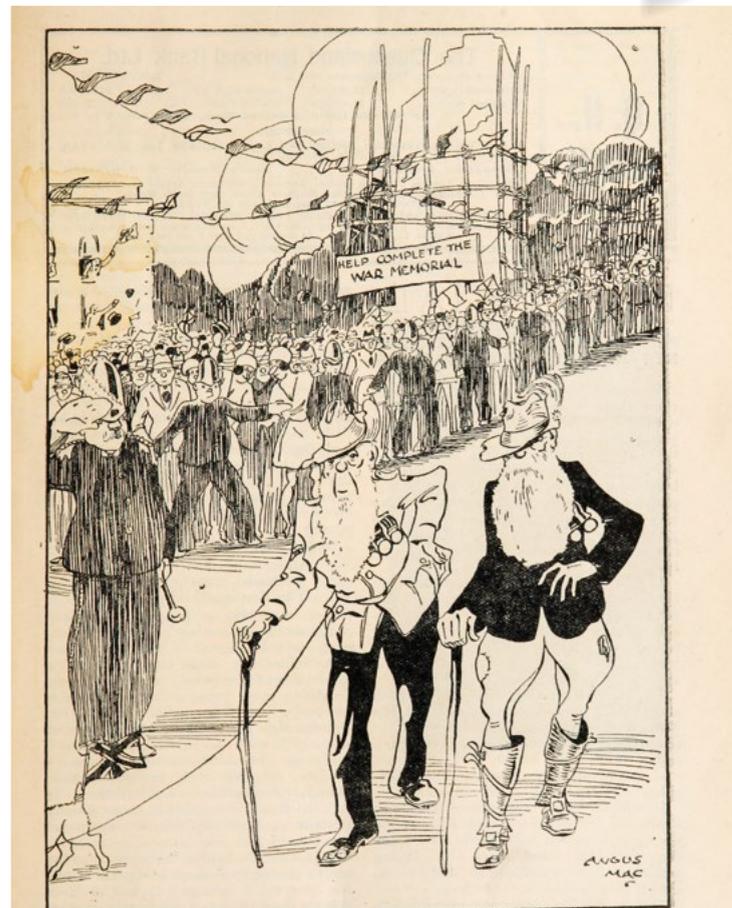
A

In February 1924, 31-year-old Hubert Frazer East was elected as State President. Frazer East was a respected and experienced Brisbane businessman and his six-year tenure as President represented the first extended period of stability and consolidation in the League's short history.

Much to the relief of many, one of Frazer East's first priorities was to cease publication of *The Crusader*. A new publication was developed, and in October 1924 a complimentary issue of *The Queensland Digger* was distributed to Sub Branches. Responses to the initiative were encouraging. In April 1925 – the 10th anniversary of the landing at Gallipoli – the RSSILA formally launched issue 1 of *The Queensland Digger*.

***The Queensland Digger* (1925-1962)**

The League's new monthly publication represented a powerful recruitment tool. By providing a central and non-partisan source of information about League activities, *The Queensland Digger* proved the benefits of membership to the State's returned community.



B

ANZAC DAY, 1999.

Note the Progress made in Anzac Square, Brisbane.

[Reproduced by kind permission of "Rambles with Royalty."]

Through the pages of *The Queensland Digger*, men stayed informed about the pensions and entitlements being negotiated with the government by the RSSILA. Activities, social events and unit reunions were advertised. The individual successes of returned men who had been supported into employment by the League were reported and members read about

the distress relief provided to diggers and their families who were doing it tough.

As confidence in *The Queensland Digger* grew, members began contributing content; reminiscences of service, along with profiles of important servicemen and campaigns, were popular. The length of the publication grew from 32 to 48 pages. Sub Branches sent monthly

A: Hubert Fraser East introduced the first period of stability to the RSSILA in Queensland. Under his presidency, *The Queensland Digger* was launched in April 1925 and membership began increasing. Image: *The Queensland Digger*, 2 February 1942.

B: Humour was an essential element of *The Queensland Digger*. In 1927, it helped defray the returned community's frustration over delays to the construction of Queensland's National War Memorial: Anzac Square. *The Queensland Digger*, 3 August 1927.

There are ways to kill your Sub-branch!

THESE ARE SOME OF THEM!

HOW TO DO IT!

1. Don't come to the meetings.
2. If you do, come late.
3. If the weather doesn't suit you, don't think of coming.
4. If you do attend a meeting, find fault with the work of the officers and others.
5. Never accept office, as it is easier to criticise than to do things.
6. Nevertheless, get sore if you are not appointed on a committee, but if you are, do not attend the committee meetings.
7. If asked by the Chairman to give your opinion on some important matter, tell him you have nothing to say. After the meeting tell everyone how things ought to be done.
8. Do nothing more than is absolutely necessary, but when other members roll their sleeves up and willingly, unselfishly, use their ability to help matters along, howl that the League is run by a clique.

A

reports and soon a schedule of Sub Branch meetings and their locations was published in every issue.

Membership was an ever-present challenge and a regular topic in *The Queensland Digger*. The RSSILA depended almost exclusively upon its membership to grow the organisation. Readers were often reminded of their individual responsibility to build their League.

Details of the RSSILA's 'Revival

criteria for membership. Members were empowered to fulfil their responsibility with messaging such as, "One at a time is good going – get a new reader for the '*Queensland Digger*' today" (July 1925).

Another threat appears

In December 1930, Frazer East stood down as President. *The Queensland Digger* was returning a modest profit and membership had increased by

I've joined the R.S. League
HAVE YOU?



My Sub-Branch the
meets at on
next the 1935 so come along and
have a happy night! I will be there for sure so
DON'T DISAPPOINT ME!

B

Movement' and other recruitment campaigns were published, along with the eligibility

nearly 73%. Raymond Huish was elected President. The 32-year-old was also a managing director, and his experience was immediately put to the test as he navigated the League through the immense challenges posed by the Great Depression.

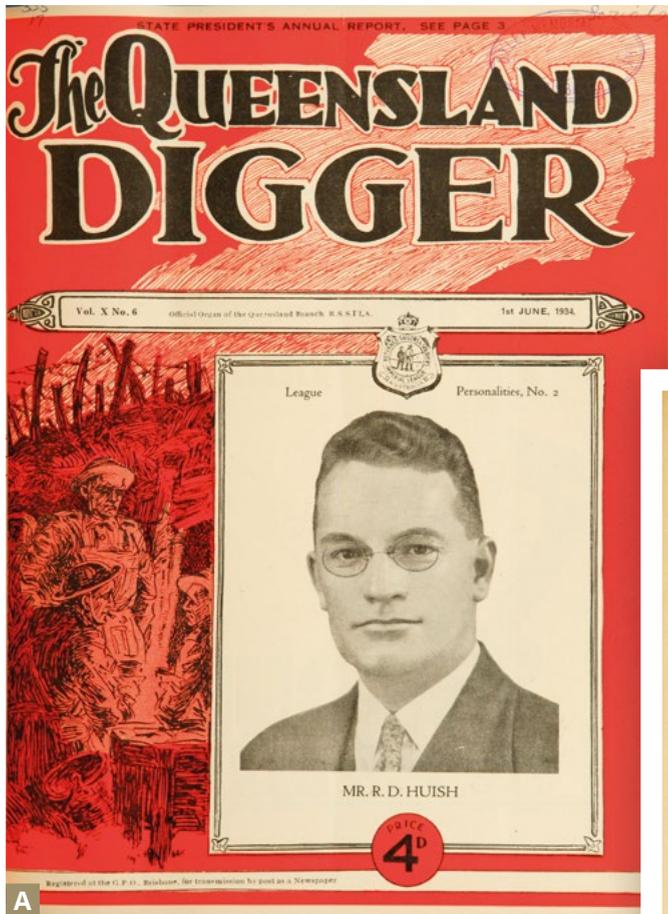
It was not long before the effects of the prevailing economic crisis began eroding *The Queensland Digger's* circulation and it began to barely break even. Huish reduced its length by one-third and its cost to two shillings.

In February 1934, he relaunched *The Queensland Digger* with a fresh look and a larger format that increased content without increasing production costs. More than 81% of the men who had embarked with the AIF during WWI were single and, by the 1930s, many had married and were raising families.

Mindful of this change, Huish

A: A Tongue-in-cheek reminder of the dangers of irresponsible membership. *The Queensland Digger*, 2 July 1926.

B: Another recruitment strategy was the inclusion of a detachable card that members were encouraged to mail to a returned mate. *The Queensland Digger*, 1 April 1935, inside front cover.



1st SEPTEMBER, 1934. THE QUEENSLAND DIGGER. Page 23.

KEEP THE HOME FIRES BURNING.
Social Sins.

They are not the sort of crimes that will procure you a month's hard, even if you're caught red-handed, but they certainly ought to!

Here they are:

1. The criminal who tells you that she saw a coat that is identical with yours for two guineas, when you paid four and a half.
2. The criminal who insists on telling you how the book ends, though you've only just begun it, or what happens in the mystery play you're going to see next week.
3. The criminal who borrows your pet Kipling and then returns it with the cover hopelessly ruined and says blithely: "I'm afraid Jim stood a hot cup of tea on it. So careless of him, but the reading part's all right."
4. The criminal who, on receiving a box of chocolates, remarks, "Oh, how nice! But I thought it was a book!"
5. The criminal who will insist on trying on your new hat, though it is obviously several sizes too small for her, hopelessly stretching the crown and bending the brim out of shape in the effort.
6. The criminal who promises so cheerfully to send you the address of a good dentist, a recipe for apple chutney, and the pattern of a wrap-over skirt—and never does.
7. The criminal who tells all and sundry the name of the little dress-maker that you told her in confidence.
8. The criminal who never appears to have a stamp, powder puff, or comb of her own.
9. The criminal who says she likes the colour of your new jumper though, of course, jumpers are only becoming to the very slender figure.

x x x x x
COME TO THE COOK-HOUSE DOOR.

Invalid Cookery.
Sago Milk.—Soak the sago for an hour in cold water, then wash in fresh water. Boil slowly in fresh milk, using only a small amount of sago, as it swells so much in cooking that unless care is taken it becomes too solid, and is unappetising.

McDONNELL & EAST LTD. — The Official Suppliers of THE R.S.S.I.L.A. BLAZER

We are now enjoying Queensland's largest blazer trade due to our splendid workmanship, quality of materials, and low prices, and we are pleased to state that we have been appointed the suppliers of the official "Digger" blazer made of marine all wool flannel, lined with gold brocade, with monogram on pocket, featuring the design of the Digger's Metal League with Sash in Khaki, and Buttons in Blue, worked in the highest grade. A special blazer without emblem and made to your individual measure.

Price complete for 34/- or blazer only 23/6; Monogram pocket 10/6 extra.

Order your "Digger" blazer from us and get maximum satisfaction.
Before purchasing please obtain Order Form from your sub-branch secretary.

McDONNELL & EAST LTD.
GEORGE STREET :: BRISBANE

THE QUEENSLAND DIGGER 1st January, 1930

List of Sub-branch Meetings

Sub-Branch	Place	Monthly Meeting
Bahamora	School of Arts, Morningside	First Thursday
Bahinda	Assist. House	First Tuesday
Balmain-Hawthorne	School of Arts, Balmain	Second Wednesday
Eastern Suburbs		First Tuesday
Enoggera	Enoggera Memorial Hall	Last Thursday
Gravelly-Chelmer	Scott's Hall, Gravelly	Third Thursday
Kedron	Kedron	Second Tuesday
Northgate	Masonic Hall	Fourth Friday
Redlands	Memorial Hall, Cleveland	Third Thursday
Roadgate	Town Hall, Roadgate	Last Monday
Sherrin	Corinda Hall, Corinda	Last Wednesday
South Brisbane	Assist. House	Second Tuesday
Stephens	Junction Hall, Assinby	Second Monday
Tomball	School of Arts, Clayfield	Third Friday
Toowong	Protestant Memorial Hall, T. W.'s	Last Thursday
Tronway	Assist. House	First Tuesday
Winton	Winton	First Monday, February
Wynnum-Masby		Last Tuesday
Alora	Alora	First Wednesday
Alberton	Alberton	First Saturday
Bahinda	Bahinda	Last Sunday, 10 a.m.
Banaldine	Banaldine	First Wednesday
Bowen	Bowen (Harbour Board Office)	As occasion warrants
Bowen Oxleyfields	Collinsville	First Tuesday
Cairns	Cairns	Third Thursday
Castle Creek	Castle Creek	First Tuesday
Charters Towers	Charters Towers	Second Tuesday
Chinchilla	Chinchilla	First Thursday
El Arish	Dun's Hotel	First Tuesday
Gordonvale	Gordonvale	Last Sunday
Gympie	Gympie	First Friday
Home Hill	Home Hill	Third Tuesday, 10.30 a.m.
Hughenden	Hughenden (Q.N. Bank)	As occasion warrants
Inverick	Memorial Hall	Last Tuesday
Kingsley	Kingsley	Third Monday
Longreach	Longreach	Third Tuesday
Malanda	Malanda	Friday as or before full moon
Mt. Isa	Mt. Isa	Third Sunday
Mandabera	Mandabera	First Saturday
Nambour	Nambour	Monday preceding full moon
North Tambourine	North Tambourine	Second Wednesday
Proserpine	Proserpine (Soldier's Hut)	First Friday
Rockhampton	Rockhampton	First Wednesday
Southport	Excelsior Cafe, Southport	Third Friday
Springers	Springers	Second Saturday
Tara	Tara	First Wednesday
Toowoomba	Toowoomba	Third Monday
Townsville	Townsville (Town Hall)	Third Friday
Uthmaniyah	Memorial Hall	Thursday on or before new moon
Warwick	Warwick	Second Monday
Winton	Winton (Shire Council)	First Friday

FRENCH JELLIES FOR INVALIDS—PLUMRIDGE'S, QUEENSLAND MADE.

broadened the readership by including sections for women and a children's page. He also expanded advertising to include female fashion and introduced special commemorative issues for ANZAC and Armistice (later Remembrance) Days that featured striking cover art.

By the end of 1935 – four years after Huish assumed presidency, and despite the economic effects of the Great Depression – *The Queensland*

Digger was again returning a profit and had contributed to a further 62% to League membership.

Magazine helps avert membership crisis

When the RSSILA introduced *The Queensland Digger* in 1925, its membership was at an all-time low and the League's ability to provide support to the returned community

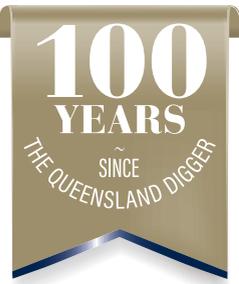
was in crisis. A decade later – and under the capable leadership of Hubert Frazer East and Raymond Huish – *The Queensland Digger* had contributed to the steady growth of membership in Queensland.

One hundred years and several name changes later, *Queensland RSL News* continues the legacy of Queensland's first successful League publication. 🗞

A: Raymond Huish succeeded Hubert Fraser East as President. He reformatted *The Queensland Digger* to broaden its appeal. *The Queensland Digger*, 1 June 1934.

B: A Sub Branch schedule of meetings in early 1930. *The Queensland Digger*, 1 January 1930.

C: What the best-dressed League man was wearing in 1934. *The Queensland Digger*, 1 September 1934.



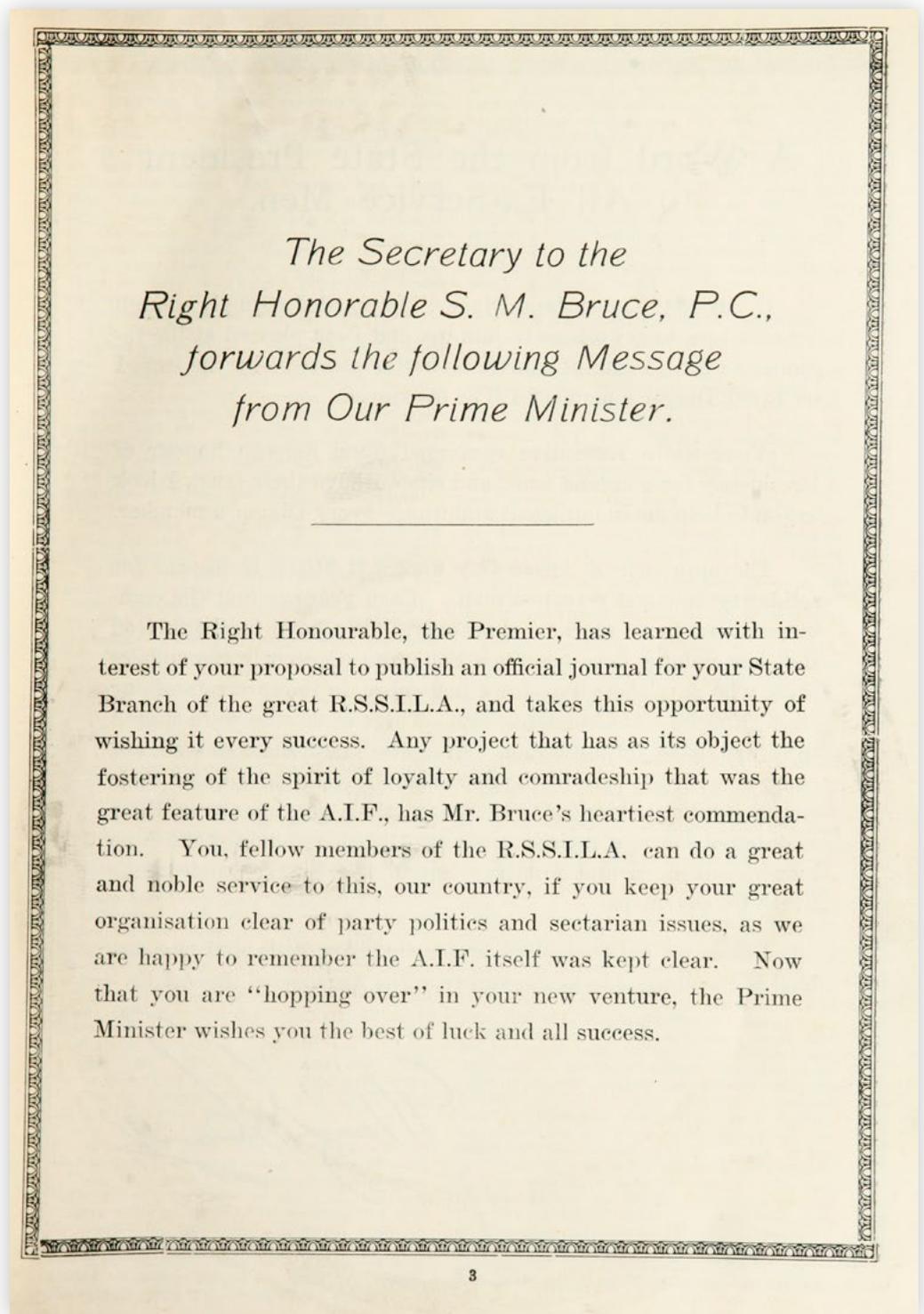
A century of support from Australia's leaders

AS we mark the centenary of our member magazines, we reflect with pride on the unwavering support our publications have received from Australia's leaders over the years. This special centenary edition begins with messages of recognition and encouragement from two Prime Ministers, past and present.

In the inaugural issue of *The Queensland Digger*, published on 15 April 1925, then-Prime Minister Stanley Bruce wrote a letter commending RSL Queensland for fostering comradeship and providing "a great and noble service to Australia".

Today, Prime Minister Anthony Albanese's message acknowledges *Queensland RSL News* as a vital source of connection and advocacy for veterans and their families, a testament to its enduring role in the lives of many.

We are grateful for the continued backing of Australia's leaders, both



past and present, which highlights the importance of our mission to assist veterans and their families.

In this centenary edition, we proudly present the messages from Prime Ministers Stanley

Bruce and Anthony Albanese.

Their words highlight the enduring significance of *Queensland RSL News* in connecting and advocating for our Defence community. ☞

“We are grateful for the continued backing of Australia’s leaders, both past and present, which highlights the importance of our mission to assist veterans and their families.”



PRIME MINISTER

MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER

QUEENSLAND RSL NEWS

Every Australian who serves our country honours us with their courage and commitment – and we, in return, honour them with our gratitude and respect.

The freedom that we enjoy and cherish in this country is thanks to every Australian who has answered the call – through two world wars and more than 70 years of peace-keeping and regional conflicts.

Across the decades, these great tests and compelling confirmations of courage and character have become a crucial part of how we see ourselves our nation and as a people. What it all adds up to is what we proudly call the Anzac story.

Since its first edition, *Queensland RSL News* has worked tirelessly to uphold this proud tradition: encouraging pride and reflection, and inspiring camaraderie among its members.

Today it remains a valued source of interest, information and connection as well as advocacy and support for veterans and their families.

As you mark 100 years of sharing veterans’ stories, I congratulate every staff member and reader who, through your proud century of existence, has made this extraordinary milestone possible.

May *Queensland RSL News* continue to assist and honour the courage, the character and the fortitude of current and former servicemen and women for many decades to come.

The Hon Anthony Albanese MP
Prime Minister of Australia

2025



A message of congratulations from Prime Minister Anthony Albanese in 2025 echoes the sentiment of then-Prime Minister Stanley Bruce in 1925 (left hand page).

100
YEARS

SINCE
THE QUEENSLAND DIGGER

RSL Queensland's member magazines over the years included *The Queensland Digger*, *Vigilance* and *Queensland RSL News*.

Preserving RSL Queensland's memory

State Library of Queensland is digitising every RSL Queensland member magazine published since 1925.

 Courtney Adams

Forging an important partnership

Over the past century, RSL Queensland has published countless veterans' stories through its dedicated member magazine. In recognising the historical significance of these magazines, State Library of Queensland has become an instrumental partner in preserving RSL Queensland's legacy.

"State Library collects all sorts of things: publications like *Queensland RSL News*, unpublished manuscripts, personal papers, letters, diaries, narratives and personal remembrances and mementos from wartime," State Library's Lead of Collection Building and Interpretation Robyn Hamilton says.

"The collection is intended to be rich and give us a full picture of Queensland life.

"Publications are important in many ways. They are a means through which we record our history. They can be an expression of our creative capability, or they can be very informational and documentary about people in times and places."

As part of its mission to maintain the collective memory of the

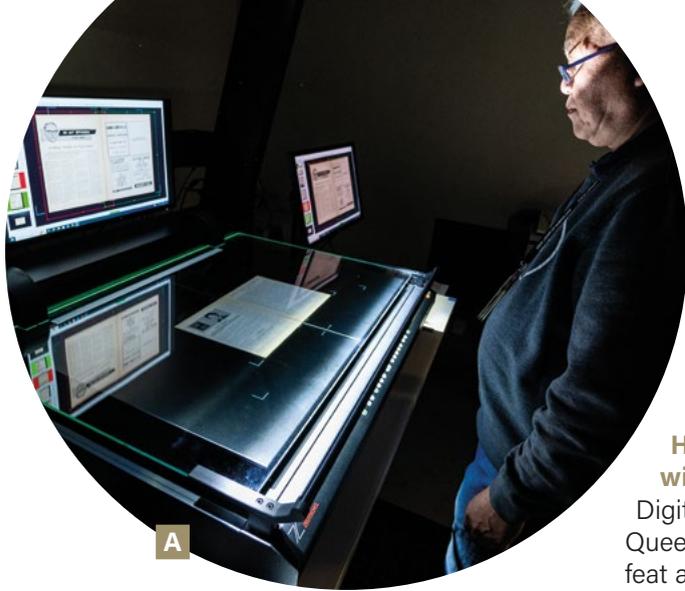
Sunshine State, State Library has acquired, preserved and stored every official edition of RSL Queensland's member magazine published since 1925.

First titled *The Queensland Digger*, the magazine was renamed to *Vigilance* in 1962 and then *Queensland RSL News* in 1989.

"Stories of service and life after service provide a rich insight into the experiences of serving members and their lives beyond," Robyn explains.

