



Official Magazine of
**WODEN VALLEY
SUB-BRANCH R.S.L.**



The SERVICEMAN

First Published in January 1962

WINTER EDITION

AUGUST 2022



Part of the impressive display in the historic village at Taralga NSW - Page 32



CONTENTS

Office Bearers 2020-21	Page 3
From the Editor's Desk	Page 4
From the President	Page 5-7
Fall In	Page 7
Annual Report Jan-Dec 2021	Page 8-9
Lest We Forget & Last Post	Page 10
Eddison Day Club Report for 2022	Page 11
ANZAC Eve Dinner 2022	Page 12
Essay winner 1 st - <i>Henry Page</i>	Page 13
Essay 2 nd place - <i>Isaac Jennings</i>	Page 14
Essay equal 3 rd - <i>Emma Battaglini</i>	Page 15
Essay equal 3 rd - <i>Isabelle Goury</i>	Page 16
Essay equal 3 rd - <i>Emmy Cook</i>	Page 17
Recollections by <i>Peter Phillips</i>	Page 18-21
Man Overboard - <i>Les Cook</i>	Page 22
60 Years anniversary <i>Margaret Manley</i>	Page 23
Eddison Park on ANZAC Day	Page 24-25
Dedication to Rats - <i>Vicki Munday</i>	Page 26-27
Larapinta Trail - <i>Rania Kalimeris</i>	Page 29
Resignation of Office Manager	Page 30
A Dog Named Judy	Page 31
Historic Village of Taralga	Page 32
Wagga & Empire Training Role	Page 33-34
Notes for the Diary	Page 35
Sub-Branch Services	Page 36

ADVERTISERS

Southern Cross Club	Page 28
Grantley Perry & Sons	Page 35

Note: Unless specifically stated otherwise, the experiences and opinions expressed in any article are those of the author and do not represent the official position of, or endorsement by the RSL, or by 'The Serviceman' as a journal. No responsibility is accepted by the RSL, the editor, or the publishers and printers, for the accuracy of information contained in this journal. The RSL is not liable for inaccuracy in any advertisement and does not accept responsibility for any claims made by advertisers. Any material considered misleading or inappropriate will be withheld at editorial discretion.

The SERVICEMAN

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE WODEN VALLEY RSL SUB-BRANCH INC.
RETURNED & SERVICES LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA

Editor:
Bob Cremer



*Printed in-house in
the Sub-Branch office,
14/27 Mulley Street,
Holder ACT 2611*

ISSN 1325-4588(Print) ISSN 2207-9815(Online)

Vol.56

July 2021

No 2

OFFICE BEARERS 2022-2023

Patron

Her Excellency Hon Dame Annette King, New Zealand High Commissioner to Australia

President

Jim Gilchrist

Deputy President

Anthony John

Vice President

Peter Sutton

Secretary: Greg Kennett **Treasurer:** Jan Properjohn

Assistant Secretary: Vacant **Assistant Treasurer:** Vacant

Board Members

Bill Kelly, Les Bienkiewicz, Rob Macaulay

Finance Committee

Ken Neil

Chaplain: Reverend Mick O'Donnell

Office Manager: Alex Solecka

Entitlements & Advocacy Administrator: Andrew Properjohn

Community Support Coordinator: Peter Sutton

Volunteer Co-ordinator: Trish Low

Appeals & Advocacy Administrator: Lynnda Liversey

Administrative Assistant: Vacant

The Sub-Branch meets on the last Tuesday of each month except April and December at the Canberra Southern Cross Club, Corinna Street, Phillip at 7.00PM. Membership Subscription is due on January 1st annually and should be posted to the above Sub-Branch address.

The Sub-Branch phone number and for 'The Serviceman': (02) 6285 1931

Welfare: welfare@rslwoden.org.au **Office Hours:** Monday to Friday 09:00-15:00

Web: www.rslwoden.org.au **Email:** admin@rslwoden.org.au **E&A:** entitlements@rslwoden.org.au



FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Bob Cremer



Another Ordinary General Meeting completed and a couple of Committee changes to manage the Sub-Branch heading into the second half of 2022 and into 2023

Welcome to Anthony John (AJ) as Deputy President and new Board member Rob Macaulay.

Just when we think everything is improving we have new cases of COVID, as well as long COVID(?) and additional variants that are causing more confusion in the community. So, I guess the message is to remain vigilant but don't stay completely isolated because we need to get out and socialise and keep in touch with family and friends. A concern is that people get used to isolation and, regardless of changing conditions don't return to normal life. This seems to be the case especially with the Day Club where usually regular attendees have not returned despite efforts by the organisers.

An arranged visit to the Coffee-Catch-Up last Friday with the Member for Bean, Mr David Smith MP attending to check out our premises and to see what we do and hopefully some good outcomes will result from his visit along with promised future visits.

As we have come to expect, the standard of the essays from Year 5 & 6 students from local schools indicates the talent and thinking of these young people. This year's essays proved a very difficult task to judge and we ended up with a total of five finalists. Great work from all concerned.

Take care, stay healthy and be kind to each other and if possible stay clear of COVID although that can sometimes be a problematic. Also, a special thanks to my wife Jan for her continued proof reading skills and corrections to my editorial errors.

Carers' Friendship Group Meeting Tue 5 July 2022

A meeting of the friendship group and the opportunity to catch up with Rania who dropped in after her trip to Greece and her walking adventure on the Larapinta Trail in central Australia.



FROM THE PRESIDENT

Jim Gilchrist

Welcome to the Winter Edition of *The Serviceman* and the latter part of winter in the ACT. As I've mentioned in previous editions, I'm not sure where the time goes or how quickly it does so. I guess that being busy helps. But as I've also mentioned in other messages, I'm sure some readers might be finding the cold, the rain and the COVID-related isolation a bit tedious. If so, please don't hesitate to call the office and speak with someone.

Despite some of the restrictions that applied at the time, we held a successful ANZAC Eve Dinner at which the RSL National President, MAJGEN (Retd) Greg Melick, addressed



members and guests. Greg spoke of his commitment to veterans and their service to our country and how he became involved in the League. Our Patron, Dame Annette King and her husband, Ray Lind, also joined us for what was a pleasant dinner. In a brief but moving ceremony to acknowledge those members who had died since the last ANZAC Eve Dinner and rededicate ourselves to the ongoing support of our members and other veterans, renowned violinist and Artist in Residence at the AWM, Mr Chris Latham, played a heartfelt rendition of *The Last Post* and *Rouse*.

On ANZAC Day, we conducted a brief but meaningful ceremony at Eddison Park. We were again supported by the Salvation Army Band, Mr Drew Ashley, the 241 Army Cadet Unit and the Weston Scout Group. Sub-Branch member LTCOL (Retd) Brian Hewitt, laid a wreath on behalf of the NZ High Commission and NZ veterans. At the end of the ceremony, Ms Vicki Munday, spoke on behalf of the Descendants of the Rats of Tobruk Association, as we dedicated a plaque commemorating the 80th Anniversary of the end of the Siege of Tobruk. This followed the planting of three *No Surrender Roses* around the obelisk during the lockdown period as part of a National project to honour *The Rats*.

While other ANZAC Day events have been reported previously, several members assisted Marist College when Year 10 students toured parts of the Woden Cemetery to reflect on the service and sacrifice of the servicemen and women who are buried or otherwise remembered there. The Schools Essay Competition also continued to provide insights from primary school students into military service and the associated sacrifices that so many have made for us.

I thank everyone who was involved in organising and supporting our commemoration of ANZAC Day, especially our office staff, Greg Kennett, Matt Griggs and the ever present and willing, Rev Mick O'Donnell, for his continued commitment to this and similar services.

On 3 August, I was one of several guests who had the honour of laying a wreath at *The Last Post Ceremony* at the AWM to mark the 60th anniversary of the landing of the Australian Army Training Team Vietnam in Saigon in 1962.

>>>

WO2 Kevin Conway, who was the first member of The Team killed in action, was honoured at the Ceremony. Sub-Branch members Ian Gollings and Simon Header had been instrumental in planning this event that marked the start of what would become Australia's commitment to the as yet undeclared war in South Vietnam. Ian was a member of this first team. A more detailed report on this occasion and the AATTV will be included in the next edition of *The Serviceman*.

From a Sub-Branch perspective, we continued to apply a business-as-usual approach to all aspects of our administration and generally succeeded in doing so. About 35 members attended our AGM in late May and the OGM that followed. I thank members for their attendance and participation in these meetings and for their continued support of the Board and our plans to sustain our future and meet our objectives. While these meetings have been reported elsewhere, I note the Members' approval for the Board to continue the extended drawdowns on the AMF as and when needed. As various grants and other largely COVID-related offsets negated the need to access these additional funds in the previous two years, the Board and I appreciate the trust that Members have placed in us. As noted in the financial statements presented to the AGM, the Sub-Branch is in a sound financial position that will see us through at least the next several years while we continue to seek sustainable financial support from external sources.

