

RSL WODEN VALLEY SUB-BRANCH



Current Items of Interest

17 March 2023

REMINDER!

SUB-BRANCH ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING (OGM) 28 MARCH 2023

Dear members,

A reminder that the next Sub-Branch OGM will be held at 1400 hours on Tuesday 28 March 2023 in the RSL Sub-Branch office in Holder.

We look forward to seeing you there.

Kind regards,

Greg



Woden Valley Sub-Branch

Greg Kennett

Secretary

Woden Valley Sub-Branch

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Morning Tea Presentation Friday 10 March, 2023

At the regular coffee catch-up on 10 March, a presentation arranged by Mick O'Donnell, guest presenter, Michael (Mike) Crane DSC and Bar, AM (Retd) gave us an illustrated presentation on the history and protocol behind the various Australian honours and awards.

Mike, originally from Tasmania attended St Virgil's College, Hobart and St Brendan's College, Devonport. Among his many academic qualifications, Mike holds an MA in Strategic Studies from the ANU, a Graduate Diploma in Defence Studies Public Policy Analysis and a Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Organic Chemistry.

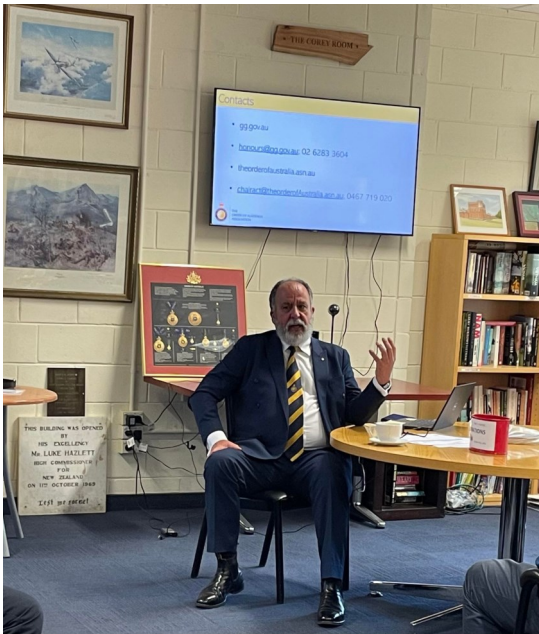
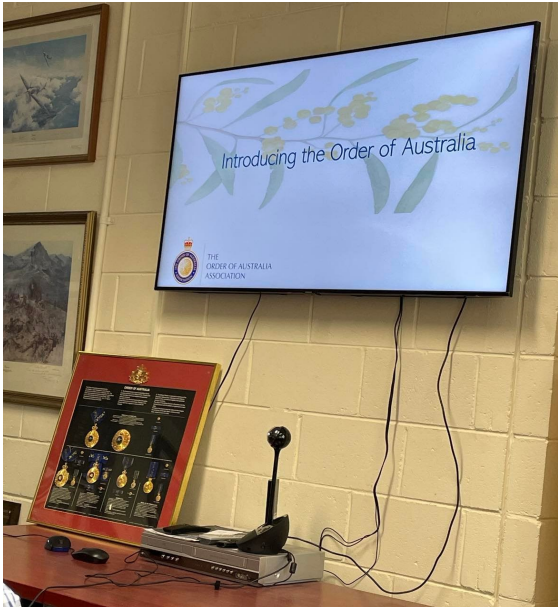
He served with distinction in the Australian Army from 1977 for almost 38 years achieving the rank of Major General - 2 Star, leading and managing ADF assets in the Middle East, and later as a Principal Advisor to the Chief of Defence Force on Australia's Military commitments. He was awarded the DSC in 2008 for Distinguished Command and Leadership on Warlike Operations as Commander of Joint Task Force 633. He is presently a consultant in the field of Defence and National Security. He has been very active as the previous chair of the Order of Australia Association, since 2014. This organisation is a Non-Profit organisation that aims to foster love and pride in Australian citizenship.



He was appointed a Member in the Order of Australia for his service as Commanding Officer 4th Field Regiment and Commandant Army Recruit Training Centre.

He was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross and Bar for service in the Middle East, and was also awarded the United States Legion of Merit (Degree of Officer) for his service at Central Command.





Also on Friday 10 March we celebrated Jim`s Birthday



Irish Club Celebration

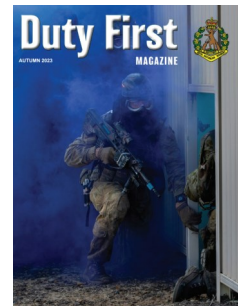
A good roll-up attended the special event on Friday 3 March 2023 to celebrate the 19th Birthday of the Eddison Day Club. This lunch was also an opportunity to gauge members thoughts and suggestions on the format and direction of the Day Club into the future.