"*RSL News* is an important publication because it keeps things current, has important and nostalgic information and points people to services.

"It's an amazing achievement that RSL Queensland has had a magazine in publication for 100



A

years. It's important to understand where you came from because it helps you to understand where you're going."

Making history and legacy accessible

In 2017, State Library took on the mammoth task of digitising RSL Queensland's first set of official member magazines as part of the State Government's Q ANZAC 100 project. Robyn remembers the project fondly.

"As one thread of three big legacy projects for the commemoration period of World War I, we went back and digitised all the issues of *The Queensland Digger* starting in 1925 up to 1962," Robyn recalls.

"It took quite a while to complete, but it was a great opportunity to break open that material and make it much more accessible to people."

As RSL Queensland's member magazine celebrates 100 years of circulation in 2025, State Library is now working to digitise all remaining RSL Queensland magazine editions in their collection. The project is expected to make even more veteran history accessible to the public.

"State Library has had issues of *Vigilance* and *Queensland RSL News* for many decades now, but we've decided to digitise the entire collection so that everyone can enjoy the contents," Robyn explains.

"It is important for RSL Queensland to have these magazines digitised because it means you can then access your own past. You can look back and see what RSL was like as an organisation right back at the start and all through the decades, right up to now."

Handling the collection with care

Digitising 100 years' worth of RSL Queensland publications is no easy feat and took months to complete. The process involves a variety of State Library specialists working across three key steps: document preparation, scanning and digital archiving.

"First of all, the magazines are prepared to be scanned. Any repairs are made up in our Conservation

Lab," Robyn explains.

During this step, State Library's collection preservation team uses specialised techniques to care, treat and manage the magazines. For example, conservators may work to maintain bindings, minimise or repair paper damage, and protect the documents from future fading and handling.

"Next, the scanning happens. Only one person can scan at a time, but once that is complete, those digital



A: Early editions of *Vigilance* being scanned by specialists at the State Library of Queensland.

B: Robyn Hamilton, Lead of Collection Building and Interpretation at the State Library of Queensland holds an archival copy of *The Queensland Digger*.



HOW TO ACCESS A FREE DIGITISED RECORD THROUGH STATE LIBRARY OF QUEENSLAND

1. Visit State Library of Queensland's website at slq.qld.gov.au.
2. Click 'Catalogue' at the top of the website's home page.
3. Use the search bar to type the name of a publication you're interested in (for example, *Queensland Digger*, *Vigilance*, or *Queensland RSL News*).
4. Click enter and wait for results to load.
5. Click 'Journals' under the search bar to filter results to journal titles only.
6. Click on the result that you are interested in. A menu will pop up with details of the record and if there are digital and/or hard copies available.
7. To view a digital copy, click the link under 'Digital Version(s)'
8. Note that you may need to create an account or login with State Library of Queensland to access certain records.
9. If you get stuck, contact the State Library team directly for assistance.

"We're always here to help people with enquiries and to help them find what they're looking for."
– Robyn Hamilton, Lead of Collection Building and Interpretation at State Library of Queensland

objects are ingested into our archival management system," Robyn says.

During this step, an operator sets up and monitors an automatic book scanner. The scanner has robotic arms that gently turn each page of the magazine, using a light vacuum and air blower mechanisms to keep pages separated. Once completed, quality checks are completed by the operator before the document enters step three.

"Then the cataloguers come in and join the digital objects to the catalogue record so that when someone comes to State Library and looks up an issue, they'll

be able to pop up the entire archive."

Once this step is complete, the magazine becomes discoverable online, meaning it can be enjoyed by readers, historians and veterans worldwide.

Keep up with *RSL News*

Queensland RSL News is published every quarter, highlighting engaging veteran news, stories, events, history and more. All RSL Queensland members receive a copy in the mail as part of their membership, while members of the public can read the latest edition online or subscribe to receive a digital copy via editor@rslqld.org 📧



RSL Queensland Managing Editor Matilda Dray, left, and State Library of Queensland Lead, Collection Building and Interpretation Robyn Hamilton review old editions of the magazine from the archives.

100 years strong: Redlands RSL Sub Branch marks a century

Following a monumental ANZAC Day service, the Redlands Returned Soldiers' Movement came together, officially forming Redlands RSL Sub Branch in 1925.

Olivia Lawrence

"IT means a great deal to be able to celebrate 100 years and share our story," Redlands RSL Sub Branch President Rob Wilson says.

A compelling link to World War I
After the conclusion of WWI in 1918, the Redlands Returned Soldiers'

Movement emerged, leading to the formation of two groups from the Redlands area, in Redland Bay and Cleveland.

Rob says the two movements consisted of veterans whose main priority at that time was to initiate the construction of two memorials

in Redland Bay and Cleveland to honour the fallen of WWI.

"In 1920, both movements were successful in attaining the two memorials for the community and while there were no returned soldiers' meetings for several years following, these diggers gathered socially on occasions," Rob says.

It was in April 1925 when a group of about 40 returned soldiers formally united. Presumably headed by WWI veteran Major C. C. Campbell, they organised the community's first ANZAC Day service at the Cleveland memorial.

"The observance of ANZAC Day was a special function of the Redlands Returned Soldiers' Movement, and the Sub Branch has



Opening of the Redlands Memorial Hall in August 1928.

100
YEARS

SINCE
THE QUEENSLAND DIGGER



Photo: Matilda Dray.

hosted a commemorative service ever since," Rob says.

Following this monumental ANZAC Day service, the group met less than a month later on 11 May 1925 and formally established Redlands RSL Sub Branch.

A solid foundation for a lasting future

It was not long after the Sub Branch formed that plans were put forward to secure a venue. Built by Gallipoli veteran Harrold Wallis, the Redlands Memorial Hall was opened in August 1928 by then Prime Minister Stanley Bruce. Rob says this opening was memorable, being the first radio broadcast to take place from the Redlands.

"Redlands Memorial Hall quickly became a focal point for local

activities and events, which included the diggers' annual ball," Rob says.

"During WWII, fundraising activities took place and local service personnel were given a 'welcome home' party after returning in 1945.

"In the early days, relief of returned service personnel's distress was a key focus. The hall helped us to provide care, commemoration and camaraderie, with all three of these areas expanding throughout the decades."

Rob says that over time, the Sub Branch has been able to expand and renovate, resulting in the building of the RSL Services Club and Redlands Memorial Hall being moved to the Cleveland Showgrounds in 1997.

In 2000, the Sub Branch and Redland Shire Council also announced plans to buy Cleveland's

former police station and courthouse, transforming these buildings into a war memorial precinct and its Sub Branch headquarters.

Today, the Sub Branch's club venue still resides in its original location, with memorials nearby for commemorative services.

Comprehensive support for veterans

Standing by their original motto, 'Honouring the dead by serving the living', Rob says the Sub Branch continues to have a significant presence in the Redlands community.

"We have 1,205 service members, two veteran advocates and approximately 150 volunteers," Rob says proudly.

"In more recent years, we have been able to offer more programs to the veteran community after amalgamating with Redlands Services Club in 2005, becoming Redlands RSL Sub Branch Inc."

Offering advocacy and wellbeing

Redlands RSL Sub Branch members and executive look over historical documents, front row from left, President Rob Wilson, Deputy President Ian Gray, Michael McDonnell, back row John Butler and Treasurer Greg Saunders.



members' centenary luncheon in May and a 'Service Dining In Night' in September, giving current serving personnel around South East Queensland the opportunity to connect with members and learn more about the Sub Branch.

"This anniversary acknowledges how Redlands RSL Sub Branch has stayed aligned with its purpose, but has also gotten bigger and better," Rob says.

"My hope is that we continue in our present amalgamated format and are able to provide the best possible support for veterans and their families, while also serving the wider Redlands community.

"I think if the fallen soldiers could see what we are doing here for our local veterans, they would be pleased, and we are very proud of that." 🗣️

services are important priorities for the Sub Branch. Volunteers conduct home and hospital visits, facilitate poppy (funeral) services, take veterans on excursions and shopping trips, and assist those experiencing homelessness.

"The Sub Branch also takes great pride in hosting commemorative services year-round. Our ANZAC Day services draw thousands of spectators each year," Rob says.

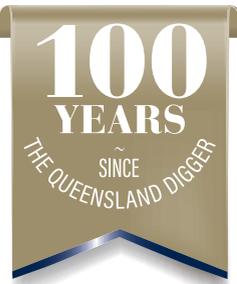
"We also gather once a month for our monthly meetings, hold our Veterans' Cuppa get-together every second Wednesday, and help in the community where we can.

"This includes supporting our local cadet units, educating primary and high school students about war history, and honouring the fallen and supporting local charities and other ex-serving organisations in the area."

A legacy continues

To celebrate 100 years, the Sub Branch held a charity golf day in February and is planning a

A: A large crowd always gathers for the Redlands ANZAC Day service.
B: Redlands RSL Sub Branch members and executive, from left, Treasurer Greg Saunders, Deputy President Ian Gray, President Rob Wilson, Michael McDonnell and John Butler.



WWII commando turns 100

Critically wounded in WWII, Commando Eric Geldard OAM was lucky to live past 20. Eight decades on, he celebrates his 100th birthday.

Belinda Crossman

IT was January 1943, and Japan's invasion of Australia seemed imminent.

As a farmer, Eric Geldard was exempt from military service. However – like his uncles who fought in World War I (WWI) – he felt compelled to serve, and joined the Volunteer Defence Corps (VDC) on his 18th birthday.

"The VDC was quickly formed by WWI veterans and others in reserved occupations," Eric recalls.

"The Miles Platoon – under the command of stock agent and

former Light Horseman, Captain Jim Castens – was to defend the newly built Condamine Airfield, which had four runways and was part of the 'fall back' Brisbane defence line.

"We trained at the airstrip each weekend, with those from Miles travelling by a car powered by a charcoal gas producer, as petrol was very scarce. I met the car at the Columboola Bridge, riding my pushbike from Stockton – about 10km along bush tracks on the southern side of the creek.

"My VDC training was remarkably good."

In 1944, Eric answered the urgent call for Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) recruits, training as a wireless air gunner. He was soon made redundant, but after meeting some "Army blokes" who were parachute jumping into the airfield, he signed up to become a Commando.

"My dad was battling away at home in his 60s trying to run four properties without any permanent help and I felt, 'I better do the best I can while I'm here,'" Eric recalled to the Australian War Memorial in 2018.

"I looked on it very personally. To me, I liked where I was, I liked the people, and I felt they needed protecting ... so we just went out to fight to protect our home."

After completing his training, Eric was sent to New Guinea with the 6th Division Cavalry Commando Regiment.

"My unit [2/9th Commando Squadron] was manning an outpost there and the Japanese had all that country and everything," Eric said. "There was a whole army of them – 24,400 came in when they surrendered – and there was a whole 30 of us."

Saved by 'angels'

The war was just weeks from ending when Eric's fate took a turn for the worse.

Early on 26 July 1945, he and his long-time mate Keith 'Mike' Thomas Heffernan had just finished their patrol – a hazardous walk along razorback ridges, where jungle obscured the path forward and the steep drops either side.

They were cleaning their weapons when Mike's Owen gun – which had no safety catch – caught Mike's shirt, discharging in the process.

The bullet pierced both Eric's legs.

"It felt as if somebody had hit the funny bone with a sledgehammer," he said. "Then I started to see blood going everywhere, and I knew I was in trouble."

With his femoral artery severed, Eric's only hope of survival was the



casualty clearing station – a seven-hour trek away through enemy territory.

He owes his life to the Papuan carriers – better known as fuzzy wuzzy angels – who stretchered him 4,000 feet down the steep and narrow jungle trail.

“Gee, they were good,” he said. “In places there were 30 or 40 steps in the trail, and they were so considerate. Sometimes some of them would get down with their hands up and pass the stretcher across the top.”

By the end of the trek, Eric was unconscious and unable to thank his rescuers. Fifty years later, he had the opportunity to thank carrier Raphael Oimbari, who attended Townsville’s Victory in the Pacific commemorations to represent the many people of New Guinea who helped Australian soldiers during WWII.

Eighty years of service

From New Guinea, Eric was flown to Brisbane for further treatment. After 15 months in hospital, he bumped into his childhood friend Betty, who had served as an anti-aircraft gunner and search light operator.

Eric and Betty returned to their hometown of Miles (located 340km northwest of Brisbane) and later married, ran a property and raised four children.

Meanwhile, Eric dedicated years to supporting his fellow veterans and his local community.

“It was my parents’ belief that we should try to put something back into the community where we live,” Eric explains.

He joined Miles RSL Sub Branch in 1946 and served as its President on multiple occasions (1983-1985, 1998, 2000-2001 and 2015). He also helped establish the Miles War Memorial and the town’s war museum – located within Miles Historical Village Museum – which contains photos of all 100 of the local men and women who enlisted for war service.



Eric also held pivotal roles within many community organisations, including Dogwood Rural Fire Brigade, the Freemasons, Miles District Show Society, the Toowoomba and Golden West Regional Tourist Association, and the former Murilla Shire Council.

In 2022, after more than 80 years of military and community service, Eric was awarded an Order of Australia Medal. Her Excellency the Honourable Dr Jeannette Young

AC PSM, Governor of Queensland, travelled from Brisbane specially to present Eric with his award.

A fortunate life

Eric counts himself very fortunate – to not only survive the war, but also reach his 100th birthday. He celebrated the milestone on 15 January 2025, surrounded by family.

His secret to living a long and happy life is pretty simple: “Everything in moderation.” 🍷



A: WWII Commando Eric Geldard OAM celebrated his 100th birthday on 15 January 2025.
B: Eric with his son Doug and daughter-in-law Patti at the War Museum, situated within the Miles Historical Village Museum. Eric was heavily involved in establishing the museum in Miles, which he is very proud. To their left in the glass case is the statue of the Pimpama Digger, which had been transferred from its original place at Ormeau.

100
YEARS
SINCE
THE QUEENSLAND DIGGER

The Queensland Digger

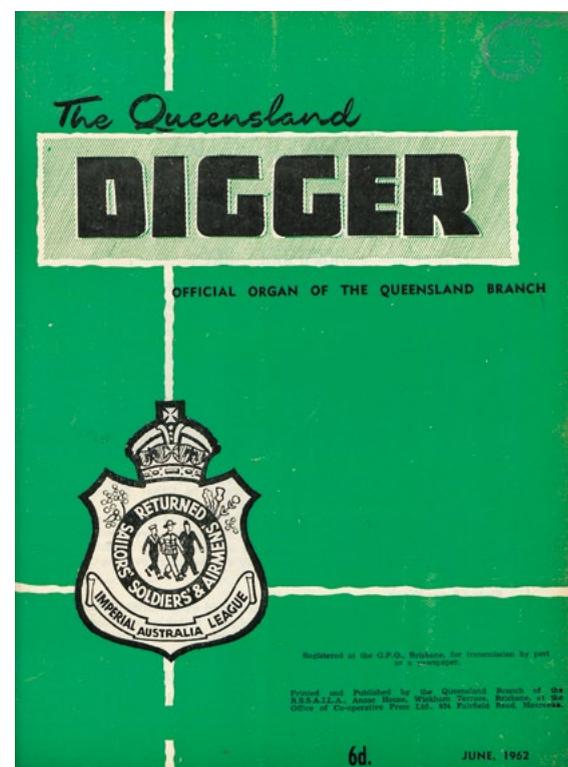
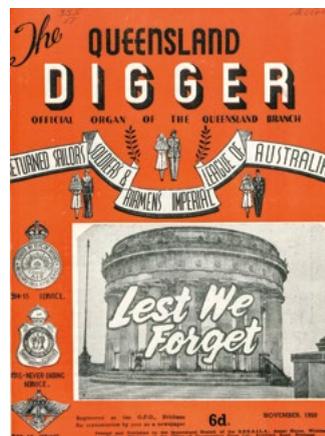
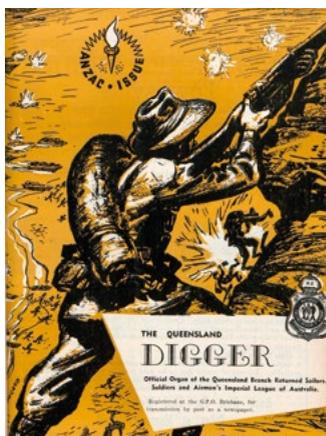
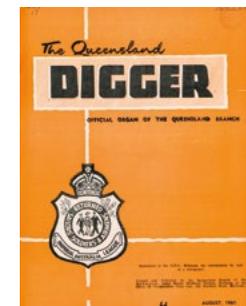
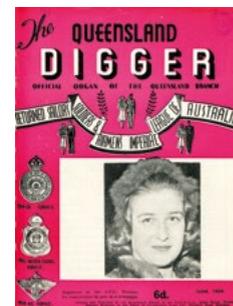
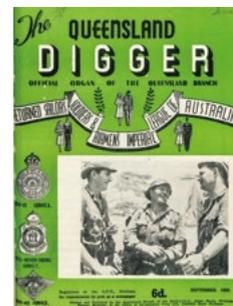
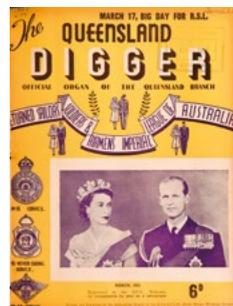
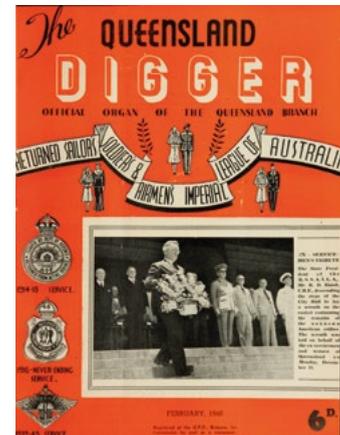
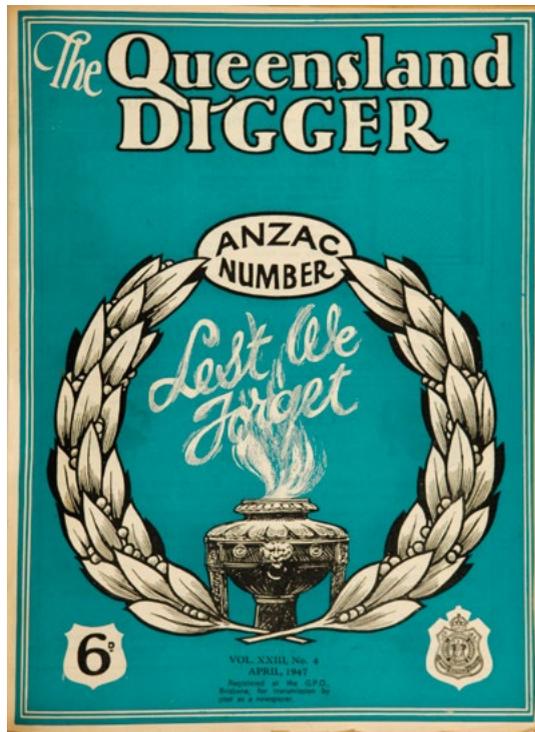
April 1925 – June 1962



“The Queensland Digger performed a crucial role in rebuilding the Returned Sailors and Soldiers Imperial League of Australia (RSSILA) in Queensland over the first 10 years of its publication.”

100 YEARS
SINCE
THE QUEENSLAND DIGGER

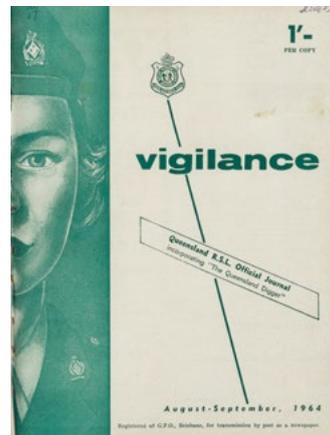
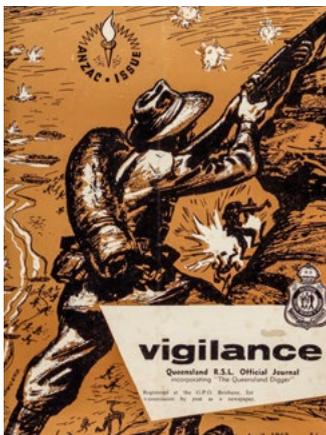
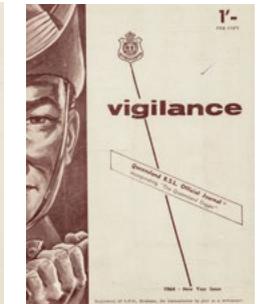
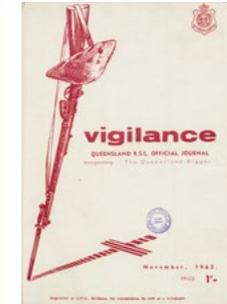
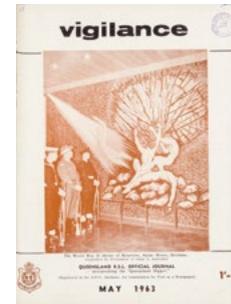
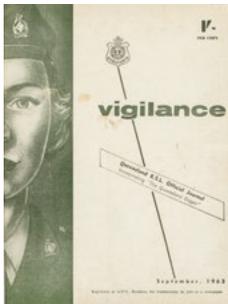
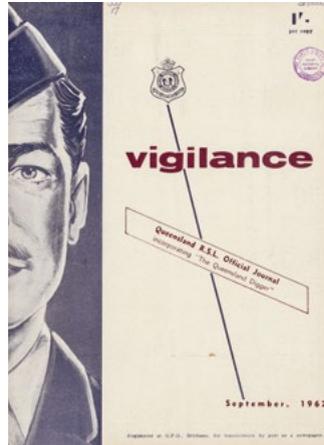
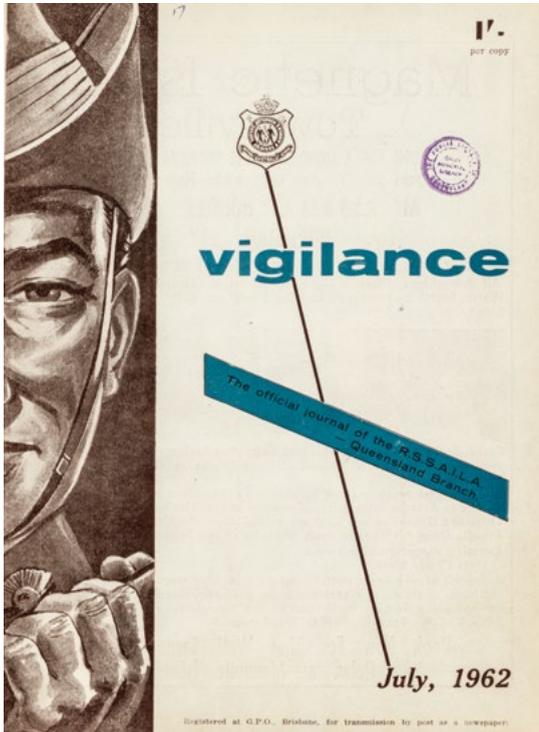
“The League’s new monthly publication represented a powerful recruitment tool. By providing a central and non-partisan source of information about League activities, The Queensland Digger proved the benefits of membership to the State’s returned community.”