While the Eddison Day Club remains on hold, *The Corey Room* continues to offer opportunities for informal gatherings, including the Friday morning Coffee Catch Ups. Bill Kelly and others continue to organise the library and ensure the room continues to grow into a space that honours former members and other veterans. Mr Ross Smith also continues to enhance some of the displays that honour individuals, events and organisations. On 5 August, we welcomed the Federal Member for Bean, Mr David Smith MP, to the Coffee Catch Up. In this informal environment, David engaged with a small group of regulars and showed an interest in our membership, our work and some of our plans. He also highlighted the relationship between his Seat and Dr Charles Bean and the Australian War Memorial. Before he left, we were already arranging his next visit.

From a welfare and wellbeing perspective, a small team of volunteers under the guidance of Board Member, Peter Sutton is maintaining call rosters and small gatherings. While we are not yet free of the shackles that have limited opportunities for our members to gather in large groups, please stay alert for more information about smaller events as we hopefully return to a more stable environment. Fortunately, the flow of major welfare issues has slowed to a manageable level, although we still have difficulties in accessing various facilities and services for our members.

The Compensation Team continues to face the challenges of a continuous flow of new clients, including members and others from the broad Veteran Community, and that leads to a growing backlog of veterans who are waiting their turn. Similarly, some complex cases continue to stretch our resources and our patience as advocates and clients face extensive delays and frustrations in and with the claims and appeals systems with DVA and the Veterans Review Board. We do, however, receive excellent support from some quarters and have been able to achieve some very good outcomes for many clients.

As noted in previous correspondence, I have been working with an RSL National Working Group that is monitoring the *Royal Commission into Defence and Veterans Suicide* and the *National Veterans Affairs Committee* for the past 12 to 18 months. While this work has at times been rewarding and has provided opportunities to raise and discuss issues that continue to affect our ability to support our veterans, it is also very demanding.

>>>

In my opinion, these committees will be slow to address the key issues that affect us the most. Thus, and with mixed emotions, I recently advised the Branch President that I will be retiring from these commitments so I can focus on the Sub-Branch and its operations. I will continue to raise issues in appropriate forums to ensure our voice is heard and so we can seek the changes and support we need. In that regard, I note that Victoria and NSW Branches have recently offered to assist us with the training of our advocates. Hopefully, this new relationship will lead to other sustainable options.

Although ACT Branch continues to maintain a low profile, the Branch President and newly appointed CEO, Ms Kim Hicks, have provided renewed interest in and willingness to support our operations, particularly those concerning the compensation and welfare services we provide. Similarly, we are attracting some younger veterans to work with our advocates as part of a whole of Branch approach to supporting the Veteran Community in the ACT and region. However, it is still early days and we still have much work to do.

In thanking all of the staff and volunteers who provide our services or support the day-to-day operations of the Sub-Branch, I offer special thanks to Greg Kennett and Jan Properjohn, Ross Thomas, Peter Sutton and Bob Cremer. I also record my thanks to Joyce O'Brien, who left us in May after six years as Office Manager. On behalf of all of us, I wish Joyce all the best as she starts a new job with the High Court.

In closing, I look forward to seeing many of you at our meetings and other activities that are scheduled in the coming months. I wish all of our members, their families and our friends good health and good cheer, especially those who are struggling with their health or that of their partner, other family members or their friends.

Below, *The Corey Room* gathering, a replacement for the cancelled OGM Dinner on Tue 28 Jun. Just another COVID related disruption to Sub-Branch activities.



FALL IN

A warm welcome is extended to the following new members.

David Nolan, Denis Whitty, Darold Annett, Peter Johnson,
Owen Patterson, Stuart Althaus, William Byrne,
Phillip Lemon, Winston Phillips, William Wilson

Woden Valley RSL Sub-Branch Annual Report
January - December 2021
2022 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

After another difficult year that provided heartaches, restrictions, frustrations and concerns to many people, I begin this report by thanking all of our volunteers and staff who supported our members and others in the veteran community in the ACT and region so well and so professionally during 2021. Despite the restrictions and uncertainties we all faced, the results were outstanding and were testament to the commitment the Sub-Branch and its members continue to make to our fellow veterans and their families.

Overall, we applied lessons from 2020 to modify our capabilities so we could continue to help our mates and commemorate the service and sacrifice of our members and other members of the veteran community. We provided safe work areas that allowed staff and volunteers to open all functional areas and conduct business as closely as possible to normal throughout the year. We issued newsletters, used telephone networks and applied safe visiting protocols to maintain contact with as many members as possible. We conducted meetings in person, online or by telephone, and, when possible, we gathered in small groups for social interaction. Members supported the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and several Ordinary General Meetings (OGMs) under COVID safe protocols in the corridors and in *The Corey Room* at the Grant Cameron Community Centre (GCCC). Many members seemed to enjoy the experience of being in our own premises and the relaxed atmosphere it presented.

While it is difficult to accurately quantify how many people attended the GCCC as volunteers, staff or clients, a steady flow of clients sought advice and support from either or both the Compensation and Welfare Teams. About 400 veterans sought advice about compensation claims, and some 300 accepted our support. The Welfare Team handled many straightforward issues mainly from our members, while also dealing with some complex cases, some of which had arisen through a referral from DVA.

The Welfare Team continued its BeConnected IT Program, the Konnekt Program, the Carers Friendship Group and held several information sessions, one of which was part of DVA's Veteran Health Week. The coffee catchups attracted small but lively groups on most Friday mornings. Through video conferencing, we hosted a second round of the GEARS Program for six welfare advocates and we expect to conduct at least one further program in 2022. We also hosted various forums for DVA and the ACT government all of which related to veteran health and wellbeing. I offer my sincere thanks to everyone who contributed in any way to these activities as they are all fundamental to our culture and are valued by those who benefit from them, especially the phone calls and birthday cards.

Throughout the year, we liaised with DVA and Defence regarding some general issues and others that related directly to our clients. This liaison included several workshops and forums, in some of which our advocates represented the RSL ACT Branch and the RSL National HQ. In May, I was re-appointed as the RSL ACT Branch representative to the National Veterans Affairs Committee (NVAC). In October, I joined a National Working Group that will oversee the League's involvement with the Royal Commission into Defence and Veterans Suicide.

>>>

We provided 20 Funeral Tributes, 13 of which were for non-members of the Sub-Branch and advised seven other families for which a tribute was not required.

Although we again cancelled the ANZAC and Peace Ceremony, we did conduct the Schools' Essay Competition. We held the ANZAC Eve Dinner at which the CEO of Aspen Medical and retired Army Colonel, Bruce Armstrong, was the guest speaker. We held a small but moving ceremony for about 50 people at Eddison Park on ANZAC Day at which the Salvation Army Band and vocalist Drew Ashley provided excellent musical accompaniment. While we offer these events and ceremonies primarily for our members, each of them provides opportunities to engage with the local community and the broader veteran community. In thanking all of our volunteers and staff who planned and conducted these activities, I encourage anyone else who might have some spare time to see how they might be able to help.

A BEST Grant of \$113,365 and some Federal and ACT Government COVID-related initiatives supported our financial position and significantly reduced pressure on our limited funds, for which members had renewed the Board's authority to draw down up to \$417,000 from the Asset Management Fund as and if necessary to support our operations. While none of these funding sources or offsets provide for accurate budgeting or offer a sustainable future, they certainly provided welcome relief during 2021. That relief will allow the Board to continue its search for substantial and sustainable financial support that will provide for better budgeting and planning.

The Director of the Australian War Memorial (AWM), Matt Anderson, and the Director of the AWM's *Flowers of War Project*, Chris Latham, were guest speakers at our February and June OGM Dinners, respectively, both of which were well supported by members and guests. At the June dinner, Ross Smith presented the Sub-Branch with a framed photograph of the Long Tan Cross that now hangs in *The Corey Room*. In what was a fine way to end the year, the Sub-Branch Christmas lunch provided an opportunity to thank our staff and volunteers, and to accept our Receptionist, Alex Solecka, into the *Order of Whatever It Is*.

Our recently leased training room provided a venue and resources for training and information sessions and to participate in video conferences, including several relating to hearings of the Veterans' Review Board. It also provided good space for some of the information sessions that the Welfare Team provided for our members.

In its 18th year, the Eddison Day Club was again prevented from holding its normal Friday meetings and lunches. While small groups met informally at the Canberra Irish Club, the Day Club Committee is reviewing how best the Sub-Branch can continue to meet the goals of this worthwhile asset within our Sub-Branch. I am sure they would welcome any suggestions as to how we can continue this program and how we might attract new volunteers.

