

RSL WODEN VALLEY SUB-BRANCH



Current Items of Interest

11 March 22

Article from The Canberra Times 8 March 2022

Kitchen Garden: Susan Parsons meets Les Cook who is still growing strong



 Les Cook with tomatoes and silverbeet among his tomato plantings. Picture: Elesa Kurtz

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VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR ANZAC APPEAL WEEK

19 - 24 April

Please contact us on 62851931

if you can help staff a

booth for the ANZAC Appeal.

Les Cook, aged 99, is remarkable - I called him a marvel. He still mows his lawns, front and back, spends one and a half hours a day picking raspberries in January, he marches on April 25 and makes Anzac biscuits annually and, one year, he added cheese and red pepper to the recipe and no sugar and says they were not popular.

Born in Great Britain, Les came to Australia on the S.S. Baradine in 1925, aged two. The family lived on a dairy farm in Gippsland until he was 14. Les was in the AIF military for seven years, with the Australian Army in World War I, in the Middle East. He recalls Kokoda and Milne Bay from WWII and did liaison work with 10 tracking stations as principal executive officer with NASA for a decade. He came to Canberra in 1964 where he also worked with the Bureau of Mineral Resources.

Meeting Les was felicitous. Being interested in architecture, I have read Tony Trobe's Design Matters column in the *Sunday Canberra Times* for a decade. His column on December 19, 2021, about Swinger Hill concluded by saying he was hanging up his boots. Never having met Tony, I sent an email of thanks for the articles. He replied to say his interior designer read my column, in fact his wife Deb Cook. She told me her father was a keen grower of everything edible.

We three met in Les' garden in Garran and were joined by CT photographer, Elesa. Les explained to her, a newish gardener, how to pinch out the laterals on tomato plants. He is growing rows of the vigorous Grosse Lisse variety and has a wall of the cherry Tom Thumb variety growing three metres over the fence. However, while Les' beans, in a seed frame, all came up, the plants died and he thinks there was no cross-fertilisation. Meanwhile, Elesa has a fine crop of beans this season - the mysteries of gardening.

After harvesting 40 cobs of sweetcorn he gave them all away. For three years he has been growing Chinese cabbages, wombok, which have a sweet, mild flavour and crunchy texture.

This season they are well netted from white butterflies and snails but Les says grubs, which live in the ground, still manage to make holes in the leaves.

In retirement, Les did jobs around homes and gardens for a few people, including former editor of *The Canberra Times*, the late Ian Mathews and his wife Joyce, who also lived in Garran. From their garden Les received a grafted cutting from a damson plum and that tree is a great producer in his garden.


He bottles the fruit and added some to his homemade Christmas cake and pudding. Dozens of jars and bottles of preserves are stored in the garage.

A large fig tree in the garden is laden with fruit and Deb kindly climbed under the netting to show us the crop. From last season, Les has preserved 50 bottles of figs and he eats two spoonfuls on oatmeal every morning. Breakfast is his favourite meal of the day. Les also makes fig and ginger jam and I was given a teaspoon to taste from a large jar in the fridge - lip-licking.

Friends have been the recipients of root cuttings from the fig tree so it has progeny all over Canberra. One young tree on a side fence is also laden with fruit but another, beside it, has almost none. I suggested it might be "a boy, a male tree" and Les replied with a twinkle in his eye, "well it only takes one ram for all those sheep".

When Deb was a nurse she was given a recipe for tomato relish which she has been making for 40 years. She gave me a jar to try and has shared the recipe (to which she adds extra curry powder).



 Deb Cook checking the fig tree crop. Picture: Elesa Kurtz



Tomato relish

12 large ripe tomatoes

4 large onions, chopped

small handful of salt

450g sugar

vinegar

3 medium green apples

1 tbsp curry powder

1/2 tsp mustard

cayenne to taste

Cut tomatoes into walnut-sized pieces, add onions and sprinkle with salt. Leave overnight.

Drain the liquid in the morning and discard. Boil mixture for five minutes with sugar and enough vinegar to just come to the top of the tomatoes (but not enough to cover them). Add other ingredients and boil for about one hour or until mixture thickens. Bottle and seal while hot.

MEETING NEWS

OGM

An OGM will be held at 1400 hours on Tuesday 29 March 2022 in the Sub-Branch Office. Light refreshments will be provided following the OGM.

ANZAC and Peace Ceremony

The Sub-Branch Board has also decided not to hold the annual ANZAC and Peace Ceremony in 2022. That decision is based on the current and likely COVID-19 health advice and restrictions, and the ACT Education Directorate's position. However, we will be conducting the ANZAC Essay Competition this year.

ANZAC Eve Dinner

We look forward to catching up with members at the ANZAC Eve Dinner on 24 April 2022.