100
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THE QUEENSLAND DIGGER

Vigilance

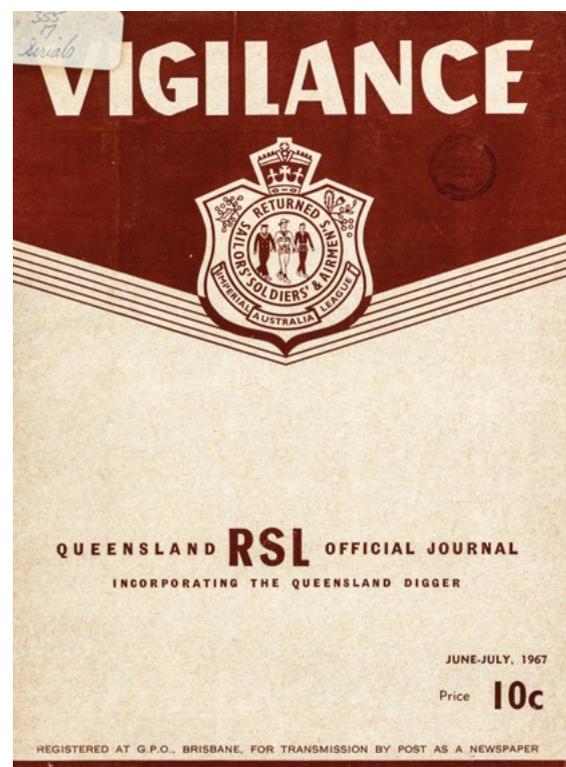
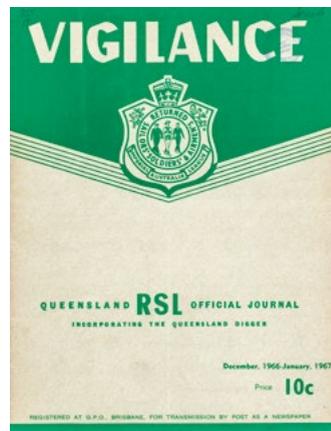
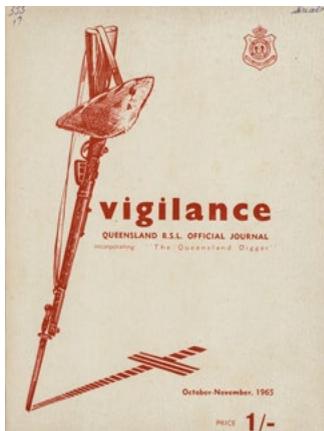
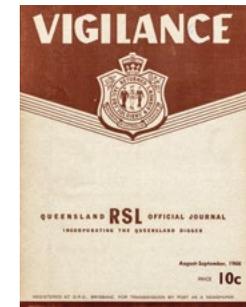
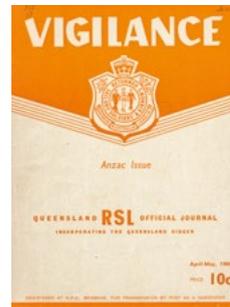
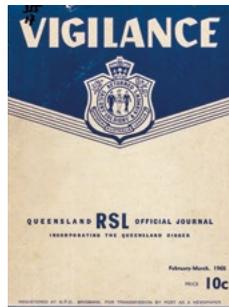
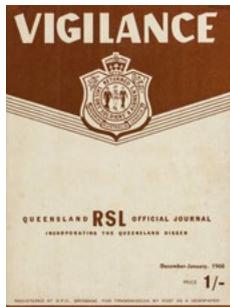
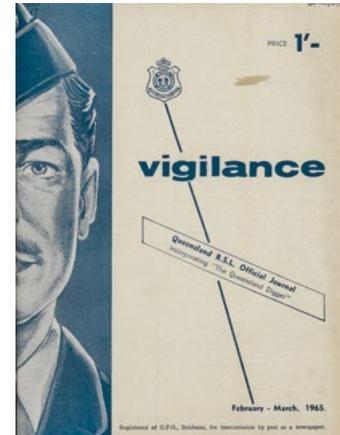
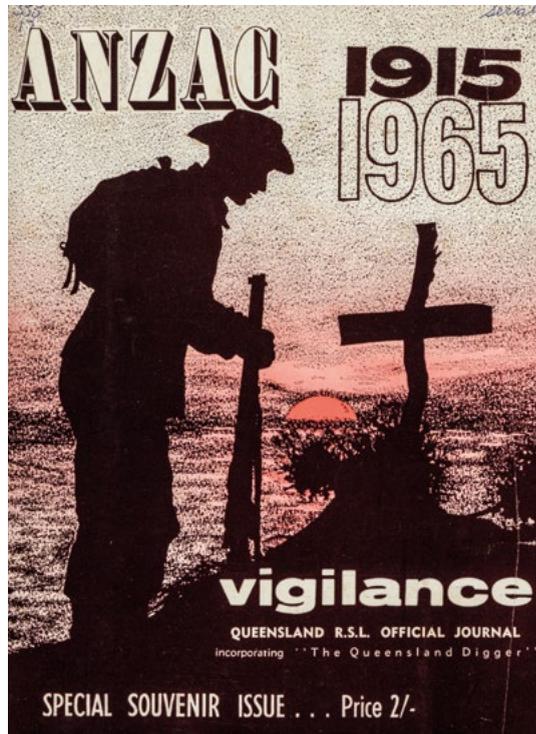
July 1962 – June/July 1967



“ In 1962, The Queensland Digger changed its name to Vigilance and published 38 editions before a hiatus from 1967 until 1989. ”

100
YEARS
SINCE
THE QUEENSLAND DIGGER

“The long road from The Queensland Digger to Vigilance and now Queensland RSL News has undoubtedly been paved by those who have generously shared their stories, knowledge and ideas.”





Queensland RSL News

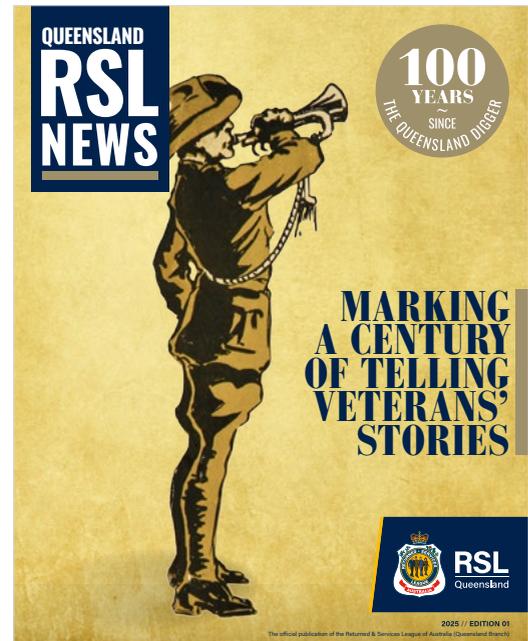
December 1989 – present



“ While the content within each edition has progressed considerably since 1925, care for our veterans, camaraderie among our community, and commemoration of service have remained at the magazine’s heart. ”

100
YEARS
SINCE
THE QUEENSLAND DIGGER

“ Ultimately, marking one century of publication cements the enduring legacy of The Queensland Digger, Vigilance and now Queensland RSL News as a voice for RSL Queensland and its members. ”



Our celebration of *The Queensland Digger* will continue for the remainder of 2025. Keep an eye out for more great centenary content in Edition 2.

— BEHIND — THE ZOO



Ever wondered what it's like to be a zookeeper? This Gold Coast program lets veterans find out, while also connecting with nature, purpose and community.

 **Belinda Crossman**

BELOW: Veteran Stephen Crawford (right) participating in the zookeeper program at Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary.

DINGOES, Tassie devils, snakes, lemurs... Stephen Crawford and Mal Draper from Currumbin/ Palm Beach RSL Sub Branch have encountered them all up close.

"The only thing I'm disappointed about is they won't let us in with the crocodile," Stephen says. "He's 5.2m and 800kg – absolutely massive, like the size of a bloody bus."

"I'm happy to stand back and just watch him," Mal laughs.

Stephen and Mal – who served in the British Army and the Australian Army, respectively – have always been interested in nature.

Now, they're regulars of the Veterans' Wildlife Studies Program, better known as 'the zookeeper program'.

AN INSIDE LOOK

Open to current and ex-serving Defence members, the zookeeper program takes veterans behind the scenes at Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary, a heritage-listed Gold Coast conservation park that's home to all kinds of native and exotic animals.

The program is funded by Currumbin RSL and Aurora Currumbin Clinic, a leading mental health facility that offers specialised care for veterans and first responders.

"We take about five veterans from the RSL, who don't have to be Sub Branch members, and we also meet a small group from the clinic," Army veteran and Currumbin RSL Veteran Engagement Officer Lauren Darcy, who organises the program, says.

One week, the veterans might make enrichments for the animals to ensure they're challenging and stimulating them to 'hunt' or forage for food. The next

week, the veterans might see wildlife undergoing surgery or rehabilitation.

Each term, the program also involves a special project.

"For our first group project, we built a frog pond and bird boxes that will be set up around the sanctuary. Last term, we built a greenhouse and planted seedlings, which will be planted within the sanctuary once big enough," Lauren explains.

"The project work gives veterans the chance to be able to see something develop from start to finish, which they can watch grow over time. It lets them give back to the sanctuary as well."

"It's something different every week, and it's totally different from just visiting and reading the labels on the enclosures," Stephen says.

"I look forward to my Tuesdays there and just getting lost with all the animals."

NATURE'S THERAPY

The zookeeper program has plenty of benefits for those who take part.

"My wife tells me my temper's a lot quieter than it normally is," Mal jokes.



"It's a really nice environment to be in, and you get to meet like-minded people – it's a bit of camaraderie for us all."

He says the program also brings people out of their shells.

"For a period of time, some sort of hang back and don't say much. After a few months they tend to get more involved. So, the program seems to bring down some walls, which is really good. Everyone seems to just settle in and enjoy the morning."

"Just walking through the sanctuary is lovely," Lauren says. "It's a chance to switch off and just wander, listen and enjoy without all the stresses of life."

That can make a real difference to those undergoing treatment at the clinic, she explains.

"They really look forward to coming along each week. It's a chance for them to slowly come back out into the community without it being overwhelming, meet other veterans, start connecting to all our programs and services, and see what other things are out there for them to do."

Most importantly, Lauren says, the program helps veterans "see the value in their own self".

"One lesson that's resonated deeply with me and other veterans is that every living thing has its

place and purpose in the world," she says.

PURPOSE AND FULFILMENT

According to Currumbin/Palm Beach RSL Sub Branch Board member Cherisa Pearce – also an Army veteran – the zookeeper program is one of their most successful.

"Everybody knows how wonderful animals can be for mental health. When I attended one of the sessions, it gave me goosebumps seeing the smiles on people's faces."

"Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary depends a lot on volunteer help, so veterans who take part in the program are contributing to our local community, which I think is really important for human connection and wellbeing."

Stephen enjoys the program so much that he's signed up for a fourth term and offered to volunteer at the sanctuary.

"It gives me a sense of fulfillment that I've done my little bit for the environment," he says. "If you get given something, you've got to give it back some other way."

HELPING THE VETERAN COMMUNITY THRIVE

The zookeeper program is just one of the Sub Branch's many social initiatives, which range from coffee catchups to cooking classes, a weekly social run/walk, kayaking, pickleball, and an organic community garden dubbed the Veterans' Backyard.

Some activities are reserved for Sub Branch members and their families, but most welcome any veterans or Defence members, and their partners.

FIND EVENTS NEAR YOU

RSL Sub Branches run programs and events all over Queensland. Visit rslqld.org to discover what's on near you.

Cherisa says these social events have played a big part in building the Sub Branch's strong, inclusive community.

"Those relationships that people build through our programs – which lead to them meeting other people in the veteran and wider community – are what makes us strong," she reflects.

"We're a big family, and we just want everyone to thrive."

Mal, who's lived in towns and joined RSLs all over Australia, has high praise for his Sub Branch.

"All the stuff they put on is really good, so I try to get to as much as I can," he says.

"Currumbin/Palm Beach has one of the most active and efficient veteran programs going of any place I've seen or been associated with."

Stephen agrees.

"I didn't have anything to do with the military until I came to Australia and joined the RSL. I get a lot of satisfaction from belonging to the Sub Branch," he says.

"The things they do for us veterans – there's always help and support." ←

ABOVE: Veteran Stephen Crawford (centre) participating in the zookeeper program at Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary.

BELOW LEFT: A koala at the Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary. Animals can be wonderful for improving mental health and often put a smile on the face of participants.



For more information on Currumbin/Palm Beach RSL Sub Branch's programs, please email Lauren Darcy via laurend@veteransupport.com.au

Young veterans honoured in Cotton Tree Cenotaph upgrade

Maroochydore RSL Sub Branch has played a proud role in upgrading its local place of remembrance.

✍ Courtney Adams

BELOW:
The Maroochydore community gather at the updated cenotaph, which is designed to honour all generations of veterans.

A TEAM OF PROUD CARETAKERS

Cotton Tree Cenotaph has been a place of reverence for the Maroochydore community since 1986. Located along a serene waterfront esplanade, the memorial and its surrounding gardens are proudly maintained by a team of volunteers from Maroochydore RSL Sub Branch.

Part of the team overseeing these important works is Sub Branch President and RAAF veteran Peter Tsakissiris.

"The veteran community at Maroochydore RSL Sub Branch is vibrant and supportive," Peter says.

"As of November 2024, we have 834 members, nine life members and 45 volunteers who help provide a great service to all

veterans in our community and foster camaraderie, mateship and resilience.

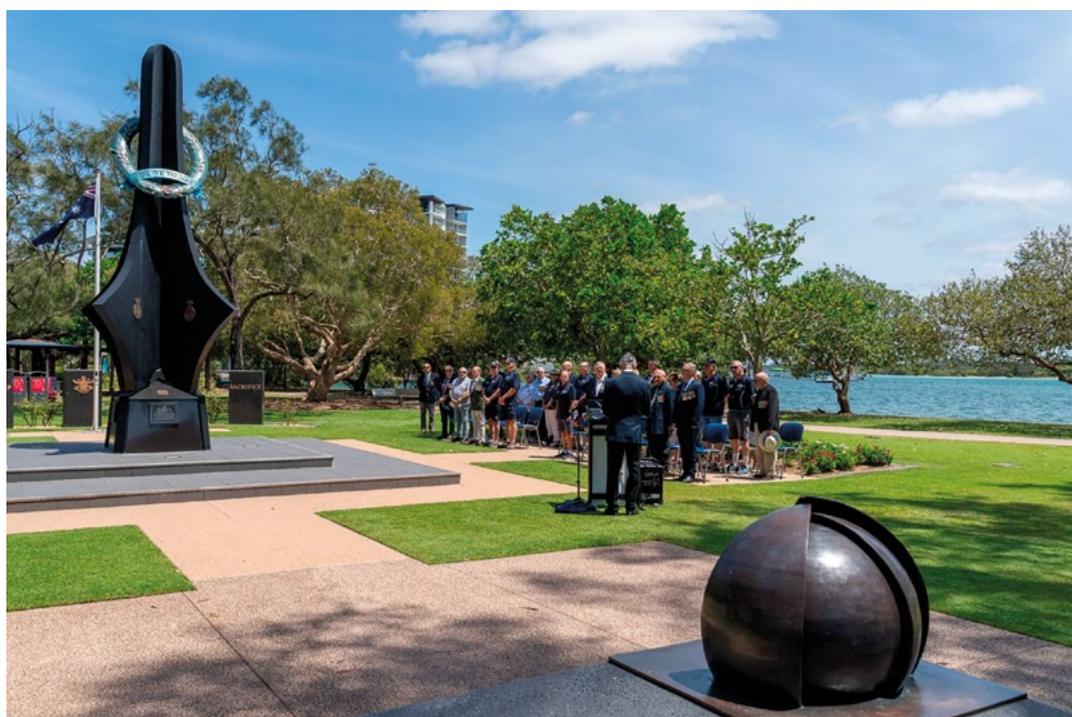
"Our dedicated team, in close partnership with the Sunshine Coast Council, works diligently to maintain the Cotton Tree Cenotaph area, ensuring it remains in excellent condition despite the wear from the harsh Australian elements.

"Our goal is to preserve it as an inclusive space for reflection, ensuring every veteran feels honoured, supported and remembered."

Almost four decades since its dedication, the cenotaph remains a place for community commemoration and recognition of Australian Defence personnel, especially those who have suffered and sacrificed in armed conflicts and peacekeeping operations. For veterans, it plays an essential role in acknowledging the breadth of their service.

A MORE INCLUSIVE MEMORIAL

Cotton Tree Cenotaph has received a few upgrades in its lifetime, including a refurbishment completed in 2006 and the installation of an eternal flame in 2018. More recently, the



community identified a crucial need to honour younger veterans at the site, motivating officials from Maroochydore RSL Sub Branch and Sunshine Coast Council to set works in motion.

"The cenotaph is a place where we recognise the service of all Defence personnel, and it was important to have it reflect the enormous contribution to our national security in conflicts and operations post-Vietnam," Peter explains.

"It was also important for the upgraded site to bridge generational gaps and create a shared space of remembrance and unity for veterans of all ages."

Two key changes were made to honour those who have served in more recent conflicts and operations. First, the existing plaque was upgraded to mention conflicts in Vietnam, the Gulf War, Afghanistan and Iraq. Second, a new plaque was created to acknowledge those who served in peacekeeping and peacemaking operations in Somalia, Bougainville, East Timor, Cambodia, Sinai and Rwanda.

"This cenotaph is now a truly inclusive monument where everyone can come together to remember, reflect and express gratitude," Peter says.

"It is a place where families can bring younger generations to educate them about Australia's ongoing commitment to peace and international stability, beyond the well-known conflicts."

REMEMBRANCE DAY AT THE CENOTAPH

Works to the cenotaph were completed in time for Remembrance Day 2024, providing a fitting opportunity for veterans and community members to gather and commemorate at the upgraded memorial grounds.

"Holding the 2024 Remembrance Day service at the upgraded cenotaph was incredibly

meaningful for our Sub Branch members because it provided an opportunity to formally honour those whose service was not previously recognised at the site," Peter says.

"The upgraded plaques added a layer of resonance to the service, allowing members and attendees to feel that our community acknowledges all aspects of service. It was a profound and moving day, and a moment that felt inclusive and unifying."

Following the service, the upgraded cenotaph received overwhelmingly positive feedback from veterans and community members alike.

"The response has been incredibly positive and heartfelt, with many veterans expressing

appreciation for the updated plaques and community members noting that the cenotaph now feels more representative and inclusive of our collective history," Peter says.

With the project now unveiled, Maroochydore RSL Sub Branch representatives hope the upgraded cenotaph will serve as a place for community reflection and education.

"We hope that visitors feel a deep sense of respect for and understanding of the commitment of Australia's service personnel in conflicts and peacekeeping operations," Peter says.

"Our aim is for every visitor to leave with a greater awareness and appreciation of the sacrifices made by Australian men and women in service to our nation." ←



TOP:
An ANZAC Day dawn service held at the original Cotton Tree Cenotaph in 1979.

ABOVE:
A new cenotaph was unveiled in 1987.



For those interested in visiting the Cotton Tree Cenotaph, the site can be found at **53 The Esplanade, Maroochydore.**



TOWNHOUSE 1



TOWNHOUSE 2



TOWNHOUSE 3



TOWNHOUSE 4



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A \$13 MILLION GOLD COAST DREAM BEACH LIFE

CONGRATULATIONS to Jillian* from the New South Wales South Coast, who was beyond excited when we told her she'd won Dream Home Art Union Draw 421: A \$13 million Gold Coast dream beach life.

She was lost for words when Dream Home Art Union Executive General Manager, Commercial and Investments Tracey Bishop gave her a call.

What does this mean for Jillian?

A \$13 million win means she is now the proud owner of an entire Gold Coast apartment complex, steps from the sparkling calm waters of Tallebudgera, plus \$100,000 in gold, a luxury electric vehicle and a \$50,000 travel voucher.

And what a location for Jillian to ponder her next steps. With an estimated rental income of \$361,400 a year, she may never need to work again. Should she live in the luxe penthouse all year-round while planning travel adventures? Or use the income to have the properties managed for her, and holiday whenever they like? The options are endless, and all are wonderful.

"I can't believe this, it's a bit unreal. It is such a great cause and amazing prize," Jillian said.

Congratulations, Jillian – we wish you all the very best for the future.

Many thanks to you and all who support Dream Home Art Union. Each ticket sold supports veterans and families. 🙏

****Name changed for privacy reasons.***



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MATES 4 MATES

THE QUARTERLY MAGAZINE
FOR OUR DEFENCE COMMUNITY

The power of group-based support.

CHECK OUT OUR SKILLS FOR RECOVERY PROGRAMS
FOR THE YEAR.

+ **HOW TO BUILD HEALTHY COMMUNICATION.**
A SOCIAL WORKER SHARES HOW COMMUNICATION IS
THE KEY TO HAPPY RELATIONSHIPS.

Understanding the importance of connection.

THE MATES4MATES TEAM SHARE THEIR
STORIES OF SERVICE.

+ **LOOKING TO IMPROVE YOUR
HEALTH IN 2025?**
MATES4MATES CLINICIANS ARE HERE
TO HELP VETERANS AND FAMILIES.



A message from Emma.

As we settle into the new year, the Mates4Mates team and I have been busy reviewing our impact from 2024, which we look forward to sharing with you all very soon. I'm incredibly proud of the difference my team has made in the lives of veterans and families across the country.

Looking forward to the remainder of 2025, the team are working on a wide range of opportunities to ensure those who access our services benefit from meaningful outcomes to improve the quality of their lives.

Following the Australian Government's response late last year to the recommendations made by the Royal

Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide, Mates4Mates remains committed to delivering evidence-based and coordinated care, to support veterans and families to reconnect and recover.

As we prepare for the commemoration of ANZAC Day, it's important that our community takes the time to look after one another. Commemoration days are a time to reflect on the sacrifice and service of ex-serving and current military personnel, but they can also be a difficult time for veterans and family members.

Mates4Mates is here to support veterans and family members in the lead up to commemoration days. For 24-hour crisis support and on public holidays, please contact Open Arms on 1800 011 046.

Finally, I would like to remind the Defence community that Mates4Mates services are accessible to family members without the need for the veteran to be in attendance. Whether you're looking to access our mental health or physical rehabilitation services or build your community with our social connection activities, Mates4Mates is here to support veterans, partners, and families alike.

I look forward to seeing you all throughout the year and growing the Mates4Mates community further.

Emma

Mates4Mates Chief Executive Officer

Make the call that makes the difference.

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

mates4mates.org

[1300 4 MATES](tel:13004MATES)



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



Shop your support.

Every purchase supports veterans and their families.

mates4matesshop.org

The power of group-based support.



There shouldn't be a one-size-fits-all approach to recovery. That's why Mates4Mates offers a range of clinical group-based programs and workshops that aim to give veterans and family members the right skills and strategies to manage long-term health and wellbeing.

Throughout the year, Mates4Mates will be running online and in-person Skills for Recovery Programs across a range of topics including **sleep, addiction, emotional regulation, healthy relationships, persistent pain, heart health** and more.

The **One-Day Wellness Program** is also back in 2025, providing both veterans and family members an opportunity to be involved and learn to manage and improve mental and physical health through an integrative and holistic approach. These day programs are facilitated across Mates4Mates locations and will explore different ways to practise mindfulness through a range of activities including tai chi, yoga, art projects and self-reflection.

Delivered by Mates4Mates clinicians, the Skills for Recovery Programs are facilitated in a safe environment with like-minded others to ensure participants feel supported to learn and share together. Carol*, a veteran in South East Queensland who completed an online program, found the Skills for Recovery Programs "informative and insightful".

"It provided practical tools and strategies that were easy to implement in my daily life."

— Carol*, veteran

*Name changed for privacy reasons.

Are you a veteran or family member interested in participating?



Expressions of interest for these programs and workshops will open at various times throughout the year. Visit the Mates4Mates website by scanning the QR code or contact **programs@mates4mates.org** for more information.

PROGRAM / WORKSHOP	EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST OPEN
Partners and Carers Program*	March and September
Clinical Tai Chi Program (Townsville)	March and June
Online Healthy Relationships Program	March and September
Understanding Addiction Program*	March
One-Day Wellness Sunshine Coast	March and July
One-Day Wellness Toowoomba	March and July
One-Day Wellness Launceston	March
Online Explain the Brain Workshop	March, August and October
Online Sleep Program	April and August
Online Pain Education Workshop	April, June, August and October
One-Day Wellness Townsville	April and September
Falls Prevention Workshop*	May
Persistent Pain Program*	June
One-Day Wellness Stafford	June
One-Day Wellness Cairns	June and September
One-Day Wellness Ipswich	June
Online Learn More, Drink Less Program	July
One-Day Wellness Hobart	July
Heart Health Workshop*	September

* These programs/workshops will be held in multiple locations. For further details on exact locations, please use the QR code to visit the website.