Throughout the year, the Board continued to develop our governance and management arrangements and systems, a major element of which was a comprehensive review of our staffing needs. The review provided an excellent opportunity for the Board to consider its goals and priorities for the Sub-Branch and the Veterans Support Centre (VSC) as it continued to provide for a sustainable future. The review and its outcomes will be finalised in early 2022. We also continued to monitor our information systems to ensure we effectively and efficiently manage our data, while enhancing our communications.

>>>

At a small ceremony at the RSL National HQ Building in January, Max Brennan, Julie Cronin, Jim Gilchrist and Andrew Properjohn were awarded Australia Day Medallions. At the RSL ACT Branch AGM in May, the National CEO presented Jack Aaron and Ross Thomas with Meritorious Service Medals that are the highest award available to the League's members; and Jim Gilchrist with Life Membership. It is worth noting that Jack and Ross join Ian Gollings and Bill Smith as recent recipients of this prestigious award. On behalf of the Board and our members, I thank all recipients for their respective efforts and congratulate them on their awards. On a personal note, I thank everyone who assisted and advised me in my various roles over the past eight years. I cannot clearly express just how proud I am to have been offered these opportunities in such a wonderful environment and how proud I am of our Sub-Branch and its members.

In closing this report, I again thank the staff, volunteers and members who contributed in any way to the operations of our Sub-Branch. I express my special thanks to Peter Eveille who stood down from his position as our senior Volunteer Welfare Advocate after many years service to veterans through our Sub-Branch and other ex-service organisations in the ACT and elsewhere. In June, Peter was appointed a member of the Order of Australia in recognition of this service. After more than four years with the Welfare Team, Ourania (Rania) Kalimeris opted to return to Greece before undertaking some study. I particularly thank the editor of *The Serviceman*, Bob Cremer, who has held this important role for nearly 16 years. Bob is also involved in many other activities including being a Director of the Sub-Branch.

LEST WE FORGET

“The price of Liberty is Eternal Vigilance”



*“They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old;
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun, and in the morning
We will remember them.”*



Brian Cooper, Merle Rand, Owen Elsbury, Ernest Snelling, Bernard Skarbek, Gordon Temme, George McRae, Josef Simecek, Ailsa Brooke, Albert Gosch, David Taylor, Sydney Stanley, Beverley Wright, Kin Oung, George Harris

Eddison Day Club Report - AGM 2022

Peter Sutton

Chairman & Coordinator

Over the last two years and these past twelve months, the Eddison Day Club has undergone a major transformation.

When we had to suspend operations on 15 March 2020 due to the outbreak of COVID-19, we did not get together again until 24 July 2020. The numbers were reduced, many of the things that we took for granted were no longer possible; self-serve coffee and tea, home bake day and volunteers serving lunches. Although we had these changes we were still able to attract between 24 and 28 people when we were permitted to meet again, after 24 July 2020.

A large group attended the Christmas lunch in December 2020. We began meeting again. We had quite large numbers attend when we started back on 15 January 2021, having to check in with the App and other requirements. Since May last year the numbers have slowly reduced to where we now only have between three and seven attend a lunch each Friday.

We were represented at the AGM of the Canberra Irish Club on 28 November 2021, where I spoke of the support this club has given to us over the past 17 years. A Christmas party was held on 17 December 2021 was attended by 12 people including our Patron, Mrs Sue Sarantos.

A small group met for lunch to celebrate our 18th birthday on 4 February 2022. We continue to meet each Friday with groups of less than ten. Much discussion has continued about how to resume and have larger numbers attend. Some people say that we need entertainment or guest speakers. This is fine but we cannot expect these people to attend with such small numbers. One group of singers have made contact, but will not come without more attendees.

Considering the lock-downs, imposing of restrictions and their easing is not unique to the Day Club. Many ESOs such as the TPI Association and War Widows' Guild have found it difficult to have their members and volunteers return and join in. 'Probus' is another organisation that is experiencing similar issues.

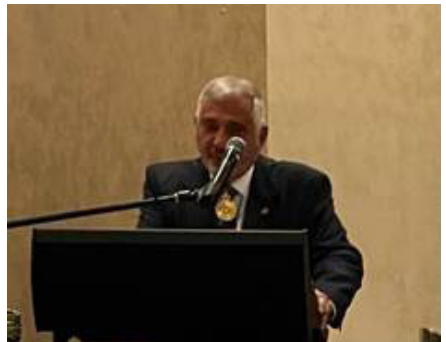
Even with the availability of boosters to older persons and the promulgation each day of the number of infections and hospitalisations has made many people afraid to venture out.

Many Day Clubs throughout New South Wales have ceased to operate or changed since early 2020. Some have folded due to COVID but others have stopped meeting due to ageing of both members and volunteers.

I do not think the Eddison Day Club will return to the status it held before COVID struck, but am optimistic that we will be a viable outlet for the RSL and the wider community for many more years. This allows an outlet for the elderly and lonely members to look forward to each Friday.

ANZAC Eve Dinner Sunday 24 Apr 2022

Our ANZAC Eve dinner was well attended by over 80 members and guests. Special guests were our Patron, Dame Annette King, the New Zealand High Commissioner to Australia, Mr Greg Mellick, President of RSL Australia and Chris Latham, musician and Director of the Flowers of War Company, the recently produced 'Vietnam Requiem', a musical legacy for commemorative purposes to demonstrate through music that wounds can be healed by those affected by war.



ANZAC & Peace Ceremony Essay Competition Winning Essay - 2022

ANZAC DAY Henry Page - Year 6 Saint Edmund's School

ANZAC Day to me is about sacrifice, bravery and honour. It is to commemorate the day when our own people fought for our country and died for it. All those brave men who went away from their families to fight, and that is something for our people to be proud of, as those men showed bravery in the face of fear, and that is what ANZAC Day means to me.

My great great uncle, Clarence Elliot Page and his two brothers, Thomas and John fought on the beach of Gallipoli. They joined the Army in 1914, and went from Sydney to Western Australia, and from there were shipped to the Middle East. Two of them went to Gallipoli on the 25th April, and other arrived on the 26th. Thomas was wounded and died from the wounds on a Greek Island. Clarence survived but then went to the Somme, in France, and fell at Pozières.

When my family and I made our trip to Europe in 2019, we went to the Sir John Monash Museum in Villers-Bretonneux, France. We ran a scan and found Clarence's grave in a quiet little graveyard beside a highway. Here we paid our respects and left a poppy flower. It was very nice seeing that he rested well.

The summary of what ANZAC Day means to me is that many people out there were willing to put their own lives on the line for others and continue to do that for their country. ANZAC Day is about never forgetting the sacrifice all those good men made for our beautiful country, their willingness to risk it all for others.

On this day, all Australians should be united, no matter what tongue, race, or origin, we should all be willing to pay our respects to the fallen and honour the great sacrifice that they made for our people. For those same people fought, not only for their own sake, but for the sake of others. On this we shall all take a moment, to remember the great, the fearless, the honourable and the courageous, the ones who cared not for themselves, but for others, and that is what ANZAC Day means to me.

Lest we Forget



***ANZAC & Peace Ceremony Essay Competition
2nd Prize Winner - 2022***

What ANZAC Day Means To Me.

Isaac Jennings

Year 5, Mawson Public School

My name is Isaac and I am 10 years old. I hope I never have to go to war and be remembered as a fallen soldier. I am sure many young men and women before me shared the same feelings, they just lived at a different time and had a different choice to make. Their choice was to leave their families and the comforts of home and go to foreign lands to face an enemy, and possibly not come home.

ANZAC Day is a day where Australians and New Zealanders commemorate, honour and pay their respects to the men and women who fought for their countries in Australia's wars. Many Australians commemorate this day with beers at the pub and games of two-up while some think of it as a day off work, however, the day is also an opportunity to think about the young Australians who are serving in our current armed forces both at home and overseas.

I am one of the lucky ones whose Grandpa and Great Grandpa made it home from war. My Great Grandpa, William Henry Abigail served in the 2nd World War and also in Vietnam. My Grandfather is Major General Peter John Abigail of the Australian Army, who is now retired. He was in the Army for 37 years and served in the Vietnam War.

Papa, as he is known in our family, has delivered many ANZAC Day speeches around Australia to commemorate this important day, but, as he is getting older he now prefers to remember in private. My Papa is quiet and doesn't say much but he has talked about his experience in the war from time to time. I know it is not easy for him, war is not easy.

When I asked my Papa what ANZAC Day means, he said it is a day of remembering all those who have served this country in wars and particularly those who paid the ultimate sacrifice. He remembers his friends who died in Vietnam and others who were hurt, but also, those he served with throughout the campaign. Life long friends.

We live in a world that can change quickly; wars can start overnight and the results are always very bad. The brave men and women, horses and dogs, who put their lives in danger deserve our respect and to be in our memories and that is what ANZAC Day is for.