Speeches by Ian Gollings, Peter Sutton and Sub-Branch President Jim Gilchrist invited those attending to consider the important role that the Day Club performs in providing an outlet for people to socialise and enjoy the company of others with some gentle exercises and a meal. This will however require more volunteers to help run the various events that the Club provides.

A special birthday cake to mark the occasion was cut by Patron, Sue Sarantos and Judith Young.



Article from: AUTUMN 2023 DUTY FIRST MAGAZINE



HISTORY

For saving life, not taking it: Corporal Ernest Corey

Trudging across a Western Front battlefield under enemy gunfire, Private Ernest Corey struggled forward. Supporting a wounded soldier with one hand and carrying a medical bag with the other, he concentrated on just one thing: to avoid being wounded so he could get this man to safety.

Ernest Albert Corey, known as Ernie, had not planned to go to war. Born on 20 December 1892 in Numeralla, near Cooma, New South Wales, Ernie left school early to work as a **labourer**. Hard at work when the First World War broke out in August 1914, he did not immediately enlist. For the next year, however, like many other Australians, Ernie was engrossed by news from the front.

Tales of heroic Australians serving on Gallipoli were fresh in Ernie's mind when the "Men from Snowy River" **recruitment** march passed through his local district in January 1916. Ernie enlisted at Nimmitabel on 13 January, and joined the march for the final leg of their journey to Goulburn. He was assigned to the 55th Battalion and left Australia with the 4th Reinforcements on board *Port Sydney*. As Ernie bid farewell to his parents, Thomas and Ellen, and his brothers and sisters, he must have wondered what lay ahead.

Ernie joined his battalion on the **Western Front** in April 1917. France was just then recovering from the coldest winter it had seen in more than 30 years, and Ernie was grateful for the spring sunshine.

The next month, during an enemy attack near the French village of Queant, the 55th and 56th battalions suffered heavy **casualties**. A call went out for volunteers to help collect wounded soldiers. Ernie raised his hand. For 17 hours straight he worked, bringing in soldiers from **no-man's-land** to receive medical treatment. Ernie's courage and devotion to duty were rewarded with a Military Medal.

Ernie after enlisting in 1916.

AWM P10990.001





FAST FACTS

The Western Front

1916–18

After the Gallipoli campaign, the Australian Imperial Force was reorganised to include the large numbers of new recruits coming from Australia. Most of these men were sent to the Western Front to fight the German army.

The Western Front was a 750-kilometre line of trenches that ran through France and Belgium, from Belgium's North Sea coast to the Swiss border.

Of the more than 330,000 Australians who served overseas during the First World War, the majority served on the Western Front between 1916 and 1918.

The conditions in France and Belgium were devastating. Australians faced the challenges of gas, heavy artillery, mortars, and machine-guns that could fire up to 500 bullets per minute. At the end of 1916, soldiers experienced the coldest winter Europe had seen in 30 years and suffered many cold-related illnesses, including pneumonia and trench foot.

More than 61,000 Australians lost their lives in the First World War. Of these, more than 46,000 died on the Western Front.



Septimus Power, *Stretcher bearers* (1922, oil on canvas, 69 x 94 cm, AWM ART03645)

The Military Medal

The Military Medal was a British medal introduced in 1916, during the First World War. It was awarded for bravery and devotion to duty under fire, and was given to military personnel who were not officers.

In 1993, the Military Medal was discontinued under the UK Honours and Awards system. The Military Cross, which was originally awarded only to officers, is now awarded to personnel of all ranks.

AWM REL/04728



Ernie became a regular stretcher bearer for his battalion, and it was not long before he was again in the thick of it: this time at Polygon Wood in Belgium. Ernie worked tirelessly, risking his own life to ensure the safety of others. For this, he was awarded a second Military Medal. Part of the **citation** for his award reads:

*The greatest danger did not deter this man from doing his duty when his services were required ... he tended the wounded and carried them to places of safety continuously ... often under very heavy **artillery** and machine gun fire ... he set a fine example of bravery and coolness to all ranks.¹*

But Ernie was not done yet. During heavy fighting at the village of Péronne, in September 1918, Ernie was commended for "saving the lives of many"² soldiers and was yet again awarded a Military Medal.