Please note, dates are correct at time of printing. There is a minimum number of participants required for facilitation of Skills for Recovery Programs. A program or workshop may be cancelled if the minimum number is not met.

Understanding the importance of connection.



At Mates4Mates, many of our staff are veterans or come from Defence families and understand the importance of being part of a community that can reconnect and recover together.

Mates4Mates Sunshine Coast's Senior Liaison Officer Jack Halling and Liaison Officer Kirsty Leuken are both veterans who know that it can be hard to find a sense of belonging when transitioning into civilian life.

Jack explains that during his service, he often felt incredibly lonely during times of stress or struggle, even when surrounded by people.

"The unique challenges of Defence life can be isolating, as it can be hard for others to truly understand what you're going through," Jack says.

"I'm glad organisations and places like Mates4Mates exist, where support is readily available, and the focus is on connection and shared understanding."

— Jack Halling, Senior Liaison Officer

After leaving the Defence Force, Jack joined Mates4Mates, working from the Hobart centre in Tasmania. His time there highlighted to him how important the support services were to the local veteran community. So, when the opportunity arose to relocate to the Sunshine Coast to help open a new centre in 2024, he knew he wanted to help play a role in rallying together a community to access the support they needed.

"Working at Mates4Mates is deeply fulfilling. I get to see firsthand the transformations that occur when people feel supported and valued. Personally, it has strengthened my understanding of resilience and connection, and it's incredibly rewarding to be part of a team that makes a real difference in people's lives," Jack shares.

Since the opening of the Veteran & Family Wellbeing Centre in Maroochydore one year ago, the response has been overwhelmingly positive.

"In a typical week, we see many local veterans and family members embrace Mates4Mates as a place where they can connect, share their experiences, and get the support they need," Jack says.

"It's not just about getting help when you're struggling, it is about having a regular connection with others who 'get it'."

Kirsty explains that during her service, although the military offered great camaraderie, there was a lot of unspoken pressures to "tough it out", which made it hard to reach out for help or to discuss health challenges.

"After service, I found myself actively searching for a connection where people understood the unique challenges I was going through and, in particular, the challenges I found with being a woman in the military who had to navigate both gender expectations and the pressures of military life," Kirsty says.

The Mates4Mates Sunshine Coast team is located within the RSL Queensland Veteran & Family Wellbeing Centre at Level 2, 21 Carnaby Street, Maroochydore, and offers social connection activities for veterans and families, as well as physiotherapy, psychology and social work appointments, and a dedicated veterans' lounge and rehab gym. To find out more, visit mates4mates.org.

Kirsty credits the sense of connection from like-minded communities for allowing her to be vulnerable and receive support during this crucial time of her healing process.

“Having a supportive and safe space to go like Mates4Mates, where everyone understands the unique challenges veterans and their family members face, helps foster a sense of belonging,” Kirsty says.

“It is about having a place where you don’t feel judged or misunderstood.”

“It creates community where we can heal together and share our journeys, knowing that we are not alone in our struggles.”

— Kirsty Leuken, Liaison Officer

“If you haven’t accessed Mates4Mates services before, and you’re in need of support, then today’s the day to reach out to our friendly team.”



Fundraise today for veterans and families!

Each year, we’re grateful to those in the community who choose to fundraise for Mates4Mates to help support veterans and families. If you’re interested in fundraising, here are some helpful tips to get started.

Make it a FUNdraiser!

There are no rules around fundraisers having to be a bake sale or a fun run, so pick something you’re passionate about and build it out from there. Speak to the Mates4Mates fundraising team if you’re having trouble getting started.

Use the power of social media.

Share information with your friends and family about why your cause is important. We recommend adding a link to your fundraising page in a Facebook post or in an Instagram story.

Show your gratitude.

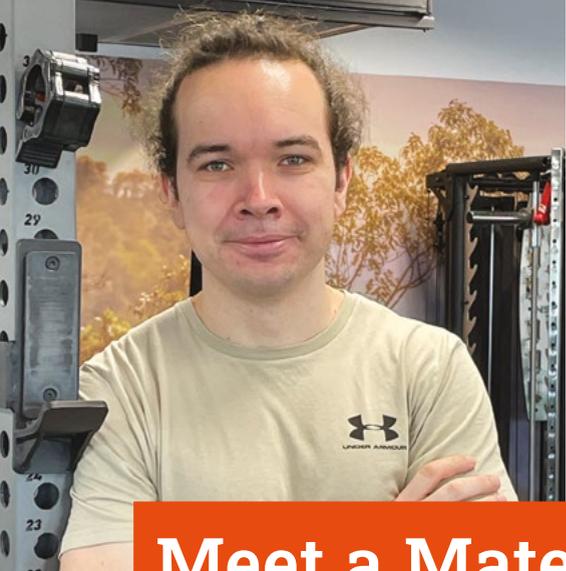
A few dollars still go a long way to helping you reach your goal, so don’t forget to genuinely thank all the people that donate.

Back yourself.

Don’t assume that everyone will say ‘no’. We know that friends and family may not always be able to donate, but they may be able to make a small contribution or even help share it for you on their channels or with their networks.



To find out more about fundraising for Mates4Mates, scan the QR code or head to supportmates4mates.org.



Meet a Mate.

Tom is a Mate living in Brisbane who has been regularly accessing Mates4Mates services since 2021.

Why do you enjoy being a Mate?

“I enjoy being able to drop in and use the centre, which might lead to catching up with someone I haven’t seen in a while. I’ve found it much easier to talk to fellow Mates or staff about how you’ve been tracking because of the shared focus of everyone who visits Mates4Mates.

I also think it’s really important to have routine social connection in your life, even if you feel like you have plenty of friends. Life can get busy, or it can become hard to stay connected, but with regular contact through

Mates4Mates activities, I know that my social life will never fall away.”

What impact has Mates4Mates had on you?

“I was in a bit of a state when I first joined Mates4Mates. My biggest challenge was making it out of the house and into the centre.

My life has changed massively since then. I had been unable to exercise for years due to a severe panic disorder and having the support of Mates4Mates really helped me to work on that. Now you can’t keep me out of the gym!”



Creating more inclusive spaces for veterans.

Reconciliation remains a priority for Mates4Mates as we continue to develop and provide services that are safe and inclusive of the entire community, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander veterans and families.

Mates4Mates proudly progressed through our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan in 2024, and as we continue our efforts in 2025, we are proud to be working towards our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan with Reconciliation Australia.

Earlier in the year, we partnered with Masud Sanders of Ghungarie Designs who created and designed incredible artwork for the Mates4Mates Innovate Reconciliation

Action Plan. Masud is an independent artist and is a proud Munanjali man through his maternal grandfather, a proud Gooreng Gorreng man through his maternal grandmother and a proud Ghangulu man through his maternal grandfather.

The artwork is titled ‘Munjoorum’, meaning ‘together’, and encompasses the Mates4Mates values of integrity, compassion, innovation and collaboration.

To learn more about the Mates4Mates Reconciliation Action Plan, scan the QR code to visit our website.





How to build healthy communication.

✍️ *Written by Simone Johns, Mates4Mates Social Worker*

Social connection is vital for humans. When things go wrong with people we love, our world can feel upside-down. Healthy communication is the key to happy and healthy relationships.

Healthy communication is based around respect and clear communication: respect for yourself and other people. It is important to be honest and respectful about what you are trying to say and to think before you say it.

Veterans may struggle with healthy communication practices as a result of the unique nature of their military experience. Effective communication may be impacted by a range of psychological health conditions, including PTSD, depression, anxiety, insomnia, isolation, or difficulties with memory. Living with pain and physical concerns can also interfere with maintaining healthy communication.

The way we communicate depends on the type of relationship as well as our goals and needs. No matter the conversation or its participants, the most important aspect is respect, without which communication can quickly become unhelpful.

When having a difficult conversation with someone you care about, try to remain non-judgmental and not to place blame on the other person as this can lead to defensiveness and may aggravate the situation.

Healthy communication in a romantic relationship involves some added steps, including the ability to be curious about your partner and actively listening to them without interruption or judgement. Couples who communicate effectively are more likely to understand and respect each other's needs and boundaries.

Like all good things, healthy communication takes effort and commitment. The first step is recognising where improvements may be required. Practising active listening, asking for feedback, and

being open to receiving it can be helpful for the development of effective communication.

It is also important to avoid making assumptions and to communicate clearly and respectfully as well as being clear and consistent in your interactions with others. These techniques all assist in effectively building trust, which is the foundation of any healthy relationship.

Mates4Mates offers veterans and family members access to psychologists, counsellors, and social workers who can work with you toward improving your communication in your meaningful relationships at home, at work, and in the community.

To find out more, reach out to Mates4Mates on **1300 4 MATES (62 837)** for a confidential chat.

MATES 4 MATES

Here for those
impacted by service.



Looking to improve your mental or physical health in 2025?

Mates4Mates offers clinical support to eligible veterans and families through psychology, counselling, social work, exercise physiology and physiotherapy services. Our clinicians are military-informed, experienced in supporting Defence members and families to improve their quality of life.

If you're not sure where to start when it comes to booking an appointment with a Mates4Mates clinician, we recommend speaking with your GP, medical officer or specialist first.

We understand that asking for support from a health professional can feel like a daunting task. The following conversation starters may be helpful when discussing your concerns with your GP to determine the best course of treatment and referral options.

"I've been more tired/anxious/nervous/reactive than usual, and I'd like a referral to work on these with a mental health professional."

"I'd like a referral to see a psychologist to work through some personal things. Would you be able to prepare one for me?"

"I'd like a referral to an exercise physiologist or physiotherapist who can help me restore my physical fitness and ability to complete general, day-to-day tasks."

"I have persistent pain that is impacting my daily life, and I'd like to see an exercise physiologist or physiotherapist be able to help me navigate this pain."

Remember that if a Mates4Mates centre isn't located near you, telehealth appointments are available for clients with eligible referrals.



For more information about how to access support from Mates4Mates clinicians and referral eligibility, scan the QR code. To make an appointment over the phone, you can call us anytime from Monday to Friday, between 8:30am and 4:30pm, on 1300 4 MATES (62 837).

CARINA MEN'S SHED

CELEBRATES SUCCESS OF DEDICATED VETERANS' PROGRAM

*Carina Men's Shed offers an outlet for learning new skills
and connecting with a supportive community.*

 Courtney Adams |  Belinda Crossman

BUILDING COMMUNITY

Manly-Lota RSL Sub Branch member Bob Ikin has been involved with Carina Men's Shed since it formed in 2009. He has witnessed its membership grow from just six to more than 170 – an achievement he attributes to the tight-knit community that has formed through their shed.

"When a lot of men retire, they lose their social network and are stuck at home. If they downsize, they also lose the shed in their backyard. A men's shed fills a void in that area," Bob explains.

"Carina Men's Shed is very much a community shed. You can have the best facilities in the world, but if the membership isn't working together and looking out for one another, it won't work. I'm very proud to say that this shed has all those ingredients together."

Having served for 20 years in the Army during his career, Bob realised that in addition to the schools, community organisations and hospitals that Carina Men's Shed supports, they could make a difference to his fellow veterans too.



"I went to Mates4Mates to talk about the men's shed movement for one of their barbecue nights. Then I thought, 'Why don't we start doing a few veterans' programs at our shed?'"

From there, Bob and the team applied for a Department of Veterans' Affairs grant and secured a partnership with the Clem Jones Centre, enabling Carina Men's Shed to hold its first dedicated

ABOVE: Members of Carina Men's Shed, a close-knit community of over 170 members.

RIGHT:
Some of
the wooden
creations made
by members.

CENTRE:
Tools in the
workshop.

BELOW:
Carina Men's
Shed members
looking at
member's
creations.



veterans' program in
November 2020.

"We now run the program over
two Fridays and at last count,
we've put 45 veterans through –
42% of which have been female.

"It's very satisfying for us and
we're getting great feedback from
Mates4Mates. We want to take
this well into the future, as long as
there is a need with veterans."

Bob believes the key to the
program's success has been its
mentors – men like Bevan,
Graham and Malcolm.



BUILDING CONFIDENCE

Bevan Guttormsen has been
involved with Carina Men's Shed
since it first started. His mentoring
style comes from a combination of
experience in the Army and trade
expertise in woodworking
and painting.

"I was in the ninth intake of the
National Service and served from
1967 to 1969. Aside from the Army,
my background is boat building.
I've helped build pleasure boats,
government boats, trawlers – any
size up to 100-foot, and all in
timber. From there, I changed
tactics and went into industrial
painting," Bevan says.

Bevan usually spends one day
per week in the shed, where you'll
find him training members on safe
machinery use while assisting with
their woodworking projects.

"They do a simple job first –
usually a carryall box to hold their
own tools in. After that, they may
want to bring in a project to do
over two or three sessions.

"We've built some big projects,
such as a replica of the 'Brisbane'
sign in ply, a flexible folding table
over 35 feet long, and a model
train. We've made a roulette wheel
for the dementia ward of a nursing
home, a chicken coop for a school,
trophies for different clubs, and
billy karts. We do a kite festival and
attend big markets about three
times per year."

While Bevan enjoys helping
members build their confidence in
the shed, he also revels in building
social connections with them.

"I find the shed very enjoyable
because you're meeting new
people. They might tell you what



they've done in the Army, and I can relate back to tell them that I was a Nasho and what I did in the Army. By the end of the session, you're mates."

BUILDING SKILLS

Graham Findlay joined Carina Men's Shed 10 years ago. His motivation to help veterans was largely inspired by his father, who benefited from a similar outlet following his military service.

"My father went to New Guinea before the Japanese declared war and he was up there when they started bombing. He was finally evacuated, but they had to put him into various hospitals because he had malaria. The only thing he had was carpet making tools – the Red Cross ran carpet making as a rehabilitation project," Graham says.

"So, when Bob said we're going to have this veterans' program at our Sub Branch, I wanted to be a part of it."

While Graham was initially worried about not having a trade to contribute to the program, his willingness to learn a new skill has proven invaluable to the shed's members.

"When I first joined, I quickly realised that most of the members had some sort of trade behind

them. I thought, 'I don't have a trade, what can I possibly do here?'. Then, a gentleman stood up and said, 'I want to do leadlight glass – anyone interested?' I put my hand up and that's how our glass group started.

"Our president at the time found somebody who could teach us leadlighting. From there, we progressed to decorative and warm melted glass."

After years of honing his skills from scratch, Graham now mentors shed members with their own glasswork projects – a role he has found greatly fulfilling.

"I don't know how the time has passed, because we've done so many great things. I get a lot out of helping people. This place becomes your community – a part of your family."

BUILDING WELLNESS

After leaving the Navy in 2005, Malcolm Baldock found himself looking for an outlet that could improve his mental health. He

joined Carina Men's Shed in 2017 and is now a mentor and staunch advocate for their work.

"I did 22 years in the Navy and struggled with a lot of things. Through a bit of help I realised that I needed something to do. I have a trade, arts and craft background, so I ended up at the Men's Shed," Malcolm says.

"To a certain extent, the shed is much like the military in terms of support for members. It's all about our ongoing welfare."

Malcolm calls himself the shed's 'roustabout', helping members with various tasks across woodworking, safety and leatherwork. A highlight for him has been working on the shed's veterans' program.

"A lot of us are veterans or have family members who are serving or ex-serving. I thought the program was a great idea because you can get some time to lose those thoughts in your head and after a couple of hours think, 'God, I feel better'."

"People in the shed are also learning about the plight of servicemen. Just through conversations, they start to understand the people in their own families who have served."

For those considering trying out a men's shed, Malcolm's advice is simple.

"Whether you're a current or ex-service person, police officer, firefighter, ambo, or somebody who's retired or experiencing grief – whether it's loss of job, loved ones or direction – I'll beat the drum all day for men's sheds.

"Go online and find a shed in your area. Not all sheds are the same, so find one that works for you." ←

LEFT:

Manly-Lota RSL Sub Branch member Bob Ikin has been involved with Carina Men's Shed since it formed in 2009.

"A lot of us are veterans or have family members who are serving or ex-serving. I thought the program was a great idea because you can get some time to lose those thoughts in your head and after a couple of hours think, 'God, I feel better'."



For more information about Carina Men's Shed, visit carinamensshed.org.au



ROLLING TOGETHER

ABOVE:
The 2024 Dad's Army race team.

BELOW:
Peter Gerdes and the 2024 Dad's Army race team.

Mareeba veterans are boosting wellness through wheelbarrow racing.

 **Olivia Lawrence**
 **Mareeba Shire Council**

More than 10 years ago, an idea was sparked amongst Mareeba RSL Sub Branch members to enter a team in the Great Wheelbarrow Race.

The unique event takes place annually in May over the course of three days and challenges individuals and teams of all ages to race a wheelbarrow 140km from Mareeba to Chillagoe.

The Sub Branch's decision to enter the one-of-a-kind endeavour not only formed the 10-person Dad's Army Wheelbarrow Race Team, which has participated every year since, but has also encouraged physical activity and camaraderie amongst

the Far Northern Queensland veterans.

Peter Gerdes, who has raced every year with Dad's Army, says the team has come a long way since their first event, but their desire to enter was inspired by prioritising their physical health.

"Twelve months prior to our first race in 2013, a group of us joined our local gym, Essential Fitness, to improve our fitness and increase our general activity levels," Peter explains.

"After months of exercising, we were all feeling really good, and it was Sub Branch member Ron Philp who said we should take part in the community event. Not fully understanding what we were getting ourselves into, we were all keen for the challenge."

The gym, along with local nurse Tanya Barker RN and exercise physiologist Samantha Musso, rallied behind the idea, providing





physical support for the veterans along the way. To complete the 140km race, the team alternates who pushes the wheelbarrow and the runners jump in and out of their moving coaster bus in turn.

"The first race we did was pretty horrendous," Peter says with a chuckle.

"We didn't realise we had to run in order to finish in the time requirement, so it became a steep learning curve pretty quickly."

It may have been a slow start for Dad's Army, but it didn't take long before the team became a well-oiled machine. Last year the group completed the race in just over 15 hours with only eight on their team: two fewer than usual.

"Our oldest member is 87 years old and our youngest is 63 years old," Peter explains.

"We have developed a strategy where we sprint with the barrow for 20 seconds and then switch out, so each of us are out there sprinting every three minutes."

To date, Dad's Army is the only group in the 55-and-older category, but Peter and the rest of the team are hoping to change that.

"We hope to inspire other Sub Branches to form a team and join in on the fun, because it's such a proud moment to not only be able to do it yourself but to see your teammates do it too," Peter says.

"We are all members of the gym and exercise together three times



a week year-round. An exercise physiologist also runs a program for us on two of the days, which is funded by the Department of Veterans' Affairs. It's great training for the race, but beyond that, it helps our health overall!"

The mateship goes beyond Mareeba RSL Sub Branch as well; Dad's Army has one teammate from Cairns RSL Sub Branch and another from Townsville RSL Sub Branch.

"We have Army, Navy and Air Force vets on the team and the camaraderie and support is just great, but it's also fun rivalry and banter too," Peter says.

Dad's Army also plans social events for the team and keeps busy by giving back to the community.

"After covering our costs to enter and compete in the race, we give back to Mareeba Hospital," Peter explains.

"The funds we donate go towards any medical equipment they're needing. This year we raised \$3,000 and in past years we have raised upwards of \$6,000.

"I think Dad's Army proves that you are never too old to do anything. If you do a bit of exercise and keep yourself going you can achieve great things." ←

ABOVE LEFT: Ivan Sayed hands off the wheelbarrow to Peter Gerdes during the Great Wheelbarrow Race in 2024.

ABOVE TOP: Cairns RSL Sub Branch member Franz Thezan (centre) and the rest of the 2024 Dad's Army race team.

ABOVE: Dad's Army gifting medical equipment to Mareeba Hospital.

GLADSTONE BANDS TOGETHER FOR MAJOR WAR RELIC RESTORATION

A rusty Bofors gun is inspiring a future generation of tradies, mentored by local veterans.

✍ Courtney Adams



TREASURE AMONGST THE SCRAP

In early 2023, members of Gladstone RSL Sub Branch caught wind of a 1942 40mm Bofors gun destined for scrap in neighbouring Bundaberg. An anti-aircraft autocannon designed in Sweden in the 1930s, the Bofors gun was one of the most popular guns used by both sides during World War II.

"A member of Bundaberg RSL Sub Branch contacted us and mentioned there was a Bofors





ABOVE:
Mark Shaw
from Deploy
Workforce
Solutions.

anti-aircraft gun sitting in a yard in Bundaberg Council. We said, 'How do we go about getting it?,' Gladstone RSL Sub Branch President Ed Dahlheimer recalls.

"Bundaberg RSL Sub Branch consulted with other ex-service organisations and found that nobody wanted it. We then received a letter from Council saying they were happy for us to have it."

With the help of local company Extreme Engineering, the gun was moved to Gladstone and equipment provided to start its restoration. However, the Sub Branch quickly found that extensive, long-term works were needed, necessitating outside help.

"The initial thought was to have

veterans do it, but that would take decades because we've got busy lives," Ed explains.

"So, we've partnered with a local company, Deploy Workforce Solutions. They take disadvantaged kids and adults and provide them with base training."

This includes grinding and welding using hand and power tools initially, and then developing skills in other fields as they move through the training.

BRINGING LOCAL VETERANS AND YOUTH TOGETHER

The Bofors gun's restoration began in July 2023 and involves several community groups.

Youth participants from the Communities of Gladstone

Supporting Youth program partner with a veteran mentor for six weeks. Work is completed under the guidance of Deploy Workforce Solutions, which leads the restoration, while Gladstone RSL Sub Branch purchases the necessary materials, tools and consumables to complete the work.

Gladstone RSL Sub Branch and Young Veterans Central Queensland member Jon Felton says the program has been a positive experience for mentors.

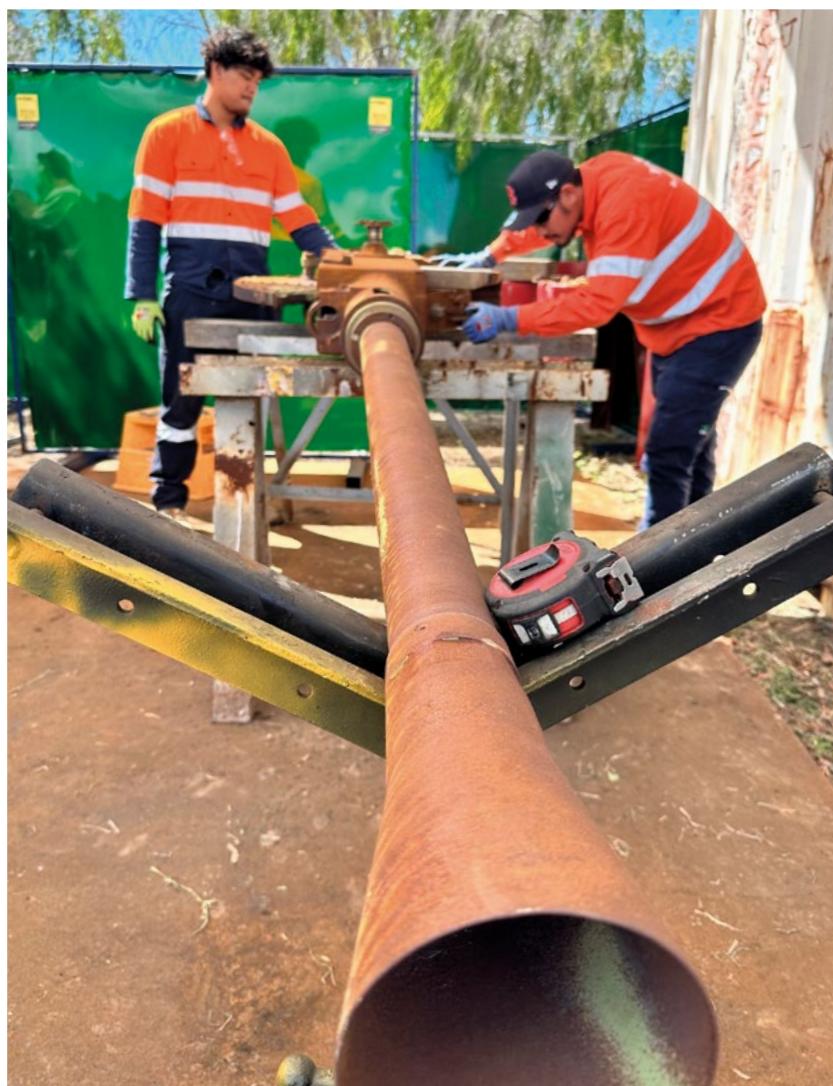
"For me, it was about getting our veterans re-engaged in the community and involved in a project where they can get their purpose back," Jon explains.