***ANZAC & Peace Ceremony Essay Competition
Equal 3rd Prize Winner - 2022***

What ANZAC Means to Me

Emma Battaglini

Year 6 St John Vianney Primary School

The word ANZAC is an acronym for Australian and New Zealand Army Corps and was how the soldiers were grouped for the landing at Gallipoli in April 1915. Since then the word has grown to include so much more than this first group of men. It is a day of remembrance as well as a summary of the Australian fighting spirit and freedom. On ANZAC Day, I often stop to think about my great-grandmother. Her birthday was on the 25th of April and when she arrived in Australia as a little girl, she was delighted to find out they had special public holiday called ANZAC Day. Whilst no-one in my family has ever had to fight in a war, there are certainly members of my family who have been affected by war.

My great-grandmother and her family fled to Australia from the Netherlands after WWII. They travelled by boat to Australia and arrived in Sydney. Last year on ANZAC Day my family and I went to Sydney and found their names on the Welcome Wall at the Australian Maritime Museum. The Welcome Wall is a wall that has the names of people who travelled by boat to Australia looking for a better and more peaceful life. I am very thankful for all of the sacrifices made by the Australian Defence Force, past and present, that make Australia a safe and peaceful place to live in.

Our safe and happy lives in Australia are thanks to many selfless men and women, from the first ANZACs at Gallipoli in 1915 to today's dedicated service personnel, who over many, many years have fought to restore peace around the world. The word ANZAC sums up the spirit of the many different people who have served and represented Australia in multiple ways and still do today. Not only were they soldiers, airmen and sailors, but also doctors, nurses, chefs and pilots. The Australian Defence Force from the past and now, have fought in many wars and helped keep the peace throughout the world. I am very grateful for all the sacrifices and acts they have done to protect us and try to make peace. On ANZAC Day during the one minute of silence, I stop and think about all those who made the greatest sacrifice of all for us.

In conclusion, the word ANZAC means more than just the 25th of April each year. ANZAC Day focuses us as we remember those who have fought and died as well as highlighting the need for peace throughout the world. We also remember the many innocent people who were harmed, killed or had to flee their homes during conflict and of the families who lost people special to them. The word ANZAC makes us reflect on what has happened and why it should never happen again. It is a word of reflection and thanks for the many sacrifices people made for us. I am very lucky and grateful that I have not had to experience hiding while my city was bombed or feeling hungry like my great-grandmother did in WWII. Thank you to the ANZACs and for everything and word ANZAC means.

We Will Remember Them

***ANZAC & Peace Ceremony Essay Competition
Equal 3rd Prize Winner - 2022***

ANZAC

Isabelle Gloury - St. Benedict's Primary School

What ANZAC means to me... To me it means to thinking of those who have fought in wars like my great grandfathers who fought in World War Two. My Mum is a Nursing Officer in the Royal Australian Air Force.

Every ANZAC Day I think of my great grandfather's but in particular my Mum and how she helps others and contributes to keeping our country safe. In 2016 my Mum was deployed to the Middle East where she was in charge of the Australian Air Force medical unit that cared for the airmen and airwomen at the air base for almost seven months.

That ANZAC Day while Mum was deployed, something unexpected happened to me and my siblings at my school in Brisbane. We got called to the stage at assembly and were presented with a medal in recognition for perseverance on the home front during your parents' deployment. It was made extra special because it was presented to us by Mum's best friend, fellow nursing officer and our surrogate Aunty. It means a lot because when I wear it every ANZAC Day it reminds me of the sacrifice my Mum and our family made when she was deployed overseas. I am proud to wear the medal when I watch my Mum march in the ANZAC Day parades or services.

I love to make ANZAC biscuits with my Mum as it reminds me of the sacrifice the troops made in all world wars to ensure our freedom. I also enjoy making them with Mum as she tells me when Dad was deployed to the Middle East in 2004. She made them and sent them to him on the Navy ship.

As a defence kid, I have had the opportunity to do some special things. One of these was being a member of a Defence Kids Club at my old school where all the defence kids got together each week to do activities.

Another proud moment is being selected to lay the wreath at Remembrance and ANZAC Day ceremonies. I was also proud when Mum read out the ode in front of the whole school at an ANZAC Day ceremony.

ANZAC Day means a lot to other people but to me it's all about my Mum and family. That's what ANZAC Day means to me.

I, Isabelle Gloury am proud to be a Defence KID!

***ANZAC & Peace Ceremony Essay Competition
Equal 3rd Prize Winner - 2022***

WHAT ANZAC MEANS TO ME

Emmy Cook - Year 6 Scared Heart Primary School, Pearce ACT

Family - Remembrance - Protection - Sacrifice

I often think about it I would ever go to war, and if I am being completely honest, I would probably be too scared. But that will no stop me from remembering the soldiers who did.

In my family, on both of my parent's sides, ANZAC Day is really important because of our long history of service men and women. My Grampa and Granny were in the RAAF and served in Vietnam, my uncle was in the Navy and went to Afghanistan, my Great uncles and Great Nanna were soldiers in WWII, and my Great Great Great Uncles and Great Great Great Grandfather fought in WWI. Every year on ANZAC Day, my Grampa and Uncle march proudly, and it makes me proud too. They march for those who can't be there, including my Granny.

In August 1914, when Britain declared war, being on the side of the Commonwealth, Australia had to send in troops. It was 1915 when the ANZAC soldiers formed part of the expedition that stormed what is now known as ANZAC cove. On the first day, about 16,000 ANZACs arrived on the shores of Gallipoli, and by the evening, around 2,000 had been injured, or killed. And by the 20th of January 1916 all allied troops had withdrawn from the peninsula.

It was a famously gruesome battle stretching up to eight months. During those eight long months, the ANZACs became known for their values which are Endurance, Courage, Good Humour and Mateship. That is now known as the ANZAC spirit and is used to describe all Australian soldiers from any war.

My Grandad is always proudly speaking about my Great Uncle Alf, his brother Neville and his Mum Pauline who were all soldiers. Sadly, Alf was shot and killed in Papua New Guinea and Neville was put in a prisoner of war camp in Singapore at the age of 17. Pauline survived the war and ended up marrying one of Alf's best mates.

I spoke to my Grampa and Uncle recently, and I was told about my Great Great Great Uncle Jack who was shot and killed in no man's land in WWI and died in his brother Jim's arms. Jim buried his body, but after the war was over, he couldn't find it. Then, in early 2000s Jack's body was found by people that were building a new road and he was finally laid to rest in a graveyard in Belgium with the words "At rest after being lost for 90 years".

In response to the question, to me, ANZAC does not mean war, it means hope, family and bravery.

Lest I Forget

"Therefore, may our reunions and get togethers rekindle that bond of those bygone years and also remind us just how grateful we should be that we are all still here".

(From a letter written to Alf Daniel's parents after his death by Ken Kell NX8186)

Victoria Barracks, Brisbane, 1980-84 Recollections by Peter Phillips (Part 1)

Background: After commanding 3 Battalion, RAR, in 1973-74, I spent five years on the staff at Army Headquarters, Canberra. My more notable activity was as a member of the Army's Regular Officer Development Committee, set up to do a thorough overhaul of policy for the training and education of Army officers. Its report made some 200 recommendations all of which were accepted (though not all implemented). It then fell to me as a Colonel, Director of Personnel Plans, to implement them. It was very satisfying work.

I had been warned to expect a posting to London in 1980 to take over as Australian Army Attaché from Colonel Eric Philip. It was an exciting prospect but, alas, was not to be. At the end of 1979, I was promoted to Brigadier and sent instead to Victoria Barracks, Brisbane, to take over the appointment of Commander 1st Military District. As I had previously served in Qld (1964-65 at Enoggera, 1969-70 at Canungra; and 1970-71 at Rockhampton), I felt confident taking over responsibility for 'district support' of the Army in Qld. The position that I had to fill had not long before been upgraded to the rank of Brigadier and given added responsibilities for logistic support to Field Force elements in Qld. I had a wide ranging brief to manage base support services, liaison with the other Commonwealth Departments, the Qld government and its agencies, public relation, and being the Army's 'landlord'.

My Introduction to Victoria Barracks. I had first visited the Barracks in 1964 but knew little about the place. I recall my first formal visit there was in mid 1969. I was summoned from Canungra to call on the General Officer Commanding Northern Command, Major General (later General Sir) Arthur Leslie MacDonald in his office (the same office that I was later to use as Commander 1st Military District!). The General went on to be the Chief of the Defence Force but, in the 1970s was well known as a martinet of acerbic disposition. The Army knew him simply by his initials, "AL". I had known him in Vietnam in 1968 and knew what to expect. I had learnt that the General never asked a question to which he did not know the answer. He congratulated me on my promotion to Lieutenant Colonel and his instruction to me on my new role as Commander Central Queensland Area, based in Rockhampton, was brief and to the point.