**WODEN VALLEY RSL
SUB-BRANCH ANZAC
EVE DINNER
24 APRIL 2022**

**ANZAC
DAY**

The President and Board of the Woden Valley RSL Sub-Branch have pleasure in inviting you and your guests to the annual ANZAC Eve Dinner and Rededication Ceremony at the Canberra Southern Cross Club in Woden on **Sunday 24 April at 6pm**

Our guest Speaker is the RSL National President Greg Melick AO RFD FANZCN SC



The son of a WWII veteran, Major General Melick, a former Australian Army commando, was elected as National President in 2019. Greg Melick enjoyed a stellar career in the Australian Defence Force (ADF) rising through the ranks to Major General. He was the ADF's senior Reserve Officer, a role responsible for Reserves and Cadets before retiring in December 2018 after 52 years' service. He is Colonel Commandant, 1st Commando Regiment and is a member on the Council of the Australian War Memorial Commission.

Please book and pay by cob Thursday 14 April.

Cost is \$42 per person, drinks at own expense.

Phone us on 6285 1931 with your credit card details; or call in person for cash, cheque or credit/debit card payment at the Sub-Branch Office, Level 2A, 27 Mulley Street HOLDER ACT 2611.

By direct credit (EFT) to: **BSB 062 908 Account number 1084 1897 A/C name: Woden Valley RSL Sub-Branch** include your name and advise the office of your booking by e-mail to admin@rslwoden.org.au to make sure we cater for you and your dietary requirements.

Menu

Mains: alternate serve

Roasted Riverine lamb rump, crispy Kipfler potato, grilled broccolini, salsa verde (GF)
Grilled Chicken Breast, sour cream and chive mash, honey roasted carrot, creamy mushroom sauce.

Dessert: alternate serve

Passionfruit tart, fresh passionfruit, mint, crème chantilly (NF)
Warm sticky date pudding, salted caramel sauce and vanilla bean icecream

Complimentary Basket of sourdough rolls with cultured butter
Freshly brewed Lonsdale Street Roasters coffee and selection of teas.

PARTICIPATION IN MARIST COLLEGE'S 'FOOTSTEPS PROGRAM - DEFENCE SERVICE DAY'

Dear members,

We have been approached by Marist College to participate in the college's 'Footsteps Program – Defence Service Day' on Wednesday 6 April 2022.

The whole day involves small group (Marist House group) discussions with the AWM, Soldier On, and other organisations. A highlight activity is visiting Woden Cemetery to:

- Find and discuss the Defence section of the cemetery.
- Hear the story of Ernest Corey – our local hero – and find his grave.
- Discuss what Defence service was to a veteran who is on-site.

Place an Australian flag at each grave in the Defence section. None are missed.

A teacher at Marist, who is the son and grandson of Sub-Branch members, introduced the Program and organises it. The 250-odd boys in Year 9 rotate through the activities (AWM, Soldier On, Act Historical Society, Woden Cemetery etc) using school buses. Each site has about 3-4 sessions through the day before rotating, commencing at about 0930 hours. Each session is about 90 minutes in duration.

Marist College is seeking a special relationship with Woden Valley RSL in the Woden Cemetery part of the day. Marist is in the heart of Woden Valley and a link with the Sub-Branch is obvious. What Marist seeks is say, one or two veterans to be there for each session to take a half group, describe their service for about 10 mins before then being with the boys to answer questions while the flags are placed at each grave. Veterans can do shifts – that is, just do one session before being relieved by another veteran with a different story. Or stay the whole day. Not to glorify anything, but just to say what their individual service was, and why they honour those who have fallen and whose graves are now in the Defence section of the Woden Cemetery. And it doesn't have to be veterans with operational service.

Here is the link to story published by the Canberra Times about the day last year <https://www.canberratimes.com.au/story/7219146/very-special-anzac-day-meaning-instilled-in-hundreds-of-students/>

If you are interested in participating in this program, please let me know, along with your contact details, by Wednesday 23 March 2022, to secretary@rslwoden.org.au

Regards,

Greg



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Invitation to

Triumph of the Imagination

Join Musica da Camera and the Flowers of Peace for a special concert that will include a preview of some music and stories that will feature in the *POW Requiem*, the next in the series of commemorative concerts that will premiere in October 2022.

**Saturday 26 March 2.30-4.30pm,
Chapel of the Australian Centre for Christianity and Culture,
15 Blackall St, Barton**

Please RSVP to team@flowersofpeace.com.au by Wednesday, 23 March as seating is very limited.





Australian Government
Department of Veterans' Affairs

DVA e-news – Special Edition - QLD/NSW floods

Welcome to the latest edition of *e-news*, which includes snapshots of articles that you'll find on the [Latest News for Veterans](#) page on the Department of Veterans' Affairs website.

If you have received this without having subscribed to *DVA e-news*, that's because DVA has used the email address you provided to [MyService](#). We have done this to inform you of benefits and services that may be available to you as a result of the flooding emergency affecting eastern Australia. We will not send you routine editions of *DVA e-news* unless you [subscribe](#). *DVA e-news* is published every two months.