"Putting some of those key skills they learned from the military

relic restoration.



ABOVE:
Youth participants from the Communities of Gladstone Supporting Youth program.

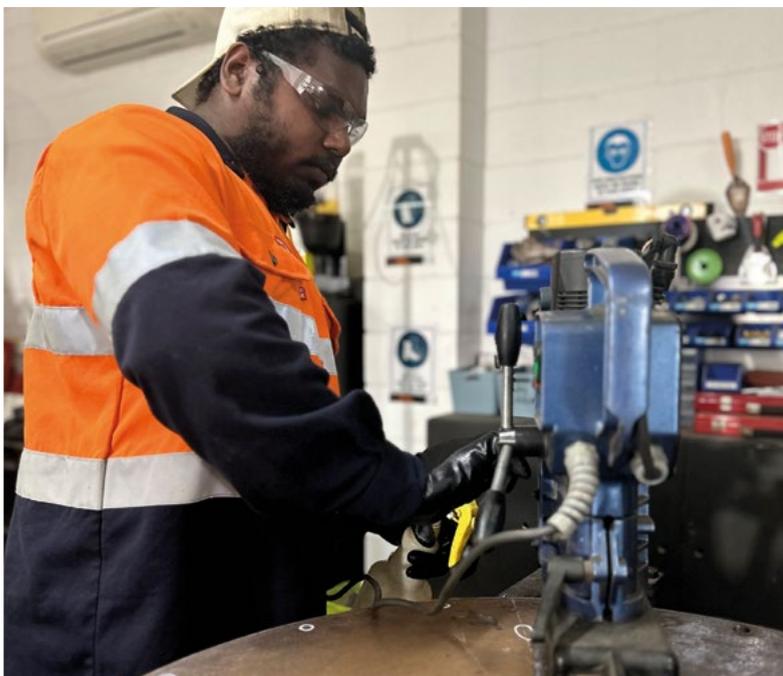


SCAN TO WATCH VIDEO

to use, overcoming some of the struggles they have, and the mentor piece have been life-changing for some of our people.”

Army veteran Matt Bull is one such example. He moved to Gladstone following his service discharge in 2022 and has been involved as a mentor in the program since it began in mid-2023.

“I was part of Young Veterans in Victoria and connected with the



crew up here when I was asked to participate in the mentor program," Matt explains.

"Being discharged after 34 years and not knowing what you're going to do next, to have a program like this to work on and be able to give back is huge."

Matt's mentoring role involves imparting the life skills he gained from his extensive career in the military to the program's participants. Watching his mentees' confidence develop as they progress has been hugely rewarding.

"A lot of these kids have come from backgrounds that aren't the most affluent, so to see that people

in the community actually care about them helps them understand that not everyone is out there to get them; people are actually there to give them a chance," Matt says.

CONTRIBUTING TO GLADSTONE'S LEGACY

Once completed, the restored Bofors gun will be displayed at Gladstone's Anzac Park as part of a memorial walk commemorating various conflicts throughout history.

"Once it's in Anzac Park, there's multiple facets of our community that will go 'I was a part of that.' There will be a lot of younger members of the community who will be very proud of what they've done, and also identify that as a stepping stone to a career," Ed says.

"The veteran mentors have instilled in them a sense of pride and commitment to a relic of a bygone era and restored it back to its original glory so it can be proudly displayed."

Jon agrees.

"All the participants that have been part of each program have touched it. We want them to be part of a legacy, so in 20 years' time, any of them can walk past with their own kids or grandkids and say they had a part in restoring this piece of our military history." ←

ABOVE:
Once completed, the restored Bofors gun will be displayed at Gladstone's Anzac Park.



To learn more about the restoration project contact Gladstone RSL Sub Branch at rslqld.org/about-us/gladstone-sub-branch-inc

UNCOVERING THE QUALITIES OF A COMPENSATION ADVOCATE

With a background in mental health and crisis support, RSL Queensland Compensation Advocate Chanara Hawkes has always wanted to help people but has now found her new purpose.

“Ultimately you need to be doing it for the right reasons; you need to really care and want to make a difference because you can change people’s lives. And I don’t think you get the opportunity to do that in many other jobs.”

DESPITE only starting the role in early 2024, Chanara Hawkes says she has found her purpose in helping veterans as a compensation advocate.

Originally from Mount Isa in northwest Queensland, Chanara moved to Bundaberg in 2019 in the hopes of pursuing a new career.

“I have a long history of working in the mental health and crisis support space – about eight or nine years actually, but I was ready for a change,” Chanara explains.

“Even though I wanted to try something different, I still wanted to do something that supported people. That’s when I saw this job for a compensation advocate with RSL Queensland pop up and thought to throw my hat in the ring.”

A compensation advocate assists veterans identify and submit claims to the Department of Veterans’ Affairs (DVA) around conditions that they may have received during or after their service, and help them potentially receive some compensation for those claims.

“The DVA process, at times,

can be a little overwhelming, and that’s where we step in. We set up interviews, help them navigate the legislation and identify conditions they might not have thought they could claim and get compensation for,” Chanara says.

“As an advocate, you’ve got to have a deep understanding of the complex process, which requires training through the Advocacy Training and Development Program.

“It can take up to 18 months to be a fully qualified level two advocate, but I’m hoping to become a level one advocate in a few more months.

“While the training has been extensive, I’ve had incredible support from my team leader Natalie Drake, who is just a wealth of knowledge, as well as the entire Central Queensland team – everyone has been so supportive throughout this process.”

THE BEST OUTCOMES FOR VETERANS

Natalie has been with RSL

Queensland for three years and is passionate about supporting and training advocates in her area. Currently, she looks after advocacy and compensation advocates across Hervey Bay, Bundaberg and Rockhampton.

“The role of a compensation advocate is multilayered but incredibly rewarding,” Natalie says.

“No two veterans have had the same service experience, which can make the interviews go in many different directions, and uncovering their story and potential conditions can be emotional and challenging for the client, but just being there to support our clients through a complicated process can positively affect their life.

“I want to make sure that all new advocates, especially those in regional areas, feel supported by other advocates and the RSL Queensland service delivery team, and get that exposure to these kinds of conversations during their training because that is how we learn on the job.”



As compensation advocates deal with highly personal information, Natalie says having empathy and emotional intelligence is crucial to build rapport with the client and achieve the best outcome.

"I think the biggest thing for an advocate is to have empathy and not hold any judgement of the person sitting in front of you, so you can build that trust between you both," she explains.

"Being able to make them feel safe is also a big one, because the more that you can do that, the more you get out of that relationship and, in turn, uncover

the best possible outcome of compensation.

"That empathy, trust and support is essential, but also to have that ability to take a holistic approach when assisting a veteran is important. Being able to take it a step further and ask: 'what else can we do?; 'how else can we help you?'"

Chanara agrees and adds that a willingness to learn is another quality of a great advocate.

"I think an advocate has to be a caring person, but also someone who wants to learn because the claim process and legislation that we work with is intricate, so you really do learn something new

every day," Chanara says.

"Somebody who has a desire to learn and support others would be perfect as a compensation advocate."

"Ultimately you need to be doing it for the right reasons; you need to really care and want to make a difference because you can change people's lives. And I don't think you get the opportunity to do that in many other jobs," Natalie adds.

"While it can be challenging at times, the reward of hearing comments like 'you've changed my life,' 'I am so glad I met you' and 'you've helped me so much' make it all worthwhile." ←

ABOVE:

After a long history of working in mental health and crisis support, Chanara Hawkes found her purpose as a compensation advocate with RSL Queensland.

EMBRACING THE COMMUNITY OF ST HELENS

After serving in the Defence Force for more than 25 years, Barbara Farren-Price understands the importance of building a sense of community.

Jasmine Halley



 YouTube



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SMALL TOWN, BIG COMMUNITY

Originally from Melbourne, Barbara and her husband moved to the small rural town of Yalbaroo five years ago and immediately became involved with the nearby St Helens RSL Sub Branch.

"When we first arrived, we attended the local Remembrance Day commemoration. This was back when the Sub Branch itself was quite small," Barbara recalls.

"My husband and I had been to services of all sizes over the years, so I knew that if we got the community more involved, we could make this commemoration even larger.

"I saw so much potential for the Sub Branch and was inspired to help. That's when we decided to

become President and Secretary of the Sub Branch."

Barbara knew community involvement was the key to growing the Sub Branch, but also recognised the importance of making sure Sub Branch members were heard.

"We made time to visit locals who knew a lot of history about the area and the Sub Branch, and then started hosting regular meetings with our members to share this knowledge and talk about ways we could make our Sub Branch even better and more connected," Barbara says.

"Through our networking, we've been able to build connections with local businesses and schools that now support us with services and

other activities. And we've been able to secure grants for renovations.

"We've also introduced the annual gunfire breakfast and got schools involved in our commemorations by letting students write and recite poems at the service."

A GROWING SUB BRANCH

The Sub Branch has now grown from nine service members to 15 service members and 11 social members, who are incredibly active in the community. Attendance at commemorations has also dramatically increased.

"That first Remembrance Day service we had eight people attend. Now, we have the Memorial Hall filled with people!"

PICTURED:
Barbara Farren-Price during her time in the Australian Army.





ABOVE:
Calen and District War Memorial Hall.

RIGHT:
Originally from Melbourne, Barbara and her husband moved to the small rural town of Yalbaroo five years ago and immediately became involved with the nearby St Helens RSL Sub Branch.



Barbara attributes this growth to the newfound connectedness between the Sub Branch and the community and localising the commemorations.

"While sharing the history of the commemoration is important, I think it's been beneficial for us to include local stories of the area in

our services as well. It gives the ceremony that personal element and makes attendees more engaged in the service," Barbara says.

"It's lovely to have locals come up after a service and tell us, 'My dad did this' or 'My grandfather was involved in this,' because we are then able to recognise their service in the next commemoration and make it more personalised."

Over the years, veterans in the area have been returning and getting involved with the Sub Branch.

"It was eye-opening when I first joined the Sub Branch as Secretary and was made aware of all the programs RSL Queensland offers veterans and their families. I never knew there were so many support services available," Barbara explains.

"Now, a few years into the role, it's been so rewarding to reconnect with veterans in the community and guide them in the direction of relevant support services available.

"Sometimes it's even as simple

as enjoying a cuppa and listening to their story. It may seem like a small interaction to us, but it's so important to the veteran."

Barbara also introduced social activities that have become popular with members.

"We host regular paint 'n' sips, which have been successful. Members have told me the activity is therapeutic and that it's nice to do something different with their friends in town," Barbara says.

"As a veteran, it's important to feel camaraderie as much as you can. When you're in the Defence Force you get it daily, but when you leave, you might miss it. So, building a sense of community here at the Sub Branch where members feel safe is so important.

"Another big thing for us is getting local schools involved in activities. Whether it's through painting, poetry or getting involved with Postcards of Honour, we want to make sure the legacy and history of the RSL and the Defence Force is passed on."

CONNECTION IS THE KEY TO SUCCESS

Barbara also credits the success of St Helens Sub Branch events to its active involvement with neighbouring businesses.

"It's great to be able to work closely with the Calen and District Memorial Hall and surrounding neighbours to bring the location to life for services, events or luncheons," Barbara says.

"We all have the same objective of driving community engagement, so everyone is more than accommodating when we put together activities.

"While we might not have direct access to the facilities that some Sub Branches may have in larger cities, we don't feel constrained in any way because our community is so strong here. Everyone looks out for one another and to me that is what makes a Sub Branch so successful." ←

A VETERAN NETWORK CHAMPION FOR EX-SERVING PERSONNEL

Ken Orr's dedication to service has extended beyond his family's legacy through his active involvement with the Gold Coast Health Veteran Employee Network.

Olivia Lawrence



OPENING SPREAD:

Ken Orr alongside members of the Gold Coast Health Veteran Employee Network, which includes Veteran Employee Network Deputy Chair Wayne Williams (right).

BELOW:

Southport RSL Sub Branch Deputy President Ken Orr is also involved in the Gold Coast Health Veteran Employee Network.

Becoming involved in both the military and the medical field came naturally for Southport RSL Sub Branch Deputy President Ken Orr.

With a father who served as a medic in the New Zealand Army and his grandfather and great-grandfathers having military backgrounds, Ken says it felt right to follow in their footsteps, serving nine years as a medic in the New Zealand Army Reserves.

"I grew up around a hospital, my dad was one of the first male registered nurses in New Zealand, so I guess I knew I'd always end up in a hospital somewhere," Ken says.

"I got involved in St John cadets when I was eight years old and knowing that dad had been a medic in the Army, when I turned 18 it seemed like a great thing for me to then progress onto, something a bit different and a challenge."

Today, Ken's dedication to service has extended beyond his family's legacy through his active involvement with Southport RSL

Sub Branch and the Gold Coast Health Veteran Employee Network.

BUILDING CONNECTIONS IN THE VETERAN COMMUNITY

Ken and his young family decided to move to Australia, and he accepted a role at Gold Coast Health in 2003.

"Big organisations like Gold Coast Health bring some of the same familiarities as the military," Ken explains.

"They have various roles and structure, which veterans are definitely used to, and also opportunities to be a great team player or develop as a leader."

After getting settled on the Gold Coast, Ken became a member of Surfers Paradise RSL Sub Branch and then Southport RSL Sub Branch. Since becoming a member more than a decade ago, Ken has taken on various volunteer roles with both Sub Branches, RSL Gold Coast District and now Southport.

"I decided I wanted to get involved with an RSL Sub Branch after going to many commemorations with my son, who



was volunteering as a Senior Navy Cadet through school," Ken says.

"Looking back, I'm very grateful my son inspired me to become an RSL member through his example of volunteering. It keeps me busy, and I enjoy doing a variety of different things to help veterans and their families."



EXPANDING PATHWAYS AND OPPORTUNITIES

This sense of purpose and commitment to veterans led Ken to eagerly get involved when Gold Coast Health proposed the concept of a Veteran Network in late 2019.

"I have gained a lot of skills and experiences through my RSL work that I knew I could apply to being part of a veteran network, and it would also provide me with some new challenges," Ken explains.

"The purpose of the Network is about bringing the veteran spirit into our health community for both our veteran staff and staff in general at Gold Coast Health, but also for our patients, visitors, carers and families."

The Network offers veterans support and guidance, organises social activities beyond



the workplace, promotes commemorations throughout the year, and advocates for veteran recruitment.

Since the Network began in 2019, its membership has grown to 60 veterans and Ken has taken on the role of Chair with a steering committee of three others.

"We are also implementing a buddy support program, recognising when we have any new veteran staff, we want to make sure that we don't just employ them, we actually support them during their early times in the workplace," Ken explains.

"Our motto is 'We still serve,' which is reflective of the fact that we have served in the military and now continue to serve the community here in the hospital and health service – this is also a part of Gold Coast Health's 'Always Care' philosophy."

FOSTERING COLLABORATION AND COMMUNITY FOR VETERANS

Ken says the Network takes pride in its promotion of important commemorations, which includes services for ANZAC Day and

Remembrance Day as well as different activities around Gold Coast Health facilities leading up to these days, including unique initiatives like stations for handing out rosemary and poppies.

"We try to spread activities out around our health service in as many facilities as we can because we have three hospitals and multiple health precincts. We want to be inclusive and get people involved," Ken says.

"Southport RSL Sub Branch also helps with our commemorative activities by providing poppies. In return, colleagues from the Network attend Southport RSL Sub Branch ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day services."

In addition to advancing what the Network already offers, Ken hopes more awareness can be raised of the transferrable skills that veterans can bring into all workplaces.

"The RSL Employment Program in particular does some great work in that space," Ken says.

"The average age of a veteran transitioning from Defence is quite young – late twenties to early thirties – so these are people that have had on average about a

decade of service. They've learned a lot and have many skills to bring across to health and other sectors.

"A lot of the time it's something that's part of life's plan to move from military into civilian life, but it can still be a difficult change. It's all about recognising that and figuring out how we can best support veterans along the way." ←

ABOVE: Southport RSL Sub Branch Deputy President Ken Orr is also involved in the Gold Coast Health Veteran Employee Network.

INSET: A framed photograph sits on Ken's desk of his father, Ken Orr Sr, who was a medic with the Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment. The photo was taken during his father's time as a Registered Nurse.



YouTube



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Corvette In Dust Screen

AN Australian Navy corvette had a remarkable experience while travelling down the eastern coast of Australia last week. For three days, between Cooktown and Sandy Cape, a distance of 900 miles, the ship was enveloped in a thick dust-storm.

The captain, formerly a well-known Brisbane shipping official, while in Brisbane that a mile and at no stage above three or four miles.

It was not just a dust haze, he had experienced before, but "a swirling dust storm which beat into the eyes of the crew."

Dust filtered into all parts of the ship and the ratings were hard put to all the time to keep the craft clean and ship-shape.

CHRONICLES ABOARD AUSTRALIAN CORVETTES DURING WORLD WAR II

World War II Navy veterans and Corvette-class crewmen Alan Grimmer and Allan Quartermaine reflect on their service aboard and ashore during the war and their experiences once they finally returned home.

Jasmine Halley

It was 1939. World War II had begun and the need for suitable minesweeping and escort vessels for the British Navy and Royal Australian Navy (RAN) became apparent.

Soon after the start of WWII, an order was placed for the Australian Government to construct 60 minesweepers – commonly known as Corvettes – with anti-submarine and escort functionalities. But it wasn't until 1942 that construction accelerated after Germany commenced its anti-shipping campaign in and around Australian waters, and Japan entered the war.

Navy veteran and renowned author and artist John Bastock described the Corvettes as “handy and reliable, and in addition to minesweeping, patrol and escort work they were employed on an endless variety of tasks including the carrying of troops and stores, participation in bombardments and assault landings, surveying and towing operations. In short, they were maids-of-all-work”.

HMAS IPSWICH

In June 1942, 18-year-old, Townsville-born Alan Grimmer was sent to the newly built Corvette, HMAS *Ipswich*.

“My father was in the Merchant Navy and hearing his stories was one of the many factors that inspired me to join the Australian Navy,” Grimmer explains.

“I always wanted to go out to sea, so originally, I joined the Sea Scouts in Townsville, and I liked what I heard. I learned how to talk Navy and understand what things go on at sea.

“Then the war broke out when I was 15 and I thought to myself that this was my chance. If the war was still on when I was of age, and they needed me, I'd join the Navy – which was an unusual thing to do because Townsville is not a maritime town. So, I was somewhat unique.”

HMAS *Ipswich* was commissioned at Brisbane and saw an extensive career during WWII. Grimmer was aboard the ship for most of her service and took part in escort and patrol campaigns in the western Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean, including the Allied invasion of Sicily. Within her first 18 months, the ship covered 61,360 miles before going back to the Indian Ocean on escort duty between India and Sri Lanka.

In July 1944, following further service in the Indian Ocean, HMAS *Ipswich* proceeded to





ABOVE: World War II Navy veteran Allan Quartermaine, who was 20 when he boarded HMAS *Kiama* in 1944.

Australia for refit. Grimmer left the ship and, after completing a course in torpedoes, joined HMAS *Diamantina*, which is now preserved in dry dock in the Queensland Maritime Museum.

HMAS KIAMA

In January 1944, approximately 90 crewmen boarded the HMAS *Kiama*. Among them was 20-year-old, Ayr-born Allan Quartermaine.

"Growing up, I heard stories from one of my uncles who was very keen about the Navy. Those stories intrigued me and made me want to join," Quartermaine recalls.

"But my father wouldn't sign my papers to join up unless I was able to get a job to come back to. So, I applied for three banking jobs and got into the Commonwealth Bank.

"After working for a bit, I enlisted into the Navy when I turned 17. After training and a period in Darwin, I was sent to HMAS *Kiama*."

During her operational wartime career, HMAS *Kiama* was primarily

involved in escorting duties, troop transport operations and anti-submarine patrols in New Guinea waters.

"One memory that has stuck with me was when we were minesweeping," Quartermaine reflects.

"I was on the upper deck, and it was around two o'clock in the afternoon. All of a sudden there was this grinding noise coming from under the boat and I thought to myself, 'I hope that's not a mine!'"

"Well, we didn't know it at the time, but it thankfully wasn't a mine; it was a shipwreck in the harbour. And we just happened to go over the top of it."

In her two years and two months of service, HMAS *Kiama* steamed 60,882 miles.

WAR IS OVER

Both Grimmer and Quartermaine were relieved more than anything when they heard the war was over.

"I didn't feel any jubilation or

exhilaration in the idea that the war was finished," Grimmer says. "I think we'd been so used to the war being there day in and day out for the last six years that it was a relief more than anything else."

"I can't remember exactly where we were at sea, but I remember being told and feeling relief. Everyone was pleased about it," Quartermaine adds.

"It was then a matter of preserving yourself until you got out."

Both men were also involved in some of the Japanese surrender ceremonies that were conducted.

"We were given the job of doing the surrenders in Naru, Ocean Islands and some in Bougainville," Grimmer says.

"The Japanese came aboard the ship, and we all stood around as they surrendered their swords and signed the papers."

"Some of us even collected souvenirs from the Japanese," Quartermaine adds.



LEFT: World War II Navy veteran Alan Grimmer holding a photo of his younger self.

BELOW: Alan Grimmer's memorabilia, including his wedding photo and the book he published, *A History of HMAS Ipswich*.

"I had a Japanese sword for years – always carried it around with me. I ended up giving it to Maroochydore RSL Sub Branch."

BACK TO CIVILIAN LIFE

Grimmer and Quartermaine had different experiences transitioning to civilian life.

As soon as Grimmer returned to Townsville, he immediately joined Townsville RSL Sub Branch. But as Townsville was not a maritime town, Grimmer didn't find solace at the local Sub Branch at the time.

"Most of the veterans were Army, and some Air Force. I was the only Navy veteran up there," Grimmer explains.

"I went to one or two meetings, but these men only reminisced about their experience in the Army. I felt very, very lonely."

Grimmer then decided to focus on getting back to work and becoming a civilian, suppressing all Navy memories.

"I took myself aside one day and said, 'Alan, if you want to be a civilian now, be a civilian. Don't try to live your life that you've just done for the last four years.' I didn't want to sit around and retell stories to those who wouldn't understand. I had a job to do and a house and

that kind of thing," he says.

"That went well until 1972, 30 years after the HMAS *Ipswich* was commissioned and I was invited to a reunion. Everyone came from all over Australia. To see those blokes and the changes that they had made over the years, it was marvellous. My idea of putting the memories into the background didn't work so well after that, and I couldn't be more grateful."

After Grimmer retired, he wrote and published a book about his experience, titled *A History of HMAS Ipswich*.

"I had no idea how to write a book, so I just poured my memories out onto a piece of paper and kept going, researching to see that all the dates were right and things like that. I thoroughly enjoyed writing it, and the books sold like hot spuds!"

Today, Grimmer resides in Brisbane and is a member of Kenmore-Moggill RSL Sub Branch – which he joined in 1971.