I was to have administrative command of the Army Reserve Field Force units and Cadet Forces in the area from Gladstone to Mackay and west to the border. That also took in responsibility for management of the Shoalwater Bay Military Training Area, a million acre land holding that the Army acquired in 1966, and I was to provide support to units training there. I was also aware that Army Headquarters was planning to move some of its Army schools to Rockhampton and I was to be the advance guard for this project. The GOC left me in no doubt, however, that he did not support that project which was a favourite of his predecessor, General Sir Francis Hassett.

"AL" had been born on a property near Rockhampton and knew the area intimately. Moreover, his brother-in-law was the general manager of Central Queensland Meat Exporters in Rockhampton, part of the big British meat firm, Vesteys. It owned the land near Mt Archer that was being considered for the Army schools and the General knew that Vesteys was not likely to give it up without a fight in the courts. "AL" finished by saying, "Get up to Rockhampton smartly. I will be there on Wednesday. The new Secretary of the Defence Department, Sir Arthur Tange, will join us. You are to organise for us to overfly Shoalwater Bay and have lunch at the Raspberry Vale airstrip".

>>>

He continued, “We’ll start at the RLG (Rockhampton Logistic Group), an Army stores depot near the airport). The last time I was there it looked like a blacks’ camp on the outskirts of Narrabri; get it cleaned up!” A hectic 48 hours followed but the visit went off better than I expected. In 1995, I attended “AL’s” funeral in Brisbane where Sir James Killen gave a eulogy. Who of us could forget his words on that occasion? “Sir Arthur”, he said, “was a leader who was congenitally incapable of ambiguity!”

On the wall outside his office was a roll of all the previous commandants at Victoria Barracks dating back to pre-Federation. It was daunting. It included, for example, the dashing Colonel Tom Price, a former commander of the Victorian Mounted Rifles in the Boer War who is said to have originated the slouch hat. He is infamously remembered for ordering his troops to fire on strikers in Melbourne’s great Maritime Strike in the 1890s with the words “fire low and lay the bastards out”. He had a great aversion to the first Commander-in-Chief of the Australian Army, General Sir Edward Hutton, who banished him to Brisbane at the first opportunity. Within two years, however, Price took early retirement at 62 years of age and returned to Melbourne.

Heritage Buildings. Victoria Barracks in Brisbane had some charm and a military heritage that I knew was worth preserving, though it was nowhere near as imposing as the Victoria Barracks in Sydney and Melbourne. I took over the post there from an RMC Classmate, Brigadier Alec Smith, who gave me a good run-down on the Barracks and its flaws. As he said, what might have served well for the platoon sent to defend a colonial outpost in the 1860s, did not lend itself to housing a complex military headquarters. The only purpose-built facility was the Communication Centre. The Headquarters block was based on the old Commandant’s married quarters dating back to Federation with alterations and additions made during World Wars I and II.

This post-Vietnam era was a time of great economic stringency as the Army’s commitments had been wound back and money was in short supply. The Chief Engineer and I were at our wits’ ends to provide adequate funds for repairs, maintenance and minor capital works for the Army’s 1st Division based at Enoggera which was our principal customer. Work on our own buildings at Victoria Barracks was a very low priority indeed.

We had a number of heritage listed buildings within the Barracks. The HQ for our Ordnance services was situated in what had been the Brisbane women’s refuge and later asylum. It served our purposes but the offices were not comfortable. Others were in what had been built originally as stables. Other heritage listed buildings in the state became my responsibility. Most notable were the Military Police barracks and WWII Interrogation Centre at Indooroopilly and, nearby, the GOC’s residence, “Tighnabruich”. At Yeronga, the Military Hospital was built around the Victorian-era Italianate property of “Rhyndarra”. At Enoggera, “All Saints Chapel” had originally been the School of Musketry.

Preserving Our Military Heritage. In my first few months at HQ 1MD, I visited most Army establishments and inspected unit museums of historical collections. 9 Battalion, The Royal Qld Regiment, had a large collection dating from WWI. It was held in an old storeroom at Kelvin Grove, which was a potential fire trap. The Queensland Mounted Infantry had a small but well presented display at Wacol but not open to the public. Other units had minor collections of militaria and, in North Queensland, there was a small display mouldering in a coastal artillery gun emplacement. The Navy in contrast had a small but well presented display at HMAS Moreton and Commander Norman Pixley RAN (Rtd) was an energetic naval historian and curator. >>>

I was concerned that the Army in Queensland had nowhere to effectively display its heritage to its citizens and little had been recorded of Queensland's military history, especially of the colonial and inter-War periods or of the National Service schemes.

I noticed that many RSL clubs had small collections of militaria on display. I was impressed by a collection in the Brighton RSL which was under the watchful eye of Brigadier Tom Parslow, a retired Army Reserve brigadier and former Solicitor General for Queensland. I wanted somewhere that Army and others could use to better display these treasures to the public, either in permanent or occasional exhibitions. Noting that some of the heritage buildings at Victoria Barracks would be coming available with the move of the Signals Regiment to Enoggera, I examined the possibilities for forming a Queensland Military Historical Society and Museum. I had Lieutenant Colonel Brian Avery call a public meeting for this purpose and so a committee was formed under Brigadier Tom Parslow as Chairman. I had returned to Canberra in early 1984 so did not see the Museum officially opened.

As to location, I had in mind that the Museum might best be placed close to the city where it would be accessible to the public or near the main entrance where there was some limited car parking. One possibility was the "USI Hall", near Roma Street. It was a former gunnery training facility which provided the Barracks with a useful lecture theatre. As it was mainly used by the United Services Institute, it had become known as the "USI Hall". The soldiers' barracks near the main entrance looked to be another good possibility for the long term. In the wash, however, we decided to make use of the old magazine building as a short term solution. The "Victoria Barracks Museum and Historical Society" was opened in 2004 and it continues to this day, though, as a result of a falling out with the Army History Unit, its historical collection is now based in Fortitude Valley and has only recently been renamed the "Victoria Barracks Historical Society, Brisbane Inc." It owes much to the long serving curator, Mr Leo Walsh, and other committee members. Meanwhile, the Army through the Army History Unit has established a modest historical display within the Barracks. An enthusiastic band of volunteers is manning this facility and providing conducted tours. I would hope that the schism could be resolved satisfactorily.

The Staff at Headquarters 1st Military District (HQ 1MD). I could not have asked for better staff during my time at the Barracks. The principal staff officers and commanders of the logistic services were all experienced professionals who did their jobs efficiently. There were few staffing problems or inter-personal issues and, as far as I could judge, the staff worked happily. Postings to Brisbane were highly sought after which helped attract good staff. We managed base ordnance depots in Meeandah, Gaythorne, Wallangarra and Rockhampton, and base workshops at Bulimba and Oakey. These were lead by very capable colonels as were the medical services, which included a military hospital at Yeronga. Our communications were provided by a Signals Regiment which was in the process of being moved to new facilities at Enoggera. Principal staff officers were provided in the rank of lieutenant colonel for Operations, Personnel and Public Relations. As well, there were staff officers for Legal, Intelligence and Military Police matters, and a superintendent of rifle rangers. The Chief Engineer was an RMC Classmate of mine, Colonel Mal Byth. At Enoggera, we had a transport company which was able to haul freight to and from north Qld as well as provided domestic transport and at Kangaroo Point (later moved to Bulimba), we had an Army Reserve water transport squadron. A survey squadron was housed at Enoggera but was then engaged in one of the Army's last field surveys, mapping in the Gulf country.

>>>

We were well served by the Army Reserve which provided a range of specialist consultants from the medical and legal profession and others. Our chaplains also did well and gave us ready access to the heads of churches. This leavening from the professions was good for our staff and added to the camaraderie of our Officers' Mess.

We still had, in the early 1980s, a typing pool which served us well, though it was becoming obvious that the ladies preferred to be placed with departments rather than be pooled. The computer had not yet made the typist redundant but that was soon to follow. I was fortunate to have an outstanding and long serving secretary, Ms Maureen Broad, who made my work very easy. I also had a junior officer as liaison officer or aide-de-camp and it became necessary to replace him. The Military Secretary in Canberra said that he had no male officer to fill the role but was prepared to let me have a female officer. He noted that no one else would take a female ADC but I had no qualms and was fortunate in having three female officers serve with me in succession and perform admirably, none more so than the vivacious Lieutenant Veronica Connaughton. Nowadays, of course, such appointments are made without regard to sex. To round out my personal staff there was a driver and the District Sergeant Major, a fine infantry warrant officer, who nipped many problems in the bud and ran an exemplary Sergeants' Mess.