Ernie was promoted to corporal and placed in command of his battalion's stretcher bearers. During a battle north of Bellicourt, two German stretcher bearers approached him carrying a wounded Australian soldier, Corporal Ron Randall. Ernie lifted Ron into a shell hole for protection while he finished dressing other wounded soldiers. Two hours later, as he was preparing to bring in an officer he had bandaged earlier, a burst of machine-gun fire rang out, and Ernie was hit in the thigh. Applying a bandage to his own wound, Ernie crawled 300 metres before he was picked up and evacuated. After two operations, Ernie was **discharged** from the army in 1919. For his courage under fire, he was awarded a fourth Military Medal.

After a celebrated military career, and further service in the Second World War, Ernie returned to a normal life back in Australia. In an interview he gave in 1971, a year before his death, Ernie said that he was most proud of his Military Medals because he had been awarded "every one of them for saving life, not taking it".³

Corporal Ernie Corey is the only British Commonwealth soldier to have been awarded the Military Medal four times.



Ernie Corey's helmet, which he wore during the First World War and decorated himself. AWM REL/04728

Story courtesy of Anzac Portal

<https://anzacportal.dva.gov.au/resource>

Audacity: Stories of heroic Australians in wartime



Ernie's medals include (left to right) the Military Medal with three bars, British War Medal 1914-20, Victory Medal, British War Medal 1939-45, and Australia Service Medal. AWM REL/04727.001-006



A nurse from Queanbeyan Nursing Home pins Ernie's medals onto his chest, May 1971. AWM SHQ/71/D167/HQ



AWM REL/15959

The Men from Snowy River recruiting march cross the Queen's Bridge, Queanbeyan, New South Wales, in January 1916. AWM P01095.001



59 FIRST

Joint media release - Older Australians keen to take up the Commonwealth Seniors Health Card

The Hon Matt Keogh MP

Minister for Veterans' Affairs
Minister for Defence Personnel

The Hon Amanda Rishworth MP

Minister for Social Services

The Hon Bill Shorten MP

Minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme

More than 10,000 additional older Australians and veterans have had their cost of living pressures reduced after being granted a Commonwealth Seniors Health Card following eligibility changes last year.

In the first four months since the Albanese Labor Government introduced increased income thresholds, an additional 10,893 older Australians have been granted the card who would not have been eligible previously.

The annual income thresholds increased in November following the passage of legislation.

These increased to:

- \$90,000 for singles, up from the previous limit of \$57,761; and
- \$144,000 for couples, up from the previous limit of \$92,416

The CSHC provides eligible Australians who have reached age pension or veteran pension age cheaper medicines and visits to the GP.

The range of Australian Government health concessions they can access include concessional co-payments for Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme medicines, the concessional thresholds for the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme Safety Net and the Extended Medicare Safety Net, and bulk-billed visits to a General Practitioner.

Minister for Social Services Amanda Rishworth said the Albanese Labor Government was delivering on its commitment to reduce cost of living pressures and assist older Australians.

"It's incredible to see such a great take-up in such a short time," Minister Rishworth said.

"We know that seniors value their concession cards and importantly, this change isn't temporary. It's permanent and will provide older Australians with ongoing benefits in the years ahead.

"Initial projections were that an additional 52,000 older Australians would benefit by 2026-27."

Minister for Government Services Bill Shorten urged those eligible who had not yet applied to go to myGov to lodge their claim.

"How someone claims will depend on their circumstances and preferences," Minister Shorten said.

"The easiest way to lodge a claim is to sign into myGov and go to Centrelink. You can make a claim from your homepage or through the new myGov app.

"While using online services remains a choice, support is available for those who need a hand to get started. All Services Australia service centres now offer digital support for people who need help to get set up.

"Customers are also able to submit a claim via the phones or by visiting a Service Centre.

"I would also encourage all Australians to download the new myGov app, where cards like the Commonwealth seniors Health Card are stored in the digital wallet."

Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Defence Personnel, Matt Keogh encouraged eligible veterans to lodge their claims.

"This will assist many veterans of veteran pension age with cost of living pressures," Minister Keogh said.

The Commonwealth Seniors Health Card income limits will continue to be indexed annually.

Eligible Australians can find information about applying for a Commonwealth Seniors Health Card on the Services Australia website.

Changes to COVID-19 testing arrangements in the ACT

Information about changes to ACT Government COVID-19 testing arrangements for people living in Canberra and the surrounding region.

These changes come into effect with the ending of the ACT's COVID-19 Management Declaration Framework on **28 February 2023**.