When Quartermaine returned from the war, he was thankful for his father's advice and returned to Ayr to work at the bank.

"It was comforting to have work to go back to after service," he says.

"During my career, I ended up working in seven different branches

in Queensland and two in New South Wales."

Quartermaine also joined the RSL in Ayr straight after his return from service. He later joined Maroochydore RSL Sub Branch, where he's now been a member for more than 35 years.

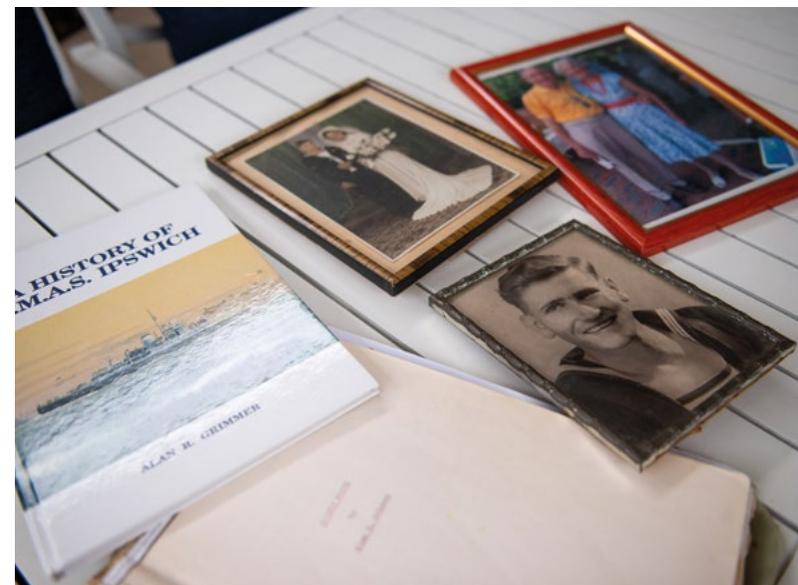
"This was one of the things about the RSL; if you had a problem, you could go to some of the RSL blokes who had an understanding of what you were talking about. I suppose you could say there's a bond there."

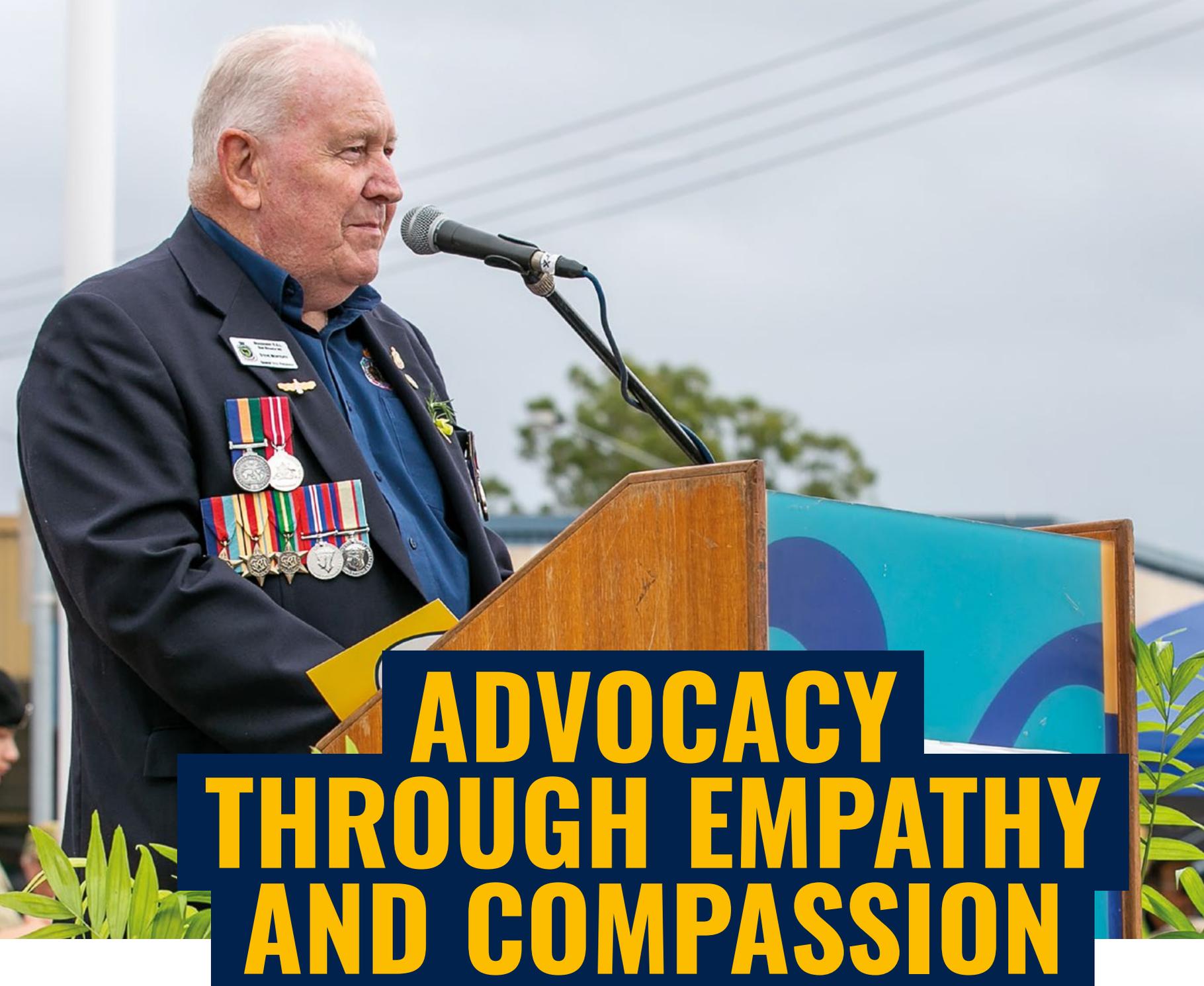
Looking back on their service for the country, Grimmer and Quartermaine – now a 78-year RSL member and a Life Member, respectively – express gratitude for their time in the RAN.

"Sometimes when you join a ship, you work 20 or 24 hours a day, seven days a week – no holiday or nothing. It was hard work, but it was the greatest thing in my life. It made a man out of me," Grimmer says proudly.

"Looking back, it's the sort of experience that you could never anticipate," Quartermaine adds.

"There's a bond that builds up amongst the ship's company. Everyone looks after each other; there's no space for ill feelings. It's very important to have that kind of friendship." ←





Through empathy and compassion, one Army veteran hopes to inspire a new generation of volunteer advocates to uplift the veteran community.

Jasmine Halley

ABOVE: Beaudesert RSL Sub Branch President Steve Monteath is passionate about veteran welfare.

WITH a background in Defence, teaching and police service, Steve Monteath has always had a knack for guiding others and serving his community.

But it was after he had been volunteering with St Vincent De Paul's (Vinnies) in Beaudesert that he found his passion for supporting veteran welfare.

"In 2013, one of the Vinnies members asked me if I had been in service and invited me to come along to Beaudesert RSL Sub Branch to see whether they needed any assistance. Once we got there, I began to learn about what the Sub Branch does for the veteran community and got involved with welfare and

compensation," Steve says.

"From there, I was officially trained through the Advocacy Training and Development Program (ATDP) to become a qualified level two compensation and welfare advocate and have been assisting veterans like me ever since."

While his training from the

“It’s so important that veterans reach out if they’re struggling to navigate their hardships or complex situations, but it’s equally important for those who can help to reach out too.”



Queensland Police Force and welfare experience from Vinnies helped his work at the Sub Branch, Steve says that veteran welfare and compensation was an entirely different course.

The ATDP training program he pursued at the time involved attending seminars and discussion groups that enabled him to connect with a network of people. This collaborative learning environment helped him, and his peers, better understand the complexities veterans face when they seek compensation support.

“Veterans are a totally different type of civilian, with a different set of life skills, who need proper attention when dealing with their

complex cases of compensation,” Steve says.

“It’s so important that veterans reach out if they’re struggling to navigate their hardships or complex situations, but it’s equally important for those who can help to reach out too.

“And that’s something that the Sub Branches do very well; they understand our background and the military mindset, and have the resources to assist and make sure no one falls through the cracks.”

Steve has held positions in RSL South Eastern District including District Wellbeing Officer, which saw him responsible for helping Sub Branch members become fully trained volunteer advocates.

He also held positions of responsibility at Beaudesert RSL Sub Branch including Vice President and President, where he played an important role in providing advocacy services to the community while also mentoring upcoming advocates.

“While the ATDP training provides you with practical and legislative knowledge, it is equally important for advocates to understand how to approach a client’s case with empathy and compassion,” Steve says.

“I make sure that the advocates I train understand how to relate to the veterans they assist by recognising their own lived experiences. Having said that, I also make sure that they look after themselves as much as they will look after others.”

Steve says the collaborative way the RSL State, District and Sub Branches work together is inspirational and a testament to the success of the RSL advocacy program.

“For me, working alongside leaders like Wendy Taylor and Kerry Gallagher has made me want to do more to support the veteran community and their families,” he says.

Now, Steve continues to assist in the compensation and welfare programs of not only Beaudesert RSL Sub Branch, but also manages veteran cases in Logan Village, Jimboomba and Kooralbyn.

“There’s nothing more rewarding than when you’re able to help a client leave with a smile on their face after coming to you with tears down their cheek. Seeing that your support and guidance actually make a difference in someone’s life is one of the most special parts of this work.” ←

BUILDING A TRIBE, UPHOLDING TRIBUTE



YouTube



SCAN TO WATCH VIDEO

“No veteran in our community will ever walk alone.” Meet the younger veterans who are turning Walkerston-Pleystowe RSL Sub Branch into a tribe for of all generations.

 **Belinda Crossman**

Veterans hold a special place in Scrubby's heart. Scrubby – what locals call the town of Walkerston and neighbouring Pleystowe – has always paid significant tribute to its past and present service people.

At Greenmount Homestead, nine trees form an Avenue of Honour for the Pleystowe sons who never returned from WWII. Every year, a local Sub Branch member handmakes special wreaths to lay beneath them.

Scrubby's ANZAC Day commemorations are a community-wide effort, with everyone from the Rural Fire Brigade to police, cadets, schools and sports clubs getting involved.

The highway through Walkerston even gets closed for the occasion, according to Walkerston-Pleystowe RSL Sub Branch President Rod Francisco.

“We literally close the Peak Downs Highway, the main route to the mines, for our ANZAC Day service,” Rod explains.

“And the service is packed; we probably have a couple of thousand [around half the community] attending.

“We have a very strong sense of community, and we get a lot of feedback about how well connected people in Scrubby feel towards veterans and commemorative services. And that's what we want to build.”

RECONNECTING WITH MATES AND PURPOSE

Joining the RSL gave Rod a sense of belonging and purpose he didn't know he needed.

After 21 years in the Army, the Iraq and East Timor veteran had “had enough”.

“I disconnected from the veteran community for 10 years after I left the military,” he says. “I just didn't want to be involved.”

That was, until someone convinced him to attend a few Sub Branch meetings.

“I felt very strongly connected to it,” he says. “I felt like I belonged, and people were very welcoming. So, I got involved, got some projects and then got Shanghai'd into President – which I'm very happy and proud to be.”

Joining the Sub Branch has been just as rewarding for Secretary and RSL Central Queensland District Vice President Dan Peters, who served in East Timor, the Solomon Islands and Afghanistan.

“I think after a certain time out of Defence, you find that you need that reconnection with the tribe,” Dan says.

“After I got out, there was a bit of a honeymoon period of, ‘This is awesome – something new, something different’.

“Then, for about six years, I actually questioned my decision to get out because I'd left all my mates behind and couldn't

find that connection or purpose again.”

When Dan attended his first Sub Branch meeting, “it all changed”.

“I got that connection back. I got that tribe back – that purpose of not helping my country now, but helping veterans,” he says.

“As Secretary, helping someone apply for a dental and allied health subsidy, or finding a chair for an older guy with mobility issues, that's something I can do now that gives me a bit of purpose.”

Dan says the mateship and support of fellow Sub Branch members – young and old – has helped his physical and mental health.

“Because we have such a close-knit Sub Branch, we can talk to each other about stuff that guys don't usually talk about,” he says.

“The Vietnam boys have been through what the younger veterans have been through as well. I think that's what makes our Sub Branch unique and really welcoming.”

BRINGING YOUNGER VETERANS TOGETHER

Walkerston-Pleystowe Sub Branch strives to recreate this sense of ‘tribe’, especially for younger veterans who disperse after transition.

“They tend not to come back to the communities they're originally from, or they don't



OPENING SPREAD:

Walkerston-Pleystowe RSL Sub Branch members, from left, Bill Lake, Paul Kelly OAM, President Rod Francisco and Secretary Dan Peters.

RIGHT:

Walkerston-Pleystowe RSL Sub Branch Secretary Dan Peters.



“We really are trying to engage more with younger veterans to get them to come and engage with each other – to give them that sense of camaraderie but also allow them to feel comfortable about coming to commemorative services.”

have a strong connection to the community they end up in,” Rod explains.

“We need to tell them that the veteran community is here for them and give them that sense of belonging.”

Rod and Dan are also using their insights as younger veterans to bring more of their peers into the fold.

“We really are trying to engage more with younger veterans to get them to come and engage with each other – to give them that sense of camaraderie but also allow them to feel comfortable about coming to commemorative services,” Rod says.

“On ANZAC Day last, I saw probably a dozen younger veterans in the crowd who don’t quite feel comfortable standing up the front with other veterans.

“Our aim is to encourage them – they don’t have to stand amongst their mates – and bring them forward. So, we very much tune our ANZAC Day services to a more modern approach.”

The Sub Branch has also established annual events to recognise more recent conflicts, including an East Timor service (held on 3 March – the National Veterans’ Day of Timor-Leste) and a Middle East Area of Operations

their RSL responsibilities – also hope their profiles as Sub Branch leaders will encourage other younger veterans to join or get involved.

“On ANZAC Day people see us and go, ‘You served in East Timor, you served in Iraq, you served in Afghanistan.’ They’re places that younger veterans can relate to,” Rod says.

“So, it’s really important for us to become that face of the RSL going forward, so people connect with us, the veteran community and the services that the RSL provides.”

A PLACE FOR EVERYONE WHO’S SERVED

While attracting younger veterans is a key focus for Walkerston-Pleystowe Sub Branch, veterans of all ages are equally welcome and recognised.

“I think the biggest lesson learned [from past generations] is having open arms, an open mind and embracing every veteran for what they are,” Rod says.

“A lot of our Vietnam veterans said they felt isolated. So, how do we make our Sub Branch more welcoming and engaging for people? Our Vietnam vets felt that certain things weren’t recognised. We do that.

“Yes, we do ANZAC Day and

(MEAO) dinner and service, which last year took place on 19 October.

“It doesn’t matter whether it’s Afghanistan, Iraq, the Persian Gulf – we hold that every year,” Rod says. “We have younger veterans come from as far away as Rockhampton, Emerald and Townsville.”

Rod and Dan – who juggle day jobs with

Remembrance Day, but we also make sure our Sub Branch members are aware of and attend other commemorative activities.”

“There are people out there that go, ‘I only did this’ or ‘I only did that,’” Dan adds. “So what? You signed on the line; you were prepared to be deployed.

“Become a member. Come back into the fold. You might enjoy it. You might need some help. You might find that connection again.”

“We have a saying: ‘Never walk alone,’” Rod says. “No veteran in our Sub Branch or in our community will ever walk alone.”

STAYING STRONG FOR THE FUTURE

Through many community activities – including an annual school bursary and ANZAC Day charity football match (co-run with Marian RSL Sub Branch) – Walkerston-Pleystowe Sub Branch is working hard to keep Scrubby, its veterans and their legacy thriving for many years to come.

“I think it’s almost our obligation to make sure the Sub Branch is strong and healthy for future veterans, so they have a place where they can have a yarn to somebody if they’re having a hard time or need help with a claim or just a friendly chat,” Dan says.

Rod has a lot of pride in the impact his Sub Branch is making.

“It’s really strongly connected to veterans, the RSL and our community,” he says.

“At every ANZAC Day service, members of the community come up to very genuinely thank us for what we’ve done and for helping other veterans and building that sense of community.

“We never struggle to get people to come and support our activities, and I think it’s just fantastic.

“I’m very proud to be the President, very proud of Dan as Secretary. I’m very proud of our Sub Branch and the members.” ←

RSL Queensland supports Gallipoli Medical Research to ensure veteran mental health projects are top priority

FOUNDED in 2005, Gallipoli Medical Research (GMR) supports veteran health and wellbeing through world-class research, programs and tools. This year, the organisation celebrates its 20-year anniversary.

Based at Greenslopes Private Hospital, the former war repatriation hospital, GMR employs nearly 60 staff, comprising renowned medical researchers, health translation experts and a clinical trials department.

GMR has maintained a long-standing research partnership with RSL Queensland, which has supported research to understand and effectively meet the needs of veterans, Defence members and their families.

Since the partnership's establishment in 2012, RSL Queensland has committed more than \$20 million towards research that delivers real, measurable impact. Notably, veterans' transition to civilian life is associated with various psychosocial factors, which has been a focus of GMR's research and tools.

"Over 13 years into our strong partnership with RSL Queensland and many of our research projects have turned into robust and practical tools that are designed to assist veterans and their families as they transition to civilian life," Miriam Kent, CEO, Gallipoli Medical Research, says.

"At the end of the day, the aim of our research is to have a tangible, meaningful and positive impact on the lives of current and ex-serving members and their families.

"That is what has driven GMR in its first 20 years, and it will continue to underpin our veteran-focused research as we move into 2025." ←

RSL QUEENSLAND AND GMR PARTNER ON RESEARCH INITIATIVES TO SUPPORT VETERANS:

RESEARCH THEMES



TRANSITION & REINTEGRATION

Equip veterans with proactive, targeted support to help successfully transition and adapt to civilian life.

FAMILIES

Develop strategies to improve family health, address social and financial challenges, and support wellbeing of those caring for ill and injured veterans.

HEALTHY VETERANS

Address contemporary and emerging mental and physical health conditions to enhance veterans' health and wellbeing.

RESEARCH TOOLS



GO BEYOND

Online self-directed training program developed to help veterans navigate life beyond service.

gobeyond.org.au



M-CARM & MT-READY

Online tools that assess the readiness and adjustment of veterans to civilian life and identify if extra help required.

m-carm.org



TRANSITION TRAINING PROGRAM

Face-to-face program to support transitioning members. Addresses psychological and cultural factors to improve outcomes.



RSL BE: WELL

Online program providing information for veterans' physical, mental and social health with new modules every three months.

rslbewell.org

RESEARCH PROJECTS



Please participate in our currently open veteran mental health surveys and workshops. Closing late June 2025.



01

HAMPERS BRING CHRISTMAS CHEER TO AGNES WATER/1770 MEMBERS

Agnes Water/1770 Sub Branch President John Turner was honoured to present Bill and Kath Taylor – two of the Sub Branch’s founding members – with a Christmas hamper from RSL Queensland the day after their 65th wedding anniversary. John was also pleased to present a hamper to Judy Ferrari, which brought a little ray of sunshine to her very cloudy year.

02

CHRISTMAS HAMPERS FOR TWO BANYO MEMBERS

Longstanding members Jim Comerford and Bob Standfast were honoured with Christmas hampers at the Banyo RSL Sub Branch Christmas party. Jim Comerford, the Sub Branch’s longest-serving member, was a dedicated badge seller until Remembrance Day 2024, often volunteering for up to four days ahead of commemorative events.

He also served two terms as President and represented the Sub Branch at District meetings. Jim is pictured with President Michael Frawley. Meanwhile, Bob Standfast, a member for more than 30 years, has contributed significantly over the years by maintaining the Sub Branch and assisting with badge selling.

03

CHRISTMAS HAMPER PRESENTED

Bowen RSL Sub Branch member Ray Shannon, centre, was presented with a Christmas hamper by Vice President Martin Tanzer, left, and Deputy President Michael Deckert.

04

ROLLING OUT THE WELCOME MAT

Harlaxton RSL Sub Branch celebrated the launch of Toowoomba’s new veteran hub with a friendly lawn bowls tournament at Northies. The hub aims to foster connections among veterans, serving members and families from Oakey and Cabarlah Bases.

Sub Branch President Tim McCrorey praised the initiative’s potential to attract younger members and strengthen community ties. Harlaxton bowlers, alongside other ex-service organisations, enjoyed the event’s camaraderie and friendly competition. Harlaxton emerged victorious in the veteran’s tournament, winning 7-1 against their RAAF rivals. With plans to make the competition an annual tradition, the hub promises to enhance the region’s vibrant veteran community.





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**CAIRNS RSL SUB BRANCH
 RAISES FUNDS FOR KIDS
 IN VIETNAM**

On 25 October 2024, Cairns RSL Sub Branch held a fundraising lunch to support Australian-run, Vietnam-based initiative Diggers Rest. Founded by Australian Army veteran Jason Fenech (pictured), Diggers Rest not only maintains the Long Tan cross memorial site, but also supports needy Vietnamese families with food parcels, school fees and supplies, accommodation and healthcare.

The lunch raised approximately \$700, with all funds going to support Diggers Rest's mission.

Diggers Rest hopes to hold more fundraising events in Australia in October 2025. If you, your Sub Branch or community club would like

to get involved, please email jasonfenech@y7mail.com.

06
STITCHING CONNECTIONS

Navy veteran Sacha de Wit brought her artistic passion to RSL Queensland's Christmas hamper project, contributing poppy-embroidered tea towels to the 700 hampers that were distributed to veterans and their families. Founder of Draw Stitch Smile, Sacha combines technology and art to create thread-based designs inspired by her Defence roots and sense of community. She views her tea towels as more than just festive items – they're a lasting symbol of connection, honouring the WWI tradition of embroidered postcards. "It's a privilege to give back to veterans and their families," she says, celebrating the opportunity to uplift and support her community.

01

GP JOINS DJUAN AND DISTRICT

Djuan and District RSL Sub Branch President Gregory Hoare and Membership Officer Sinjon Burke recently welcomed Dr Nida Hafeez-Baig into the RSL Queensland family.

Dr Hafeez-Baig, a Reserve forces member and general practitioner at the Crows Nest Community Medical Centre, received a presentation pack containing a welcome letter from State President Major General Stephen Day DSC AM, her membership card, RSL badge, the latest edition of *Queensland RSL News* and a special welcome medallion, all in a beautifully embossed RSL folder.

Dr Hafeez-Baig, who was posted to Townsville's 2HSB in January, is a valued addition to the RSL, and her presence in the Djuan and District community will be greatly missed.

02

LIFE MEMBERS AWARDED IN EMU PARK

On 27 October 2024, Central Queensland District President Phillip Luzzi presented Emu Park RSL Sub Branch members Jon Willson and Ron Robinson with their Life Membership awards and gold badges.

03

GIVING BACK ONE COFFEE AND CONVERSATION AT A TIME

Connection, camaraderie and coffee are what drove Ipswich local and Army veteran Dave Earl to set up a mobile and accessible morning tea service for local people in need. Through the support of Ipswich Railway RSL Sub Branch, DrugARM, and the Salvation Army, the

former Warrant Officer has been able to fit out a vehicle with a small kitchenette that supplies coffee and morning tea twice a week to veterans and the local community.

Every Monday morning since March 2024, Dave travels in his special vehicle to Coles Springfield to collect donated food on behalf of the Salvation Army, then drives to the park across the road from Ipswich Railway RSL Sub Branch to offer morning tea for veterans and those in need.

04

RECONCILING WITH CHANGI, FORGIVING HIROSHIMA

Captured by Japanese forces at the age of 15, Robert Bruce Rolls was the youngest Australian survivor of Changi prisoner of war (POW) camp. More than 80 years later, Japan welcomed his grandson, Army Reserve Major Trent Beilken, in a warm gesture of goodwill.