The Governor General. Soon after arrival in Brisbane I was appointed as Honorary Aide-de-Camp to the Governor General. It was an honour but involved some extraneous duties representing His Excellency, as required, in the State of Queensland. I found myself at the Brisbane Airport regularly to meet visiting heads of state. That usually entailed shepherding them onto another flight, if they were in transit or to Government House if they were stopping over in Brisbane. One such was the Crown Prince of Thailand, now His Majesty Maha Vajiralongkorn Bodindradebayavarangkun. As I waited for him, I chatted with a large crowd of Thais, mainly university students who had gathered to welcome their Crown Prince. I suggested that he stop and speak to them and was disappointed when his entourage drove off at high speed, leaving the Thais prostrate on the ground. No doubt this was a security requirement but I was disappointed for the young Thais.

On another occasion, we were kept very late at the airport waiting for the Governor General of the Solomon Islands, Sir Baddely Devisi, to arrive on an Air Pacific flight. It was worth the wait if only to meet his charming and attractive French Polynesian wife and his (police) ADC. I offered to relieve the ADC of the large brown paper parcel that he was carrying but he declined my offer. I was later to find that the parcel contained a carved wooden model of a native canoe, which the party was taking to London as a gift from the Solomon Islands for the wedding of Prince Charles and Lady Diana Spencer. I doubt that it would have otherwise passed Australia's stringent quarantine inspections!

I represented the Governor General at the State Funeral of Mr Frank Forde, an ALP man, noted for having had a mere week's tenure as Prime Minister of Australia in July 1945. As representative of the Governor General, I was ushered to the foremost seat in the cathedral and chuckled as some politicians argued about who had precedence sitting in the pews! In later years, I was to come to know his daughter-in-law, Mrs Leneen Forde, who was a popular Governor of Queensland. We served together on a government committee in later years.

Part One of 'Recollections by Peter Phillips'. Due to the length of this document, and not wishing to edit it, Part Two will be published in the next edition, Christmas 2022.

Man Overboard

Les Cook

With very few exceptions, the troop-ships I was on during the war were freighters, and most of them were old. On the British ships we lived in the cargo-holds that had been modified to give a minimum standard of comfort to accommodate people. Mess tables and seats had been bolted to the floor, iron hooks welded to the ceilings to take the hammocks in which we slept above the tables. The hammocks were taken down at Reveille each morning, rolled and stored in shelving along one wall.

Much of the time I spent on troop-ships was in the tropics. The cargo-holds were very hot, and it was a common practice to remove the hatch-covers and rig a canvas awning over the open hatch to allow some relief from the stifling heat. Even when this was done the holds were still uncomfortably hot. It was one of the few places I have been in my life where one could drink a mug of hot tea and see the sweat running out of the pores of your skin as each mouthful was swallowed.

It wasn't long before we realized that it was more comfortable to sleep on deck, a practice that was permitted on British ships, but not on American ships where all troops were herded below decks after dark and the watertight doors secured from the outside. We had each been issued with one blanket and that didn't provide much in the way of padding for lying on the steel deck-plates, but once one had acquired the knack of avoiding lying on hips it was comfortable enough. We used our kapok-filled life-jackets as pillows, although this was expressly forbidden.

Those who were unable to make themselves comfortable sleeping on the deck resorted to all sorts of subterfuges to avoid spending the nights in the steamy holds. Some even climbed up and slept on the canvas awning that was above head-height at its lowest point not far from the ship's rails. These awnings were rigged like tent-flies, being higher in the centre than at the sides so that rain would run off.

We were in the middle of the Indian Ocean when the morning roll-call disclosed that one man was missing. It was known that he was one of those who habitually slept on the awning, and, in the absence of anything to the contrary, it was assumed that he must have fallen overboard during the night. A rain storm had blown up through the night and most of the people on the deck had gone below, preferring to sleep in the sweltering heat than to get wet. It was assumed that the missing man had not been awoken by the storm, and that the wind had got under the awning and rolled him and his gear over the side.

The Indian Ocean is very large, and we knew that we were a long way from land in any direction. Even if he didn't awake before going over the side he would certainly have awoken when he hit the water. If he was not drawn back into the ship's propellers and killed he would have seen the ship disappearing into the night. If he was able to think rationally he would have realized that nobody on the ship knew that he had fallen. In any case, we had been told many times that, because of the danger of being stationary in dangerous waters, the convoy would not stop to pick up anyone who fell overboard. There was no hope of rescue by those on the ship, and no hope of reaching land. Unlike the Pacific that is dotted with islands, the Indian Ocean is mostly a vast empty space.

>>>

I have often wondered what a person would do in the circumstances. Would one call hoping to be heard?. Would one try to swim after the ship hoping that one's fall had been noticed and they the ship would stop and lower a boat?. Would one try to stay afloat as long as possible hoping against hope either that the ship would turn back next day or that another ship would chance to pass that way?. Or would one philosophically accept the utter hopelessness of the situation, stop fighting, and just allow ones self to drown?. The end result would be the same whichever option one took. I'm glad that I have not been called on to make such a decision.

60 Year Anniversary since joining the WRANS
Margaret Manley

The 18th May 2022 was the 60th Anniversary since I joined the Womens Royal Australian Naval Service (WRANS). At that time I lived in the Central West of NSW at a place called Wallerawang which is at the railway junction line for Mudgee and Bathurst.

I was 17 years-old when my father drove me down to Rushcutters Bay in Sydney to join the Navy as a Radar Plotter. I didn't make it at the first attempt as I failed the trigonometry test. After more studies at home I passed on the second attempt.

I met my lifelong friend Jan Fenwick on the Southern Aurora on our way to Melbourne. I was fascinated that we could put our shoes outside the door on the train and they would be cleaned while you slept. Jan and I still keep in touch and when we meet up it as though the years just fall away. Jan joined up from Bribie Island in Queensland.

Upon arrival in Melbourne we caught another train which took us to Crib Point where a bus picked us up and we were taken for our recruit training at HMAS Cerberus. After six months training we were sent to postings at various parts of Australia.

I went to live at HMAS Penguin overlooking the beautiful Balmoral Beach in Sydney.

Accommodation was in very old looking cabins and we were expected to keep them scrupulously clean with the duty Petty Officer's weekly inspections checking surfaces while wearing white gloves.

Each day we would meet at the base jetty for inspection before boarding a patrol boat for our short trip to HMAS Watson at Watsons Bay. At 4PM each day we caught the boat back to our quarters at Balmoral.



ANZAC DAY - Eddison Park Ceremony Monday 25 April 2022

The Sub-Branch early ANZAC Day Ceremony at Eddison Park attracted a good attendance on a cool but sunny morning. MC Matt Griggs delivered the Welcome to Country and Acknowledgements address prior to President Jim Gilchrist delivering the ANZAC Requiem and the ANZAC Day Prayer by Chaplain Mick O'Donnell. The Catafalque party was provided by the Australian Army Cadets and our piper Jen Hamer is from Canberra Pipes and Drums. National Anthems of New Zealand and Australia were sung by vocalist Drew Ashley to music provided by the Tuggeranong Salvation Army Band. Weston Scout Group provided the flag marshals.

*Those heroes that shed their blood and lost their lives...
You are now lying in the soil of a friendly country.
Therefore rest in peace. There is no difference between the
Johnnies and the Mehments to us where they lie side by side
here in this country of ours ... You, the mothers who sent their
sons from faraway countries, wipe away your tears,
your sons are now lying in our bosom and are in peace.
After having lost their lives on this land they have become
our sons as well.*

Mustafa Kemal Ataturk - 1934.

Their bodies are buried in peace; but their names liveth for evermore.





President Jim Gilchrist provided the closing remarks at the end of the service and introduced Ms Vicki Munday representing the Descendants of the Rats of Tobruk Association (DOTROTA) who gave the following speech:

Good Morning. My name is Vicki Munday and I am representing the descendants of the Rats of Tobruk Association, one of the local members of this world-wide on-line group.

The Association was started some years back at the request of our living Rat Veterans, who wanted to create an association to ensure the heritage and honour of the Rats of Tobruk lived on. Over the last few years, we have remembered some significant military anniversaries, with a few more coming over the next 12 months. Ours was one of those significant anniversaries that got caught up in COVID.

Planning started 3 years ago for what was to be the 80th Anniversary of the Siege of Tobruk World Reunion, to be held in April 2021 in Brisbane. In preparation, a rose had been developed in conjunction with Treloar Roses in Victoria - aptly named the "No Surrender" rose in recognition of our Rats of Tobruk. Created in the shades of deep blood red and the golden hue of the desert sands, there was to be a planting in each state twelve months before, so that they would be blooming around the country for our Anniversary, with a recognition plaque dedicated close by.