News

[How east coast flooding has affected DVA services](#)

[Services Australia provides immediate support to flood-affected areas](#)

[Free rapid antigen tests for veterans](#)

[Construction begins on Nowra Veteran Wellbeing Centre](#)

[New round of vocational scholarships open to veterans](#)

Health & wellbeing

[Open Arms - the counselling service founded by Vietnam veterans - celebrates 40 years](#)

[Get involved with DVA's rehabilitation pilot](#)

[Volunteers required for Alzheimer's disease study in Melbourne](#)

[Forward with Dementia](#)

Transition

[2022 Prime Minister's Veterans' Employment Awards - nominate now](#)

[Continuing to serve: Launch of the APS Veteran Employment Pathway](#)

[Get involved with DVA's Support for Employment program](#)

[Our Veterans - Gordon Webb](#)

Families

[Take part in our veterans' families study](#)

Commemorations

[Bombing of Darwin Day – 80 years since Australia came under attack](#)

[80th anniversary of the Fall of Singapore and the Bangka Island massacre](#)

[Paying tribute to National Servicemen](#)

[Recognising 80 years since the Fall of Ambon](#)

Features

[DSH Insurance warns veterans of disaster chasers](#)

[Ryan Fletcher – Long Tan Bursary recipient](#)

ESO News

[Disaster Relief Australia to mobilise veteran community for flood relief](#)

[COVID's impact on RSL fundraising](#)

[Invictus Games 2022 – harnessing the power of sport](#)

[Join the Australian Army for 'Run Army 22' this April](#)

[Mates4Mates encourages social connection](#)

[Free business program sets veterans and their partners up for success](#)

[Become a Legatee](#)

[Disaster Relief Australia – helping veterans find purpose and identity](#)

[The comfort of handmade quilts](#)

[Naval Association of Australia commemorations](#)



The footer of the website is a dark blue horizontal bar. On the left, it features the Australian Government coat of arms and the text "Australian Government" and "Department of Veterans' Affairs". On the right, there are three links: "Minister", "Contact us", and "Newsroom". Below these links is a search bar with the placeholder text "I'm searching for..." and a yellow search icon. At the bottom of the bar, there is a row of seven navigation links: "Home" (with a house icon), "Health and treatment", "Financial support", "Civilian life", "Recognition", "For providers", and "About us".

From DVA Facebook page



Australian Government Department of Veterans' Affairs

If you're keen to lend a hand to communities impacted by flooding, Disaster Relief Australia is deploying a veteran-led volunteer workforce.

Since 2016 they have been on the front line of helping communities recover from natural disasters, providing hands on help getting people back into their homes.

Around 80% of Disaster Relief Australia's workforce are veterans, but you don't have to be a veteran to join.

Find out more about how you can help flood affected communities here <https://www.dva.gov.au/.../disaster-relief-australia...>

Disaster payments are available for people impacted by flooding. Check if you are eligible at <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/active-natural-disaster-events>



Suicide Intervention & Mental Health Literacy Workshops



"I wanted to look out for my mates and this course gave me some skills to help them"



RSL
Australia

Open Arms – Veterans & Families Counselling, in partnership with RSL Australia, are offering free training opportunities to those seeking to help family, friends, co-workers or others in the veteran community.

These suicide intervention and mental health literacy workshops are delivered in RSLs and major Ex-Service Organisations (ESO) around the country.

If you are an ESO and would like to get involved with this training please contact MSHP.ClinicalProgramsandPolicy@dva.gov.au or call 1800 011 046

For more information about the workshops and other programs offered by Open Arms, visit www.openarms.gov.au/get-support/treatment-programs-and-workshops



Anti-malarial medications health assessment program

We are working with Bupa Australia to provide health assessments for veterans who are concerned about potential health effects of the anti-malarial medications, **Mefloquine** (trade name Lariam®) or **Tafenoquine** (trade names Kozenis® and Kodatef®).

The program offers:

- One comprehensive health assessment to explore any symptoms at no cost.
- Selected GPs with training in anti-malarial medication and the mental and physical health issues of veterans concerned about these medications.
- Veterans will receive a personalised Health Support Recommendations Plan to outline further investigation, referrals and/or treatment with their own GP.

Register for a health assessment



During business hours, you can call **1800 MEFLOQUINE (1800 633 567)** or call Bupa directly on **1800 612 798**.



More details are available on www.dva.gov.au using the search term 'Mefloquine'.



**COFFEE CATCH UP
ACTIVE AGAIN FROM FRIDAY
25 FEBRUARY 2022!!!**

Our Coffee Catch Up is open again from 10-12 every Friday in The Corey Room, Level 2A, of the Grant Cameron Community Centre, 27 Mulley Street, Holder.

Please note that the Eddison Day Club is currently meeting on only a very casual basis for lunch at midday Fridays.



Contact Us

Give us a call for more information or access to our services

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Visit us on the web at
www.rslwoden.org.au

Office hours are
9am-3pm Mon-Fri

PS.

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