The experience made an "ever-present mark" on Trent, an RSL Queensland member who served 18 years full-time, including four deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan. He visited Japan in 2024 as part of the Japan-Australia Grassroots Exchange Program, which offers descendants of former Australian POWs a path towards healing and understanding. Trent (back row, second from the right) is pictured with RSL Deputy National President Duncan Anderson, Joy Derham and Japanese residents at Yokohama War Cemetery.



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STUDENT THANKED FOR VOLUNTEERING EFFORTS

Kingaroy-Memerambi RSL Sub Branch President Donald Davey J.P. (Qual.) presented Kingaroy State High School student Laura-Jane with a small gift and certificate of appreciation on behalf of the Sub Branch. Laura-Jane gave up her own time to sell Remembrance Day memorabilia in between sitting for her grade 12 exams. She also helped set up and pack down each day at the local shopping centre. In addition, she volunteered her time at the Remembrance Day service to assist veterans, distribute programs and set up for the service.

06

GREENBANK MARKS NATIONAL PEACEKEEPERS' DAY

Greenbank RSL Sub Branch organised a service to commemorate National Peacekeepers' Day on 14 September 2024. Australia's first peacekeeping mission began on 14 September 1947 in the Dutch East Indies (now Indonesia).

Since then, Australians have been deployed on more than 70 international peacekeeping missions in more than 60 countries with the United Nations and other operations. Pictured at the service, from left, are Springwood Tri Services President Jamie McLellan, Springwood Tri Services Vice President Aaron McCartney and Veterans Motorcycle Club support rider Peter Innes.

01

MOUNT ISA RSL SUB BRANCH SEEKING MILITARY MEMORABILIA

Do you have any military memorabilia you'd like to share? Mount Isa RSL Sub Branch is seeking historical or military items for display in its cabinets and is inviting the public to consider donating or loaning items connected to the RSL or Commonwealth military history.

Since launching their online appeal, the Sub Branch team has already received offers from community members and has even purchased several items. They're especially hoping for medals, badges and sought-after pieces like a World War II air crew logbook.

Those wishing to donate or loan an item can contact Sub Branch Secretary Jim Nuttall via 0407 435 367 or mountisa@rslqld.org. Photo: *North West Weekly*

02

MAINTAINING CAMARADERIE IN MORANBAH

Moranbah RSL Sub Branch fosters community among veterans, including fly in, fly out (FIFO) workers. Treasurer Dave Law, a long-time FIFO worker, and Air Force veteran Margaret Stephenson (pictured) highlight the Sub Branch's dedication to supporting all veterans, regardless of membership.

With many veterans in the mining industry, the Sub Branch engages members via emails and texts to overcome roster challenges. Initiatives include school ANZAC Day activities, fundraising events and plans to renovate a memorial garden.

Both Dave and Margaret emphasise the importance of camaraderie, ensuring

veterans stay connected and supported despite the isolating FIFO lifestyle.

03

KEDRON-WAVELL SUPPORTS WHEELCHAIR COMPETITION

Kedron-Wavell RSL Sub Branch played a vital role in supporting the RSL Victorian AFL Wheelchair team during the AFL Wheelchair National Championship at South Pine Sports Complex, Eatons Hill. From meeting the team at Brisbane Airport with buses and trailer (thanks to President Ken Roma and Vice President Greg Peake OAM) to transporting equipment and players, the Sub Branch ensured a seamless experience. Evening meals for the six-day event were provided by Kedron-Wavell Services Club, and volunteers drove players to key events. The RSL team, consisting of nine veteran players and three support staff, advanced to the Division 2 grand final, defeating NSW 121-54 in a hard-fought victory.

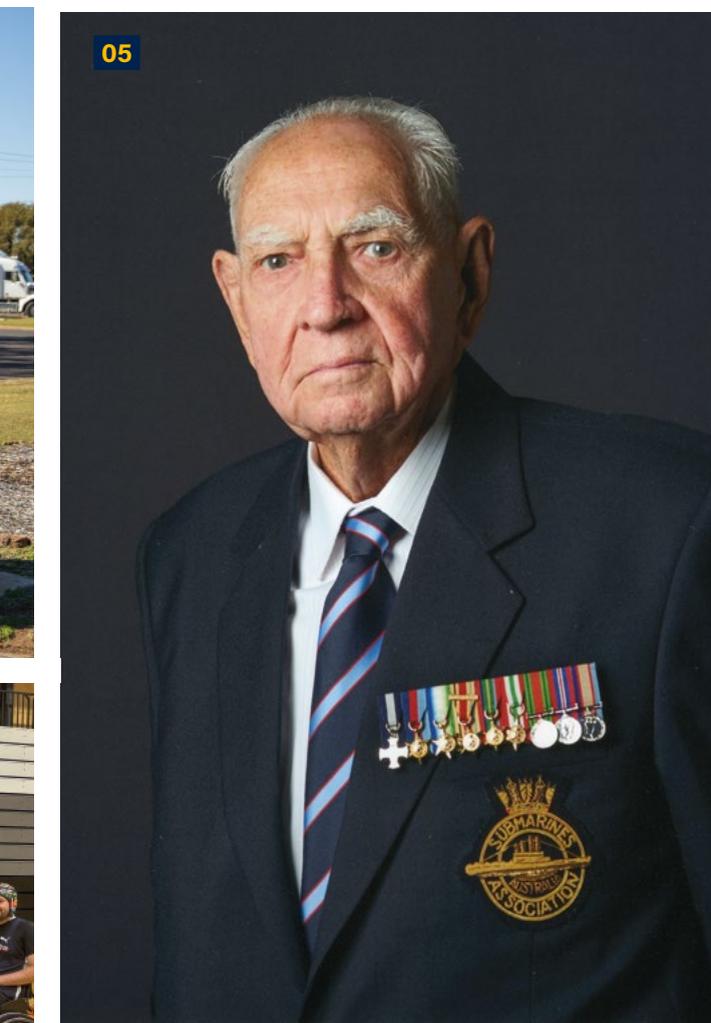




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VETSP0 FOSTERS CONNECTION AND SUPPORT

Ipswich and Railways RSL Sub Branch organised Vetspo on 12 October 2024, bringing together more than 50 exhibitors to showcase services and products for veterans and their families. The event highlighted valuable resources while fostering connections within the veteran community. Navy veteran Noel is pictured talking to Paul (ex-Navy) and Perry at the Legacy information booth. Vetspo proved a successful platform for collaboration, support and camaraderie among veterans and service providers.

05

SOCIAL HOUSING BUILDING NAMED AFTER LATE VETERAN KEN BRIGGS

Springwood's latest social housing development, featuring one- and two-bedroom apartments for seniors, has been officially named Ken Briggs Place in honour of Sub Lieutenant Ken Briggs DSC (pictured). The naming followed a public vote in Logan Shire, where

the late Ken Briggs received overwhelming support, particularly from members of Springwood Tri Services RSL Sub Branch.

Ken's granddaughter, a decorated Queensland Police Officer, attended the opening. Ken served in WWII, notably as a diver in the Royal Navy's midget submarine program. His courageous actions during Operation Sabre, including cutting critical Japanese communications cables, earned him the Distinguished Service Cross.

06

HEALTHY SEMINAR

The Tweed Heads and Coolangatta RSL Sub Branch wellbeing team hosted a seminar during Veteran' Health Week, focusing on healthy living for older veterans. Presentations from local community organisations covered health services and lifestyle improvements. The event, attended by 64 people, included healthy snacks and a barbecue lunch.

01

STANTHORPE PRESENTS LIFE MEMBER AWARDS

Three Life Member awards were presented at Stanthorpe RSL Sub Branch's Christmas function in December 2024. Recipients Graham Cockerell, Jeanette (Jan) Cockerell and Ingrid Munday were recognised for their outstanding contributions. Graham is pictured with Sub Branch President Martin Corbett and RSL Queensland State President Major General Stephen Day DSC AM. Graham joined in 2009, serving as a Director, Vice President, Wellbeing Advocate and active volunteer.

Jan joined Stanthorpe Women's Auxiliary in 2009, serving as President for more than four years, supporting fundraising and wellbeing. Ingrid, who also joined in 2009, led Auxiliary fundraising efforts, including a 75th anniversary lunch and art auction, and also served as President, fostering collaboration with other auxiliaries.

02

VETERAN PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION VISITS GOLD COAST

North Gold Coast RSL Sub Branch hosted the Point & Shoot Australian Veteran Photography Exhibition on 16 October 2024 as part of Veterans' Health Week. The exhibition toured the country from August to November 2024.

03

ROSEWOOD RSL SUB BRANCH HONOURS LOCAL CRAFTSMANSHIP

Rosewood RSL Sub Branch enlisted Rosewood Men's Workshop to create a new flag stand for use during commemorative services. The result is a testament to outstanding

local craftsmanship and is constructed from four Queensland timbers: silky oak, Queensland blue gum, white cypress and hoop pine.

The stand features expertly crafted flag poles, finials and a sturdy base and was on display on Vietnam Veterans' Day and Remembrance Day. Pictured, from left, are Sub Branch members Ian Luetchford, Bernie Kington and Colin Plenty, with Bob Hannah, Gordon Minett and Trevor Halter, who constructed the flag stand.

04

VETERAN SHARES HIS LOVE OF SIDECARS

RSL Queensland member John Swensen is rekindling his passion for sidecar racing and restoration, aiming to engage fellow veterans in the sport. A former infantry soldier and member of the Army's motorcycle racing team, John transitioned to sidecar racing after a 1996 crash. Recently reunited with his first sidecar, the 'Devil's Shopping Trolley', John plans to restore it with a team of South East Queensland veterans.

He hopes the project will promote camaraderie and introduce others to the sport. John envisions returning to the track with his original passenger, Dave Hille, for a final ride. For those interested in joining his sidecar team, please email john.swensen@defence.gov.au or call 0434 103 078.



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LIFTING THE BAR ON WELLBEING

Stephens RSL Sub Branch member David Forth has been involved in powerlifting and strongman sports for several years. After transitioning from the military to a career as a crane specialist, he found his passion for strength sports after meeting fellow veteran Red Windle at a Mates4Mates paddleboarding event.

Red encouraged David to train at Panthers Gym under coach Merinda O'Brien. David's strength has grown, culminating in his 10th place finish at the Natural Strongman World Championship in Ireland. He credits his success to his training community and hopes to inspire other veterans to explore strength sports. Email davidforth@y7mail.com if you want to chat about strength sports.

01

AWAMO SUPPORTS EQUESTRIAN SCHOOL IN THE UKRAINE

The Australian War Animal Memorial Organisation (AWAMO) has donated horse rugs to the Burevisnyk Children and Youth Sports School for Equestrian Sports in Lviv, Ukraine. Founded in 1956, the school trains more than 90 children and supports 28 horses, providing free equestrian training.

Amidst the ongoing challenges in Ukraine, the school continues to offer programs that help children and military families cope with stress through equestrian therapy. AWAMO's donation aids in maintaining the horses vital to the school's mission.

02

EMERALD RSL SUB BRANCH DONATES TO LEGACY AUSTRALIA

Emerald RSL Sub Branch recently donated \$1,000 to Legacy Australia, with \$415 raised from donation tins at the local bakery. Jo-Anne Pease and Bob Holmes from Legacy Australia attended a morning tea hosted by the Sub Branch to present a certificate of appreciation. Local widows supported by Legacy were also invited.

Emerald RSL Sub Branch Vice President Matt Briggs accepted the certificate on behalf of the Sub Branch. Pictured, from left, are Bob Holmes, Matt Briggs, carer Jan Catip, Jo-Anne Pease, Leisha Kerr, Cheryl Pearce and Emerald RSL Sub Branch member Nick Williamson. Photo courtesy of Di Stanley.

03

BROOKE'S POWERFUL CONNECTION TO HER GREAT-GREAT-GRANDFATHER

Bowen school captain Brooke Jameson moved the crowd with a heartfelt speech during

the town's Remembrance Day service. Standing before the audience, she shared a deeply personal connection to her great-great-grandfather, Albert Jameson, a former prisoner of war at Changi.

Brooke read a letter written by Albert, offering a rare insight into his experience during captivity. The Jameson family also shared photos of items he made while imprisoned and the original letter.

04

NAVAL MEMORIAL UNVEILED

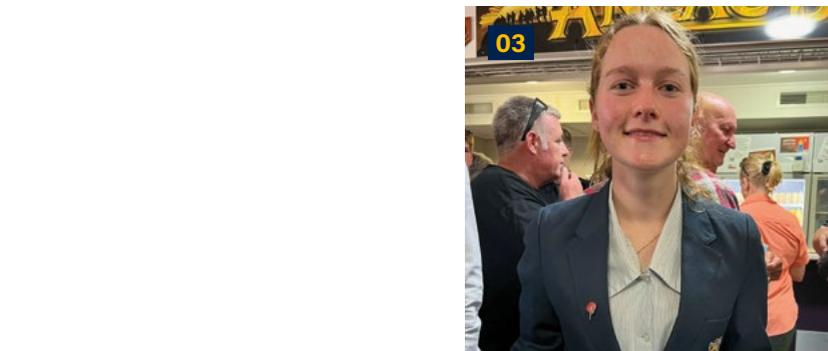
The Beenleigh and District Sub Section of the Naval Association Queensland unveiled a memorial to honour all naval personnel on 20 October 2024 at the Beenleigh RSL and Golf Club. The project was 18 months in the making and funded by a Department of Veterans' Affairs grant plus fundraising from barbecues.

Spearheaded by Keith Dickson, with support from the Sub Section Committee and Beenleigh and District RSL Sub Branch, the memorial is now a reality. The Sub Section meets monthly (except December and January) and welcomes new members. Email brendasch@bigpond.com for details.

05

AUSTRALIANS DONATE MEMORABILIA TO COMMEMORATE THE BATTLE OF SURIGAO STRAIT

In October 2024, several descendants of Australian veterans were honoured guests at the opening of an exhibit in the Philippines marking the 80th anniversary of the Battle of Surigao Strait. Attendees included Rob Nicholls, son of WWII veteran Stan Nicholls of HMAS *Shropshire*; Rob's wife Chris Nicholls; Mark Petersen and Bridget Petersen, descendants of the late David Matiske OAM of HMAS





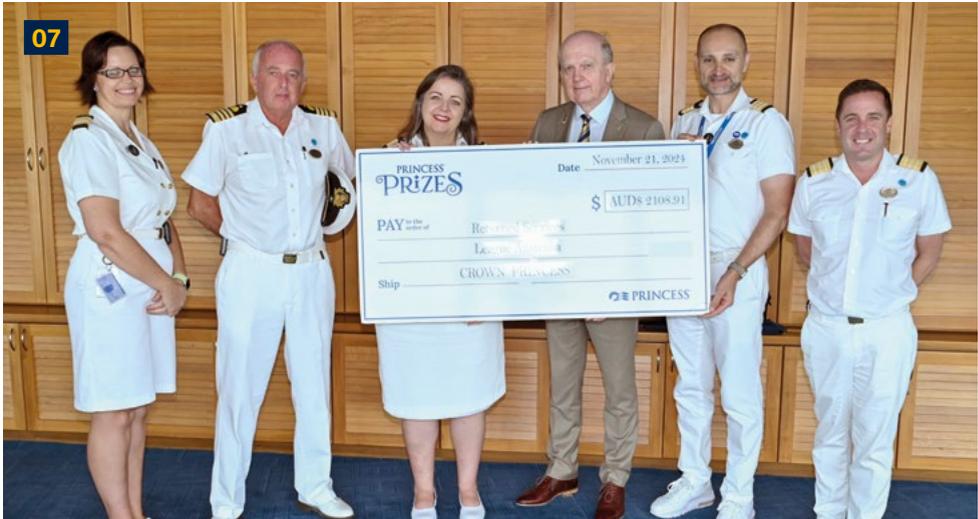
04



05



06



07

Shropshire. Accompanying them were Southport RSL Sub Branch Deputy President Ken Orr and his wife Mel Majoros.

The Australian visitors donated significant artifacts taken from the WWII collections of both their ancestors and Southport RSL Sub Branch. Fought on the night of 24-25 October 1944 as part of the Battle of Leyte Gulf, the Battle of Surigao Strait was a pivotal WWII naval engagement involving Australian and US warships.

Donations of display items are still sought for the museum, which was destroyed by a typhoon in December 2021. If you can assist, please email Ken Orr: deputy.president@southport.rslqld.net.au.

06
UNIQUE PIECE OF WAR HISTORY RAISES THOUSANDS FOR VIETNAMESE KIDS IN NEED

Last year's auction of a unique piece of Vietnam War history is now supporting needy children in Nui Dat. The item – a solid brass bell forged from reclaimed Allied shell casings – was auctioned on Vietnam Veterans' Day, 18 August 2024, by Australian-run, Vietnam-based initiative Diggers Rest. The winning bid of \$2,700 has now funded school fees for 115 children, food parcels for families doing it tough, a new wheelchair for a boy with

disabilities, eye testing and glasses for two young sisters, and much more.

Another brass bell – forged from Allied shell casings recovered from the Nui Dat area – is now up for auction, with all proceeds supporting Nui Dat kids and maintaining the Long Tan cross memorial site. To learn more or help support Diggers Rest, please email jasonfenech@y7mail.com or visit facebook.com/people/Diggers-Rest/100064814795936

07
CROWN PRINCESS CREW AND GUESTS UNITE FOR SOUTH EASTERN DISTRICT

In a touching display of generosity, Captain Christopher Lye of Princess Cruises' *Crown Princess* presented a donation to RSL South Eastern District President Kerry Gallagher for Remembrance Day 2024. Raised through the collective efforts of the ship's staff and passengers, the funds reflect the cruise line's commitment to supporting Australian veterans and their families.

The handover ceremony took place in Brisbane on 21 November, with both Christopher and Kerry highlighting the importance of community support in sustaining RSL welfare programs and commemorative initiatives.

01

SERBIA HONOURS AUSTRALIANS FROM WWI WITH COMMEMORATIVE STAMPS

In a historic first, the Serbian Post Office has issued six stamps honouring Australians who served in Serbia during World War 1.

The stamps feature six medical staff, including author Miles Franklin (bottom left), who worked in a field hospital supporting the Serbian Army. These individuals represent more than 1,500 ANZACs who served on the Serbian Front.

Descendant families attended a launch in Belgrade, with the Serbian Ambassador later presenting the stamps in Australia. It is believed this tribute marks the first time another nation has celebrated Australian service in such a way.

02

ANZAC MEMORIAL INSPIRES HEARTFELT QUILT FOR ARAMAC

Kay Wickham, a former Aramac resident now living in Townsville, was deeply moved by Aramac's new ANZAC sunset memorial, which honours service and sacrifice with its stunning design and orientation towards the setting sun.

Inspired by this tribute, Kay handcrafted a beautiful ANZAC quilt to mark the 100-year celebration of the Aramac WWI memorial. The quilt, now proudly displayed in the Aramac Information Centre's history room, was framed with mounted medal ribbons donated by a veteran and a custom-built framework.

03

CEREMONY COMMEMORATES HMAS SYDNEY (II)

On 31 October 2024, the Naval Association of Australia (NAA) Queensland held its monthly ceremony at the Navy

Jack Memorial, Brisbane, to honour the HMAS Sydney (II), which was lost on 19 November 1941 during WWII. Supported by DVA Veterans' Health Week grants, the event included a service featuring HMAS Moreton sailors and a catafalque party.

Guest speaker Captain John Gowan CSC CD and NAA National Executive members attended. Madeline Blyth, sister of HMAS Sydney (II)'s SBLT Alexander Eagar, was presented with an honorary membership badge by the Ipswich and West Moreton Sub Section. She is pictured with NAA Queensland Section Vice President and Ceremonial Rudi Bianchi, left, and NAA National President David Manolas.

04

PARADE NIGHT FOR NAVY CADETS

The TS Ipswich cadet unit of the Australian Naval Cadets held its parade night on 4 December 2024. The event was attended by the Ipswich and West Moreton Sub Section of the Naval Association of Australia and other community representatives.

05

QUEENSLAND STUDENTS BRING ANZAC HISTORY TO LIFE

Queensland students awarded the Premier's Anzac Prize, delivered by the Queensland Government in partnership with RSL Queensland, have begun their journey to honour the ANZAC legacy. Eight secondary students and two teachers explored World War I artefacts at the State Library of Queensland before embarking on research projects and fundraising activities.

Later this year, they will travel to Europe, visiting key memorial sites in the UK, France and Belgium. The





trip includes attending the ANZAC Day Dawn Service at Villers-Bretonneux.

RSL Queensland State President Major General Stephen Day DSC AM and Acting Education Minister Sam O'Connor are pictured with student recipients, chaperones and a representative from the State Library.

06 NATIONAL AWARD-WINNING PSYCHOLOGIST SUPPORTS QUEENSLAND VETERANS

Veteran Nadia Teong, recently named 2024 Veteran Entrepreneur of the Year, is making a tangible difference for Queensland veterans through her organisation, Veterans Psychology. With two psychologists based in Townsville and a strong telehealth network, Veterans Psychology is addressing the challenges of accessing veteran-focused mental health care, especially in garrison towns.

Nadia's award highlights the impact of her 'veterans helping veterans' approach, which pairs military experience with psychological expertise. Her work, recognised nationally, underscores the importance of culturally informed care for veterans

and their families, offering much-needed support to those who have served. Nadia also encourages fellow veterans to consider starting their own businesses, emphasising that the leadership, adaptability and resilience they developed in the military can be powerful tools in civilian life.

07 SOUTHERN DOWNS MILITARY HISTORY WEBSITE HONOURS LOCAL VETERANS

The Southern Downs Military History website offers a fully researched virtual memorial dedicated to local veterans. The site documents military histories, stories and service records, ensuring accuracy through primary sources.

Pictured at the website launch on 12 February were, from left, Rupert McCall OAM, Andreas Lionakis, military researcher and website creator Deborah Wheeler and Jeff Hughes from This Story Australia.

"This website is the vehicle; now we have an obligation to discover and record the identities of our veterans and their stories, ensuring they are forever remembered with pride and respect," Deborah said. Visit sdmh.au to learn more. (Photo: S. Wantling)

WIN

For your chance to win a copy of one of the books in this competition, email your name, address and contact number to editor@rslqld.org or post to PO Box 629, Spring Hill Qld 4004. Use the book title as the subject line of your email and with the address on the letter. Competition closes 8 April 2025.



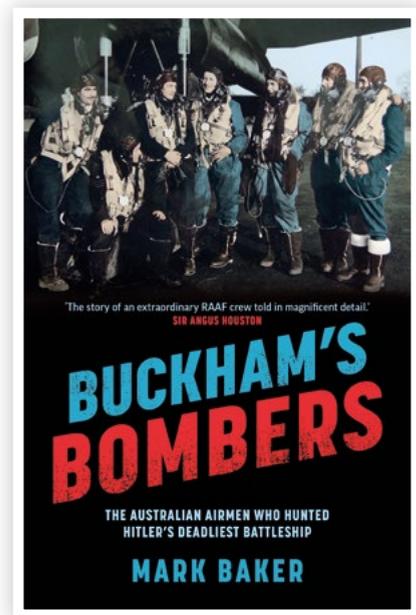
Never Forgotten by Dave Morgan is published by Big Sky Publishing (RRP: \$32.99)

Vietnam veteran Dave Morgan explores the often-overlooked sacrifices of Australian military personnel. Inspired by his own experiences, Dave embarks on a journey to capture the diverse narrative spanning generations and conflicts, from Vietnam to Somalia and Afghanistan.

Through meticulous research and armchair conversations, he uncovers untold stories, from talented athletes like Ian Anderson to pioneering female veterans like Stephanie Shipman. The book weaves together tales of camaraderie and resilience, from heartwarming reunions to the loss of friends like Robert Wilson.

These accounts offer a mosaic of bravery and resilience, and through these stories readers gain a deeper understanding of the profound impact of military service on individuals and communities, highlighting the importance of preserving these invaluable narratives.