Due to COVID, and in several unplanned lockdowns, it didn't quite go to plan, but these roses were finally planted in amongst others in this bed around the Memorial here on July 3, 2021, by the last surviving Navy Rat, Derek Holyoake, and fellow WWII Veteran Les Cook, in conjunction with the Woden Valley RSL Sub-Branch. Thanks Jim, to you and for your committee's assistance.

With several lockdowns around the nation and a number of date changes for our Anniversary activities, we finally saw the 80th Anniversary of the Siege of Tobruk World Reunion take place on the last weekend of the Anniversary year, just two weeks ago.

Finally, today, ANZAC Day 2022, we can say our dedication in Canberra is now complete, with our plaque permanently on the memorial, close by, our 'No Surrender' Roses.

Of the 14,000 who served at Tobruk, it is believed there are only 12 RATS still living today. As veteran numbers decline it is up to us, as descendants and friends, to do what we can to ensure future generations don't forget about those 'Mighty Rats'.

On behalf of our President, Committee and Members, I would sincerely like to thank Treloar Roses, Avalon Memorials and in particular the Woden Valley RSL Sub-Branch for their support in recognising our Rats of Tobruk. As we watch our roses bloom from year to year, it is one way of showing - "We will remember them".

In closing, we would now like to share with you one of the many poems written by the inaugural Patron of the Descendants of the Rats of Tobruk Association, Gordon Wallace of the original 2/15th.

Gordon was a talented writer, who wrote from the heart, painting pictures of what he saw through his mind's eye, his feelings, and his experiences of war.

Red Poppies by Gordon Wallace



Is it because of the blood that's shed,
That battlefield poppies are so red?
I picked, and held one in my hand,
That grew in that infertile sand,
And pressed it in my pocket-book.
Over fifty years since I took,
That poppy from the desert near Tobruk,
Yet the leaves are green and the petals red,
To remind me of our honoured dead,
Who gave their lives in that far land,
And bled upon the desert sand.
Not only in Flanders do they grow,
Between the crosses, but , as well,
On every field where soldiers fell.

Read by Frank "Choco" Munday



The attached Plaque reads:

80th Anniversary of the Siege of Tobruk 10th April 2021

The 'NO SURRENDER' Rose is Dedicated to the 14,000 Servicemen who served in the Siege of Tobruk 10th April to 7th December 1941.

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM

Rose donated by Treloar Roses and Descendants of the Rats of Tobruk Australia Association Inc.

Woden Valley Rams Rugby League

At the Woden Valley Rugby League game on Saturday 23 April, President Jim conducted the ANZAC service, which included recital of the Ode and Last Post ceremony. The Rams played the Tuggeranong Bushrangers in Round 3 of the local league competition. The bugler was Ben from the RMC band. Jim also conducted the coin toss to start the game. This event will be a standing item on future Rams Rugby League games and the Woden Valley RSL Sub-Branch.



Photos and story from Peter Eveille



Canberra Southern Cross Club



WODEN

92-96 Corinna St
Phillip ACT 2606
6283 7200



TUGGERANONG

Cnr Howell & Pitman Sts
Tuggeranong ACT 2900
6293 7200



YAMBA SPORTS CLUB

Irving St
Phillip ACT 2606
6283 7300



YACHT CLUB & CRUISES

Mariner Place
Yarralumla ACT 2600
6273 1784

www.csc.com.au

For the information of members and guests

Only Mountains Do Not Meet

Rania Kalimeris

On 25th May I set out for an adventure to the centre of Australia to do part of the Larapinta trail with 16 other walkers. Imagine my surprise when I ran into Joy Easter, one of our Woden Valley RSL Sub-Branch members. What an inspirational lady. We had so much fun together and so many laughs. The Larapinta Trail is one of Australia's greatest walks, the brainchild of Alan Ginns with

the first section opening in 1990. The current trail which is 223km was completed in 2002.

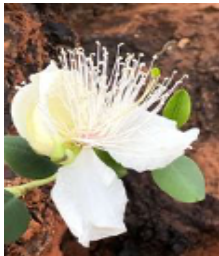


My six-day adventure in the heart of our great country truly filled my soul. We were surrounded by breathtaking landscapes that, after a very long nine years of drought, was now exploding with life in the form of leafy vegetation. The birds that flittered from tree branches to bushes gave great joy to our birdwatchers who, in turn, enlightened the group identifying countless species from Wedge-Tailed Eagles to tiny Rufous-crowned Emu-Wren and Zebra Finches. Spectacular and totally unexpected.

There were flowers and an abundance of green in the red dusty desert. Adorable rock wallabies totally camouflaged were spotted.

We trekked through the magnificent West MacDonnell Ranges beginning at Telegraph Station. The Ormiston Pound and Serpentine Gorge were impressive as was the rock formations of Standley Chasm and Simpsons Gap. The Ochre Pits showed off the many colours of our native land. The huge comet crater of Gosse Bluff was simply amazing. We walked four hours to the top of Mt Sonder (1,380m) to enjoy a spectacular sunrise. Moments like pressing my ear to a Red Gum and hearing the gulping sound in the tree, apparently the tree sucking up the water from below ground, were magical. Tasting wasp maggots offered to us from 'Dad Dave', an aboriginal guide was a crazy indulgence in bush tucker. This guide totally changed my connection to aboriginal people and my understanding of their culture.

The bush tucker we sampled was interesting and highlighted the potential of our country to enter the gourmet world food market, from bush tomatoes, lemon myrtle to an abundance of Australian bush delights. An untapped market. Our daily hikes were not always easy but worth every step taken. On alternate days we would swim in the refreshing waters that served to rejuvenate our weary muscles ready for another climb next day. A swim in the Finke River, the oldest river in the world apparently, felt like a swim in the fountain of youth. It stimulated every cell in your body and put a smile on your face, that's for sure.



Sleeping under a blanket of stars and feeling so insignificant in this expansive universe gave one such peace and tranquility. The silence and energy of the earth filled your body. It was truly unforgettable. We laughed, and sang, we cried, and we walked, boy did we walk, in the land where you were free to just exist and inspired by our fellow trekkers and blessed by the gifts our native land so generously extended to us. Our guides from World Expeditions, Mike, Kevin, Taylor, Belle and Emily were all amazing and took the trip to another level with their knowledge and motivation, not to mention their cooking skills. >>>

Being an organised tour, food was prepared for us. Absolutely 5-star, three course meals from slow cooked lamb shanks to Barramundi wrapped in foil and cooked in the ashes of our campfire. The delicious moist chocolate cake, also cooked in the ashes, was the best I've ever tasted, with strawberries and cream of course. Life is short and we do need to grab every opportunity to live and experience new things, new people, and new places to challenge ourselves, surprise ourselves. This 'land of sweeping plains' calls out to us. And while walking the 223km may not be for everyone, a taste of the natural beauty that our great country has to offer can be enjoyed by flying to Alice Springs and driving to the main attractions. You'll feel the spirit of the earth talk to you, move you. Our members have adventure running in their veins and experiencing the heart of our great country should be on everyone's bucket list.



Resignation of Office Manager

A morning tea in the Corey Room on Thursday 28 April 2022 was held to celebrate the six years that Joyce O'Brien has been with us as the Sub-Branch Office Manager. President Jim Gilchrist thanked Joyce for her valuable assistance and support during this time and wished her well in her new role where she moves to the High Court.



A Dog Named Judy *Dicken Medal Winner - The VC for animals*

Judy was a pure-bred liver and white pointer, born in Shanghai in 1936. She became mascot to several ships in the Pacific, was captured by the Japanese in 1942 and taken to a prison camp.

There she met Aircraftsman Frank Williams, who shared his small portion of rice with her. She raised the morale in the POW camp, barked when poisonous snakes or scorpions approached the prisoners and would intervene by distracting guards when they were administering punishment. She was the only animal officially registered as a POW after Williams convinced the camp Commandant, who was drunk on sake, to sign the papers with the promise of a future puppy.

This protected Judy from the guards who would threaten to shoot them when she barked or growled at them. When the POWs were shipped back to Singapore, she was smuggled out in a rice sack, never whimpering or betraying her presence to the guards. The ship was torpedoed and Williams pushed Judy out of a porthole in an attempt to save her life - a drop of 15 feet to the sea. He made his own escape from the ship but was recaptured and sent to a new POW camp. He didn't know if Judy had survived but heard stories of a dog helping drowning men reach pieces of debris after the shipwreck. Judy was found in the water by other survivors and again hidden from the Japanese and allowed to travel to a new camp.

The POWs were moved back to Sumatra by paddle steamer and spent a year cutting through the jungle to lay railway tracks. Judy used her skills to assist in trading with the locals, indicating when someone was hiding near the track and barking to alert guards when there were dangers such as tigers or elephants.