Under the Declaration, the only remaining public health direction – which requires people who test positive using RAT to report their result to ACT Health – will also end.

Canberrans are strongly encouraged to continue reporting their positive RAT results using the form which remains on the [ACT COVID-19 website](#).

Reporting positive RAT results helps ACT Health to direct people to information about supports and healthcare. It also helps us to monitor and respond to the ongoing impacts of the virus on the community. The information helps to inform Territory health policy, as well as the nature of services and assistance provided to the community and health-related facilities.

ACT Health is reminding Canberrans that, if symptomatic, testing for COVID-19 continues to be an important COVID Smart behaviour. COVID-19 remains a serious illness, particularly for those people at risk of severe disease.

Where you can get a free rapid antigen test (RAT)

From 1 March 2023, the ACT Government is expanding its free RAT program so that all Canberrans continue to have access to free COVID-19 testing.

Canberrans can collect free RATs from certain ACT Government locations, including:

Libraries ACT locations (excluding Heritage Library) – where you can collect up to 3 free RATs per person, per visit. There are nine locations across the ACT, so there's somewhere you can pick up a free RAT close to home. For information on your nearest branch, visit www.library.act.gov.au or call 6205 9000.

Access Canberra service centres – where customers can collect a RAT after transactions.

RATs are already available at Canberra Health Services facilities, including hospitals, Walk-in Centres and health centres, where visitors are encouraged to do a RAT before entering.

For the safety of staff and visitors, please do not visit or try to collect RATs from any of these locations if you're unwell and have COVID-19 symptoms. Plan ahead and have some RATs at home or ask someone else to collect some for you.

Community groups can also contact Community Services Directorate to arrange a bulk order for RATs, if needed. Arrangement can be made by emailing socialrecovery@act.gov.au

RATs are also widely available for purchase across Canberra, including at pharmacies, supermarkets, and other retail stores.

Most Canberrans, including children supervised by an adult, can use a RAT in the comfort of their own home and get results within minutes. Once you know if you have COVID-19 you can take appropriate steps to look after

Accessing PCR testing

The ACT Government's COVID-19 testing centre at Garran will permanently close at the end of the day on 28 February 2023.

Despite its closure, the ACT Government continues to ensure equitable and timely access to PCR testing for Canberrans who need a PCR test.

From 1 March 2023, there will be changes in the way COVID-19 testing can be accessed in the ACT. These changes are being made so that healthcare remains accessible to everyone as we move away from emergency settings.

Testing for COVID-19 using PCR may be preferable for:

people who are at higher risk of a severe COVID-19 illness. PCR testing may provide a positive result earlier in their illness which can be important for those who are eligible for antiviral medications.

other people who are recommended to have a PCR test by their GP or treating doctor (including those who are unable to use a RAT).

Individuals who may benefit from a COVID-19 PCR test and who are concession card holders can access PCR testing without a pathology form. This includes the following concession cards:

Pensioner concession card

Commonwealth seniors' health care card

Health care card (including Low-income health care card)

Department of Veterans' Affairs gold, white or orange cards

ACT Government Service Access Card

Pathology collection centres are spread across the ACT so that people who need to get a COVID-19 PCR will be able to access one close to home. A list of participating collection centres and access information will be on the [ACT COVID-19 website](#).

People who may need additional support or can't attend a collection centre to get PCR testing can contact ACT Pathology and let them know about the support or assistance they need.

Like any other type of pathology testing, PCR tests remain available to all Canberrans who have a pathology referral form from your primary care provider.

ACT Health continues to encourage people to have a discussion with their medical professional about what COVID-19 testing and treatment they may need before they become unwell, especially if they are at higher risk of severe COVID-19 illness.

These new testing arrangements reflect the ACT Government's commitment to ensuring ongoing access and service delivery for COVID-19 related illness, with a focus on supporting priority groups who are at greater risk – much like other notifiable respiratory diseases.

Thank you for your ongoing support of the public health response. Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Office of the Chief Health Officer's at ACTHealthOCHO@act.gov.au

Kind regards

Office for Seniors and Veterans



**COFFEE CATCH UP
EVERY FRIDAY 10-12**



Members and guests are welcome to join us for a chat and enjoy freshly brewed coffee & cake with former service mates. Every Friday from 10 to 12 in The Corey Room, Level 2A, of the Grant Cameron Community Centre, 27 Mulley Street, Holder.

The Eddison Day Club will continue to meet for a lunch each Friday at noon until we can once again meet at a reinvigorated Day Club.

Come and join us for lunch.



Contact Us

Give us a call for more information
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PS.

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