Never Forgotten serves as a poignant reminder of the sacrifices made by those who serve, ensuring their voices resonate for future generations. All proceeds from this book will be donated to Legacy Australia.



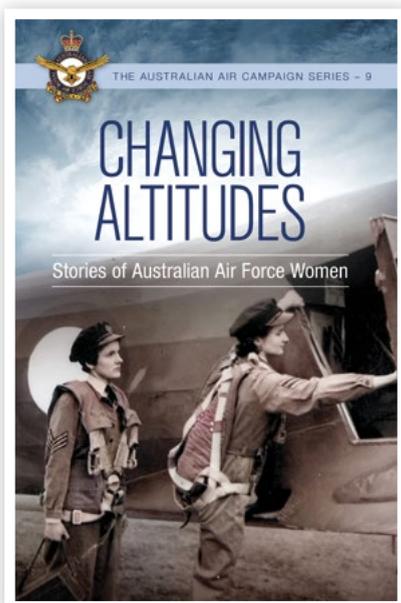
Buckham's Bombers by Mark Baker is published by Allen and Unwin (RRP: \$34.99)

This is the untold story of one of the finest Australian air crews of World War II, and one of the most dangerous missions of the war in Europe.

Bruce Buckham was captain of one of the finest Lancaster crews in WWII. The Australians were famous for their exploits in the air and infamous for their hijinks on the ground. Buckham's crew flew night after night against heavily defended targets in Germany – including during the Battle of Berlin, the bloodiest campaign of the war for Australians.

But their biggest and most dangerous operation was yet to come. The greatest battleship ever built, and the pride of Hitler's fleet, lay in a remote fjord in Norway's far north. Time and again, *Tirpitz* had evaded her hunters while continuing to threaten vital Arctic convoys, and by late 1944 her destruction was a top priority for Churchill. Buckham's crew was hand-picked because of their exceptional skills and bravery for the dramatic raids that finally sank 'The Beast.'

In this gripping account, journalist Mark Baker tells for the first time the full story of one of Australia's most highly decorated WWII pilots and his crew, drawing on extensive interviews with Buckham himself.

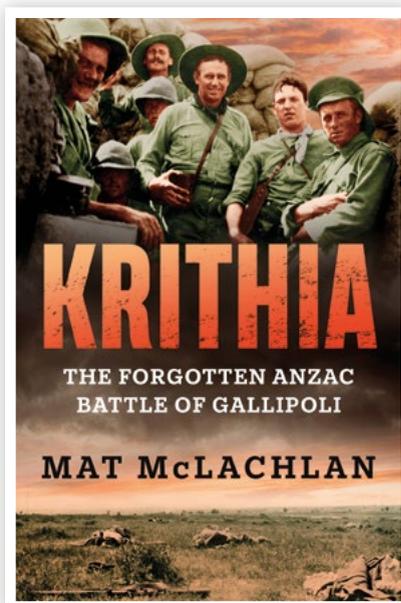


Changing Altitudes is published by Big Sky Publishing (RRP: \$19.99)

In the early years of World War II, Australian women began lobbying to contribute to the nation's wartime effort. From 1940, women were signing up to serve in the Royal Australian Nursing Service, and in 1941, an Auxiliary arm of the Royal Australian Air Force was established, allowing women to join on a temporary basis to enhance the organisation's ability to fight.

In the decades since, Australian women have continued to contribute significantly to the operational capability of the world's second oldest air force. They have done so regardless of the social norms of the time, or the perceived limits of their abilities, always showing their detractors that they are capable of great things.

This book includes the personal stories of some of these women, recounting in their own words their experiences while proudly wearing the uniform of the service.



Krithia: The Forgotten ANZAC Battle of Gallipoli by Mat McLachlan is published by Hachette Australia (RRP: \$34.99)

The Second Battle of Krithia has existed largely in the shadows of the bigger Gallipoli story. It is, however, one of the most poignant and tragic tales of World War I. The fascinating story has been brought to light at last by bestselling military historian Mat McLachlan, author of *The Cowra Breakout*.

In May 1915, British units tried to capture the village of Krithia on the southern tip of the Gallipoli peninsula. Australian and New Zealand units were sent to reinforce the British.

On 8 May, the ANZAC troops took part in a bloody battle near Krithia. Advancing across a featureless plain in broad daylight, with no idea where the Turkish defenders were, the ANZACs came under a hail of machine-gun and rifle fire.

The Australians managed to advance, but got nowhere near the village and dug in well short of their objective. The New Zealanders on their left fared no better. By the end of the day, more than 1,800 ANZAC troops had been killed or wounded.

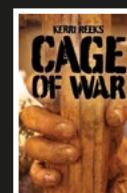
Supported by first-hand accounts and oral history, Krithia features the stories of a number of Australians, New Zealanders and Turks – some who survived, some who didn't. The battle of Krithia is a tale of bravery and sacrifice, and a vivid portrait of men doing their best under hellish conditions. It's a great Australian story that hasn't been told – until now.

QUEENSLAND RSL NEWS
WINNERS
EDITION 4 2024



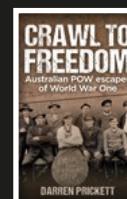
AUSTRALIA'S LOST HEROES

R Sullivan, Bargara
M Hodgess, Cleveland
I Clark, Nikenbah
F Button, Bridgeman Downs



CAGE OF WAR

I Irwin, Battery Hill
B Kinzett, Kippa-Ring
A Clark, Centenary Heights
A McLean, Sippy Downs



CRAWL TO FREEDOM

L Crompton, Bongaree
I Barnabas, Pacific Heights
C Gaitskell, Stanthorpe
R Richardson, Ayr



STOP SCREAMING I'M SCARED TOO

D Andrews, Mackay
I Underwood, Cooloola Cover
A Toy, Eagleby
O Walker, Flinders View

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

COMMUNITY CONNECT



DID YOU SERVE IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA?

Did you serve in PNG during the years 1951 to 1975? The PIB-PIR Association is recruiting new members across Queensland. Membership is only \$5 a year and offers newsletters, commemoration services and social events. Contact Kevin Smith via 0402 680 496 or visit soldierspng.com



LAPEL PIN FOR UK VETERANS

Did you know that UK veterans can apply to the Ministry of Defence to receive the HM Armed Forces Veterans' Label Badge? UK veteran and Redlands RSL Sub Branch member Bernie Colemand recently received his lapel pin and encouraged others to do the same. The badge was launched in 2004 to assist the wider public in identifying veterans. There is no cost involved. To learn more or apply visit gov.uk/apply-medal-or-veterans-badge.

REUNIONS

30TH ANNIVERSARY RWANDA REUNION

A reunion will be held during the week of 22-26 April 2025 for members of Operation Tamar (ASC 1 and ASC 2). The 'Back to Townsville' event will be generously supported by Townsville RSL and activities include a meet and greet, reunion dinner and the ANZAC Day march.

Rwanda veterans will be the lead veteran group in the march and do so under their own banner provided by Townsville RSL. Author Kevin 'Irish' O'Halloran will also conduct a book signing and talk on either 22 or 23 April.

To receive an information and registration package, email 2RAR.Reunions@gmail.com or phone Jason Martin on 0466 347 138, Colin Mosch on 0419 777 011 or 'Irish' O'Halloran on 0439 514 995.

HQ1ATF ASSOCIATION REUNION

The HQ1ATF Association will hold its next reunion at the Painters Island Holiday Park in Wangaratta from 17-21 November 2025. Book via 03 5721 3380 or stay@paintersislandcaravanpark.com.au

This reunion has now become an annual event, following a decision made at the 2024 reunion in Adelaide. The 2025 event will include a welcome dinner, tour of Glenrowan and the King Valley, and a commemorative dinner.

The Wangaratta region has a lot to offer, and it's anticipated that members and their partners will enjoy exploring the surrounds. For more information, visit 1atf.org or contact John Verhelst via 0437 212 121 or john@jhconsult.com.au

Last Post.

Queensland RSL News has published this list at the request of RSL members. Queensland RSL News takes no responsibility for inaccuracies outside the control of RSL Queensland. This list was correct as at 30 January 2025. Surnames flagged with an asterisk (*) have an unconfirmed date of their passing.

The list includes each member's surname, first name, service number and Sub Branch.



ADAMS, DONALD 18537 Gaythorne
ADAMS, ADRIAN 1733281 Redcliffe
ADAMS, BRUCE A215398 Tweed Heads & Coolangatta
AMOS, JOHN R58202 Greenbank
ANDERSON, ANDREW 2/5010 Bribie Island
ANDREW, ARNOLD O110642 Centenary Suburbs
ANDREWS, RICHARD 2091095 Bribie Island
ANISIMOFF*, LEO B6109 Tweed Heads & Coolangatta
APPLEBY, WILLIAM 22557581 Nambour
BAKER*, LESLIE B3702 Tweed Heads & Coolangatta
BANNAH, DESMOND R46844 Banyo
BARNARD, DOUGLAS VX111587 Bribie Island
BATCHELOR, DAVID 23642297 Nerang
BEASANT, RICHARD A120215 Warwick
BEER, JULIE F15466 Townsville
BENNETT, JOHN A15703/1717948 Greenbank
BERKOVICH, MARK 2147467 Crows Nest
BERNARDIN*, FRANCES NF461996 Tweed Heads & Coolangatta
BERRY, JOHN 2/764713 Maroochydhore
BIGGS-TRUEMAN, PETER C17413 Ipswich Railway
BOND, RICHARD A113373 Redlands
BORZI*, MICHELI 1/701672 Mareeba
BOYD, GEORGE 2749593 Tweed Heads & Coolangatta
BRENNAN, ROBERT R62245 Hervey Bay
BRETT, BEVAN 1717540 Maryborough
BROOKES*, EDWARD 2/8670 Tweed Heads & Coolangatta
BRYCE, ARTHUR 24745 Hervey Bay
BUHRE, JOHN 16608 Kedron-Wavell
BURNESS, IAN 1/706291 Harlaxton
CAIRNS, JOHN Tewantin/Noosa
CAMERON, JAMES 168363 Mudgeeraba-Robina
CAMPBELL, LESLIE 1/727962 Mackay
CANN*, JOYCE 95623 Tweed Heads & Coolangatta

CARMODY, STEPHEN 1/712018 Caloundra
CATERER, GRAEME Q55444 Maroochydhore
CHADWICK, RONALD 1410314 Bundaberg
CHADWICK, RONALD A120484 Bundaberg
CHADWICK, SHANE 553020 Maroochydhore
CHARLES, BERNARD A17401 Maroochydhore
CHASE, EDWARD 2782043 Nerang
CIRSON, GWENDOLYN QF269325 Redcliffe
CLARK, TERENCE A119175 Lowood
CLELLAND, ROSS O118706 City-New Farm
CLEMENTS, KENNETH 57155 Glasshouse Country
COCKBURN, TREVOR 1730791 Maryborough
COCKRAM*, FRANK 1/726154 Forest Lake and Districts
COLE*, GARY 213192 Harlaxton
COLLINS, GREGORY PM4543 Tweed Heads & Coolangatta
COLLISON, JAMES 2117605 Rockhampton
CONNORS, JACK QX36000 Coorparoo and Districts
CONNORS, JAMES 8591493 Townsville
COOK, DONALD A311250 Redlands
COOK, RICHARD R399571 Herbert River
COX, HENRY 4368 Redcliffe
COX, ALAN 40477 Greenbank
COX, BARRY 16542 Emu Park
CRANFIELD*, GEOFFREY 167694 Tweed Heads & Coolangatta
CRAWFORD, MARK A130743 Gordonvale
CROMBIE*, AALAN 88347 Tweed Heads & Coolangatta
CUNNINGHAM*, KEITH B4725 Tweed Heads & Coolangatta
CURRAN, RAYMOND 1732300 Caloundra
DANIELSEN, ROBERT 51811 Yeppoon
DAVIDSON*, GEOFFREY 453173 Tweed Heads & Coolangatta
DAVIS, LLOYD R62736 Beachmere
DEEM, VONNIE QF272961 Wondai
DIXON, WALTER R59287 Springwood Tri Services

DODD, JOHN NX207526 Nerang
DODSON, ELLIS A25891 Kingaroy/Memerambi
DUNLOP, (NEE HOLLINGWORTH) LYNETTE 176729 Nerang
DUTTON, ERIC 5043563 Geebung Zillmere Bald Hills Aspley
EDGAR, DAVID B3067 Kedron-Wavell
EDWARDS, ALAN 2782020 Bundaberg
EDWARDS*, ROBERT R66910 Goodna
EGBERTS, EDWARD A56839 Ipswich Railway
ELDRIDGE, VICKI F25819 Canungra
ELLISON, ROBERT A14635 Ipswich
EMOND*, EDGAR VX504062 Currumbin/Palm Beach
ENGLISH, GARY A121823 Gatton
EVANS, JOHN 3112NS Redlands
FITZPATRICK*, NORMAN A311095 Edmonton
FLEMING, KEVIN A117287 Bowen
FLOATE, ALBERT A311429 Caloundra
FOGG, RAYMOND 129112 Sherwood-Indooroopilly
FRAZIER, KEVIN R62011 Redcliffe
FRY*, CLIFFORD VX140738 Tweed Heads & Coolangatta
FULTON, GORDON 29144 Tweed Heads & Coolangatta
GAAL, HENDRIK 280901122 Bundaberg
GAFFNEY, DONALD 1/400331 Stephens
GAINS, BERNARD A118346 Agnes Water/1770
GARDINER*, HENRY 701930 Tweed Heads & Coolangatta
GARDNER, PHILLIP 113721 Beenleigh and District
GOSTELOW, ALAN 243186 Hervey Bay
GRAEFF*, ANTONIUS 5411029 Gaythorne
GRAZIANI, SHANE 48351 Sandgate
GRECH*, ALFRED 30778496 Tweed Heads & Coolangatta
GREENE, NEIL A113189 Caloundra
GREGORY*, SYDNEY A37048 Tweed Heads & Coolangatta
HARNEY, JOHN R51207 Cooroy-Pomona
HARTMAN, ROY A13129 Cairns
HAWKEN, GEOFFREY NX172424 Maryborough
HAWKINS, COLIN 2/8083 Tweed Heads & Coolangatta
HENNESSY, NELLIE NF409470 Currumbin/Palm Beach
HENRY, JOHN A38224 Cairns
HENRY, MICHAEL 219338 Caboolture-Morayfield and District
HERBERT, WAYNE A222983 Townsville
HIBBS, ERIC A34832 Kedron-Wavell
HOGAN, BERNARD R104808 Beachmere
HOLLIS, NEVILLE R217435 Gayndah
HOOD, LAURENCE QX62617 (Q116601) Maroochydore
HORSBURGH*, GEOFFREY 123763 / 8418213 Bribie Island
HOUGHTON, HAROLD A45158 Mudjimba
HOWORTH, GEORGE Magnetic Island
HUGHES*, JAMES 23097469 Coorparoo and Districts
HUNTER, GEOFFREY 312807 Kedron-Wavell
HUNTER*, BRYCE 210157 Nerang
INSKIP, PATRICK 51945 Innisfail
IRELAND, PATRICK CMX919203 Coorparoo and Districts
IRONS, BARBARA F55033/ID#29214 Thuringowa
JACOBSEN, JOHN 1733612 Hervey Bay
JAMES, JEFFERY 2781837 Unattached List
JENKINS, PETER 162185 Mackay
JOCE, GRAHAM A217314 Bribie Island
JOHNSON, ANTHONY 14911051 Hervey Bay
JOHNSON, JOHN A14343 Tweed Heads & Coolangatta
JOHNSTON, LAWRENCE 148567 Maroochydore
JOHNSTON, JOHN 439069 Cairns
JONES, KEVIN 1724818 Greenbank
JONES, (NEE THOMPSON) MARGARET R84577 Maroochydore
KEMP, BRUCE 53843 Agnes Water/1770
KENNEDY, ROBERT 16357 Home Hill
KENT, DAVID R93867 Bundaberg
KINGSTON*, MAXWELL 151763 Townsville
KIRK, GARY 825051 Hervey Bay
KRAMER, BRONTE 42928 Centenary Suburbs
KRANEN, JUDY F13079 Pine Rivers District
KRZYZANSKI, PETER 315679 Mudjimba
LADE, IAN 1734295 Proserpine
LAMB, JESSICA VF397051 Maroochydore
LAMB, BRIAN 2782682 Geebung Zillmere Bald Hills Aspley
LAMBERT, RICHARD Cairns
LAMMERS, ENGBERT 15752 Beenleigh and District
LANE, EVERETT 1732097 Tiara
LEONARD*, STEPHEN NX78643 Tweed Heads & Coolangatta
LESLIE-MCINTOSH, IAN A219204 / ON38076 Hervey Bay
LONGHURST*, RONALD NX80544 Tweed Heads & Coolangatta
LOVETT, DOUGLAS Russell Island
LUNDIE, ALBERT 43484 Townsville
LUTE, EDWARD 215516 Kilcoy
MACKENZIE, RUSSELL NZ 974577 Bribie Island
MAHER*, BARRY 1/722271 Tweed Heads & Coolangatta
MARRIOT, ROBERT Home Hill
MARTIN, ANTHONY D061142 Cairns
MASON*, LEONARD QX17455 Tweed Heads & Coolangatta
MATHESON, BRIAN 1410956 Springwood Tri Services
MATHEWS, BRIAN Geebung Zillmere Bald Hills Aspley
MAY, ALAN 1734969 Cloncurry
MAY, WILLIAM 1/708339 Cardwell
MCCALL, REX 34080 Gaythorne
MCCULLOUGH, MERVYN QX62760 (Q135879) Bribie Island
MCFADZEN, WILLIAM 135427 Redlands
MCGHIE, ROBERT 2/49070 Bribie Island
MCGRATH, ALAN 500401 Cooroy-Pomona
MCHUGH, CHRISTOPHER 0229977 Cardwell
MCILROY, GLEN 179146 Nanango
MCINTYRE, COLIN 1/705964 Bray Park-Strathpine
MILLER, DAVID 226911 Hervey Bay
MITCHELL*, JOHN A315724 Tweed Heads & Coolangatta
MOODY, ROBERT 216609 Emu Park
MOON, CHARLES 27943 Bribie Island
MORRISON, WILLIAM 23167975 Bundaberg
MOSS, ARTHUR A11833 Mareeba
MURPHY*, ROGER A2754 Tweed Heads & Coolangatta
NALL, ADRIAN NX143913 Kawana Waters
NELLER, VERNON 1/715435 Bundaberg
NELMES, BRYCE 1/724629 Hervey Bay
NOACK*, JOHN R39489 Sherwood-Indooroopilly

NORMAN, LEONARD A43433 Greenbank
NORMAN, RAYMOND 38183 Maroochydore
NORRIS*, PETER 221170 Mackay
O'BRIEN, MAX R45859 Nerang
O'KEEFE, EUGENE 28440 Maroochydore
OLLERMANN*, CLIVE AS05561 Cardwell
OLSEN*, EDWARD TX15939 (T44974) Tweed Heads & Coolangatta
PAGETT, LAWRENCE R66799 Rockhampton
PANTHER, PETER Moranbah
PANTING*, WILLIAM CJ/X616634 Tweed Heads & Coolangatta
PAPWORTH, BARRY 565583 Bribie Island
PARK, WILLIAM 155518 Mareeba
PARKER, DEREK 22557382 Caloundra
PARRY, LYAL 1/710997 Townsville
PARSONS, LEONARD R110147 Bribie Island
PEACOCK, KEVIN 1/720389 Maroochydore
PECKOVER, PATRICK 1/712076 Bundaberg
PELL, RAYMOND NZ18112 Hervey Bay
PERRIMAN, KENNETH 3799287 Nerang
PERRY, MICHAEL 064524 Gaythorne
PLUTHERO, BERNARD 2/741518 Nerang
PRISCHL, GUNTER 36619024 Rosewood
PROCTOR*, ALFRED CM/X718085 Tweed Heads & Coolangatta
PROWSE, ALLAN R53037 Forest Lake and Districts
RICHARDSON, MALCOLM 2799174 Bundaberg
ROBERTSON, ALEXANDER 821770 Samford
ROBERTSON*, JAMES 23675210 Tweed Heads & Coolangatta
ROBINS, JAMES A216147 Unattached List
ROBINSON, ROBERT R57606 Hervey Bay
ROBINSON, GORDON 15155 Oakey
ROBINSON, RICHARD 1734179 Bribie Island
ROLFE, KEVIN 50349 Cairns
ROSE*, WILLIAM 168342 Tweed Heads & Coolangatta
RUSSELL*, JOAN NF463613 Tweed Heads & Coolangatta
RYAN, KEVIN 14436 Ipswich Railway
RYAN, IAN 3793823 Bundaberg
RYMAN*, BERNARD 14455589 Tweed Heads & Coolangatta
SANDERSON, ALLAN R62795 Cairns
SAYER*, ANTHONY 62466 Goodna
SCHIRMER, DESMOND 219465 Hervey Bay
SCHROEDER, JENS 2795662/ 3795662 Glasshouse Country
SCOTT, EDWARD NX92362 Wynnum
SHEEDY, THOMAS A317382 Maroochydore
SHEPHERD, GORDON 1/724255 Bundaberg
SHOOTER, ALAN 1/707953 Wondai
SIMMICH*, DALE S126069 Greenbank
SLOTT*, DENIS 135871 Tweed Heads & Coolangatta
SMITH, PETER O216415 Gaythorne
SMITH, (NEE MCCONNELL) CHERYL W123432 Herbert River
SNELL, LESLIE 1/726872 Gladstone
STAEHR*, COLIN 48578 Tweed Heads & Coolangatta
SULLIVAN, BRIAN 1731718 Kedron-Wavell
SWADLING, GRAHAM 134284 Rockhampton
TANZER, EVERARD 170680 Maryborough
TAYLOR, LEON 02082 Maleny

TEE, ROBIN A43637 Hervey Bay
THELANDER, BARBARA 93674 Toowoomba
THOMAS*, SCOTT 182791 Tweed Heads & Coolangatta
THOMSON*, RONALD PM7746 Tweed Heads & Coolangatta
THORNTON*, JOSEPH A115081 Kedron-Wavell
THORPE, GLADYS VF517085 Currumbin/Palm Beach
THORPE, JOAN QF268743 Toowoomba
TOOLE, JACK 24032430 Maroochydore
TRAILL, JOHN R523896 Currumbin/Palm Beach
TUCKER, GRAHAME 222989 Nerang
WADE, BRYAN 5/704058 Hervey Bay
WALKER*, RONALD 5/1915 Malanda
WALTERS*, CHARLES NX179010 Tweed Heads & Coolangatta
WARD, BRIAN 530845 Gympie
WARD*, COLIN 11507 Gaythorne
WATERS, BASIL 51427 Bribie Island
WATERSON, NORMAN 61322 Farleigh and Northern Beaches
WEST, KEITH 16269 Redlands
WEST, HAROLD Q122841 Banyo
WHITE, PAUL R96108 Agnes Water/1770
WHITTET, JOHN 215982 Goodna
WILDE, WILLIAM A118323 Maryborough
WILDMAN, NOEL 2/701714 Sherwood-Indooroopilly
WILKIE, WILLIAM 435361 Kedron-Wavell
WILLIAMS*, FRANK CM/X804783 Tweed Heads & Coolangatta
WILLIAMSON*, RAYMOND A25392 Tweed Heads & Coolangatta
WILLMOTT, ALAN 419795 Bundaberg
WILLS, KEVIN 162368 St Helens
WILLS*, NORMAN 25135 Tweed Heads & Coolangatta
WILSON, MARIE QFX55294 Maryborough
WOOD*, GEORGE 22251641 Tweed Heads & Coolangatta
WOODS, ATHOL 2/410165 Hervey Bay
WOODWARD, KENNETH 74053 Nerang
WRIGHT, ROBERT 2427795 Killarney
ZEGENHAGEN*, PATRICK R94154 Ashgrove-Bardon
ZIEGLER*, FREDRICK NZ11240 Tweed Heads & Coolangatta



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