She was a changed animal though - not tame and obedient but a skinny animal who kept herself alive through cunning and instinct. Williams found she became more aggressive towards the Japanese and Korean guards. On one occasion the guards gave chase and shot her and Williams bandaged her grazed shoulder with palm fronds. After moving camps again, Judy was sentenced to death as part of a plan to control a lice breakout but she disappeared for three days and only reappeared when the Japanese forces abandoned the camp.

Once hostilities ceased Judy was smuggled aboard a troopship heading for Liverpool. In England she was awarded the Dicken Medal in May 1946 and her citation read:

“For magnificent courage and endurance in Japanese prison camps, which helped to maintain morale among her fellow prisoners and also for saving many lives through her intelligence and watchfulness”.

Williams and Judy spent a year after the war visiting the relatives of English POWs who had not survived and was a comforting presence to the families. Judy died in 1950 and was buried in her RAF jacket, with her campaign medals, the Pacific Star, the 1939-1945 Star, and the Defence Medal. What a dog!

*An article in the Defence Widows Group
Autumn 2022 Newsletter*

The Historic Village of Taralga

Bob Cremer

Taralga, a small village on the traditional land of the Gundungurra people in the Southern Tablelands of NSW, is located about 45km north of Goulburn on the road to Bathurst. A day with arrangements to visit Taralga, a conducted tour of their Historic Village and lunch at the local hotel was an excellent choice for a very successful day out.

The tour started in the Taralga Methodist Church (1868), now the town museum and gift shop, is surrounded by buildings of historic interest. A Nissen hut contains a very comprehensive display of photos, memorabilia and the history of the people from the village and those from the surrounding area who volunteered and went off to war. A dairy with original equipment of the time, a small one room school relocated from Wombeyan Caves and various other farming items of interest are all included in the display.



Wagga honours *Empire Air Training Role*

Karyn Maxwell Flight Lieutenant

History & Heritage - Air Force

A memorial honouring the Empire Air Training Scheme (EATS) is nearing completion at the entrance to RAAF Base Wagga, in recognition of the contribution to the RAAF by many local communities.

The new memorial is located within RAAF Base Wagga's Heritage Precinct honours the local towns and aviators who were part of the scheme between 1940 and 1945. The memorial at the base now forms another of the permanent legacies created during the Centenary of Air Force program (AF2021).



The EATS memorial highlights the significant role that regional towns played in support of the RAAF during WWII. RAAF Base Wagga AF2021 liaison officer Wing Commander Tony Wennerbom said the memorial was commissioned in recognition of the Centenary of Air Force and was designed in a way that fulfilled the expectation required from AF2021.

Air Force personnel who trained as part of the EATS in WWII are depicted in murals as part of the Air Force 2021 Centenary.

“Particularly, engaging with the community and veterans created ownership and pride amongst locals through highlighting the regional contribution the Riverina played in supporting the war effort, and finally inspiring a younger generation”, Wing Commander Wennerbom said. RAAF Base Wagga commissioned mural artist Sam Brooks and collaborated with the local RSL Sub-Branch and it's veterans to deliver the project.

“The role of EATS was a critically important project for RAAF Base Wagga to include in Air Force's Centenary year”, Wing Commander Wennerbom said. “It represents the biggest growth period in its 100-year history. It also represents the single largest combined undertaking of the Commonwealth air forces during World War II and remains to this day an incredible example of coordinated global wartime mobilisation”.

More than 200 training bases were constructed throughout the Empire for the scheme, including 37 in Australia and nine such bases across the Riverina region in NSW. The RAAF Base at Forest Hill aerodrome was developed in direct response to the infrastructure requirements of this mobilisation.

When the memorial project is completed, it will include storyboards and a memorial stone detailing the locations where EATS activities were undertaken around Australia. With the support of Air Force's History and Heritage Branch, the storyboards will specifically detail the locations across the Riverina where aircrew were trained with airmen and the Women's Auxiliary Australian Air Force employed in support of EATS.

>>>

The other aerodromes in the Riverina where training was located include Narrandera, Temora, Cootamundra, Uranquinty, Parkes, Narromine and Deniliquin. Tocumwal also played a significant role during this period, being the home to the RAAF's heavy bomber support and operational conversion units.

More than 27,000 aircrew were trained in Australia through EATS before being sent to Britain for employment with British RAF. A further 9600-plus personnel completed their training in Canada, along with nearly 600 who received training in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe).



Air Force personnel who trained as part of the EATS in WWII depicted on murals at RAAF Base Wagga.

Based on the initial feedback and social media interest (exceeding 80,000 views in the first week), the RAAF Base Wagga Heritage Precinct is expected to become a significant tourist attraction for those visitors who follow the Silo Trail.

“The significance of EATS is best summed up by then British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, where he is reported in July 1943 to have said: “The fact that Australia has been over here ... some of their very best airmen, and the share they have taken in the Empire Air Training Scheme, leaves us heavily in their debt”, Wing Commander Wennerbom said.

The official opening of the EATS memorial is planned for 1 July, 2022, marking the 82nd birthday of RAAF Base Wagga's formation.

To view more photos visit the [Defence image gallery \(http://images.defence.gov.au/S20220790\)](http://images.defence.gov.au/S20220790)

A bit of history

ANZAC Day 1958 and the march along the main street of Cudal NSW.



Notes for the Diary in 2022

OGM - Tue 30 Aug - TBA

OGM - Tue 27 Sep - TBA

OGM - Tue 25 Oct - TBA

OGM - Tue 29 Nov - TBA

Poppy Appeal - 7 - 11 Nov - Remembrance Day Appeal

Closing date for Christmas edition of *'The Serviceman'* - Fri 28 Oct



Welcome Home

Scenes such as this in 1919 were common in Sydney as families welcomed home the lucky ones who survived World War I. Proportionately, Australia's contribution exceeded that of any allied nation with 59,342 service personnel dying in action.

Photo from 'Sydney' - A celebration in pictures.

Grantley Perry & Sons

Funeral Directors

A LOCALLY OWNED FAMILY BUSINESS

With Bryan Perry a Vietnam Veteran available to serve you personally



CANBERRA-QUEANBEYAN
& YASS DISTRICTS

TUGGERANONG 6294 8003
MITCHELL 6241 4101

HEAD OFFICE
12 SANDFORD STREET
MITCHELL ACT 2911

PROUDLY SUPPORTING THE VETERAN COMMUNITY

SUB-BRANCH SERVICES

Sub-Branch Office Hours. The office is open from 9:00AM until 3:00PM Monday to Friday, except public holidays. The services of the Sub-Branch are available to all Sub-Branch members, and all serving and former members of the Australian Defence Force and overseas defence forces.

Office Manager. Alex Solecka administers the Sub-Branch office and is responsible to the Executive for the efficient day-to-day routine of the office. Alex will supervise all Sub-Branch matters including membership, correspondence, functions and access to Sub-Branch services.

Veterans' Support Centre (VSC). The office is open from 9:00AM until 3:00PM Monday to Friday, except public holidays, and at other times by appointment. The services of the VSC are available to all Sub-Branch members, all serving and former members of the Australian Defence Force and overseas defence forces.

Entitlement and Advocacy (E&A). A team of trained advocates and entitlements/pension officers, both male and female, is available to provide assistance with claims under the Veterans' Entitlement Act 1986 (VEA), the Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988 (SRCA), and the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004 (MRCA). We also provide support and advice to war widows and widowers in regards to pensions. Andrew Properjohn, the E&A Administrator will assist you with your enquiries.

Community Support. The provision of welfare to Sub-Branch members and their families can be arranged through Community Support. Advice is available on a case by case basis to access services through DVA, My Aged Care, Centrelink and the ACT Government. Contact the Sub-Branch office on 6285 1931 for details.

Hospital Visiting: We no longer visit the three Southside hospitals automatically but, working with the Veteran Liaison Officers (VLOs) in these hospitals, volunteers visit hospital patients on a case-by-case basis.

Hospice Visiting: Visits can be arranged for Sub-Branch members in Clare Holland House.

Christmas Visits: In December each year, all Sub-Branch members 80 years of age and over, and all Sub-Branch widows and widowers receive a home visit and a gift.

Health and Fitness Program. The arrangements in place between the Southern Cross Health Club and the Sub-Branch relating to gym use have changed. For details, call the office on 6285 1931.

Sub-Branch Publication. The Sub-Branch Publication, *'The Serviceman'* is published three times per year and distributed free to all Sub-Branch members, widows and widowers. A special edition is also published for schoolchildren attending the annual ANZAC and Peace Ceremony held at Eddison Park.

Eddison Day Club. Sponsored by the Sub-Branch, the Day Club caters for members, their spouses, widows, widowers and the general community. It meets every Friday from 10:00AM to 2:00PM (except Good Friday) from mid-January to mid-December at the Irish Club, Parkinson Street, Weston.

If you know of any member who would benefit from any of these services, but is reluctant to apply, please let our office know.