

RSL WODEN VALLEY SUB-BRANCH ENEWS



April 2020



ANZAC DAY

photo on the left:

An Australian soldier lays a wreath at the Cenotaph in London on Anzac Day (circa 1920)



Dear members,

We have received the following advice that the Australian War Memorial will broadcast the Anzac Day ceremony to the nation as a private, nationally televised commemorative service on 25 April 2020. The traditional Dawn Service, National Ceremony and veterans' march will not take place. More details below and attached:

This revised ceremony will be held in the Commemorative Area and Hall of Memory of the Memorial at 5.30 am on Anzac Day.

An assessment was made by the Memorial Executive and Council and the decision taken in conjunction with the RSL (ACT Branch).

The event will not be open to the public but will be broadcast live across Australia by the ABC and streamed online.

Acting Memorial Director Anne Bennie said the Memorial is committed to providing an opportunity for Australians to commemorate Anzac Day through the televised ceremony.

"Anzac Day is a symbolic day for Australians and New Zealanders, with the Australian War Memorial being the centre of Australia's national commemoration.

"In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is critical that Anzac Day commemorations adhere to government advice on gatherings of large groups. The Memorial Council has approved a revised commemorative ceremony format, to be held within the heart of the Memorial," Ms Bennie said.

President of the ACT Branch of the Returned and Services League, Mr John King, said we have an obligation to look after the safety of the veteran and wider communities.

"In these exceptional circumstances, the RSL feels the course of action decided by the Australian War Memorial is the most appropriate way to mark Anzac Day, with due consideration for public safety," Mr King said.

It's anticipated the event will be attended by dignitaries representing the Commonwealth of Australia, the people of New Zealand, and current and former serving veterans.

Full details are being finalised, the televised ceremony will be held in the Hall of Memory and will retain a number of traditional elements. The ceremony will provide an opportunity for Australians to safely pause in their homes, uniting in remembrance and celebration of the Australian spirit.

A revised format of the Last Post Ceremony will take place at the end of Anzac Day.

Regards,
Greg Kennett
Secretary
Woden Valley RSL Sub-Branch





Dear members,

In response to the COVID-19 situation, and a request from the Canberra Southern Cross Club asking that community groups reconsider their activities and meetings at the Club, the Sub-Branch Executive has made the following decisions:

- Eddison Day Club meetings will be suspended until further notice.
- The visits to Burrangiri on the third Thursday of each month will be suspended until further notice.
- The scheduled Ordinary General Meeting will be held in the Sub-Branch office, Holder at 1400 hours on Tuesday 31 March 2020. A separate email will be sent to you about that OGM.
- The ANZAC Eve dinner on 24 April 2020 is cancelled. The Board will consider conducting a re-dedication ceremony at an OGM dinner later in the year.
- The Sub-Branch ANZAC Day Service at 0830 hours in Eddison Park is cancelled.
- Hospital visits will be managed by the Veterans Support Centre on a case-by-case basis.
- The dedication of the 'Corey Room' scheduled for 15 May 2020 is the subject of further consideration.
- Sub-Branch staff will avoid visits to private homes.

All staff, members, volunteers and clients attending the Sub-Branch office and Veterans Support Centre are expected to follow the accepted protocols surrounding COVID-19 before presenting and remaining in the office.

In addition, we are still awaiting advice from ACT RSL Branch about this year's ANZAC Appeal.

While it is disappointing that some of our flagship activities and events have to be foregone or modified, I'm sure you will understand the reasons behind the decisions.

Regards,

Greg Kennett

Secretary

Woden Valley RSL Sub-Branch

Special COVID-19 edition

This is a special COVID-19 edition of *e-news*. DVA is committed to keeping the veteran community and the Australian public informed as this crisis evolves. Between editions of *e-news* and [Vetaffairs](#), you can check the [DVA website](#), including the [Latest News for Veterans](#) page. Please share this email with anyone you think might find it useful.

COVID-19 and the veteran community

DVA has a Pandemic Business Continuity Plan in place to ensure that critical support and services remain available to the veteran community throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. We are closely monitoring the Government's response and health advice and will adapt our planning accordingly.

DVA's number one priority is the health and wellbeing of Australia's veteran community.

Read more on the [DVA website](#).

Services at DVA VAN offices

For the safety of both staff and the veteran community there will be some changes to the provision of face-to-face services at DVA VAN offices.

Read more on the [DVA website](#).

Coping with COVID-19

Dr Stephanie Hodson CSC, National Manager of Open Arms – Veterans & Families Counselling looks at how to channel anxiety into positive actions.

Read more on the [DVA website](#).

DSH Insurance and COVID-19

During this extraordinary time with COVID-19, DSH Insurance has put in place mechanisms to help protect you and our wider community.

Read more on the [DVA website](#).

Economic Support Payments

On 12 March, the Australian Government announced a \$17.6 billion stimulus package. On 22 March, the Government released the second stage of its economic plan to cushion the economic impact of the coronavirus and help build a bridge to recovery.

Read more on the [DVA website](#).

Deeming rate reduction 1 May 2020

Clients who receive income support payments from DVA will soon benefit from changes to the way financial assets are assessed, thanks to changes to deeming rates.

Read more on the [DVA website](#).

Telehealth and medicine delivery

On 13 March 2020, the Australian Government announced temporary arrangements to allow some health and medical services such as those provided by general practitioners, medical specialists and mental health professionals, to be delivered by telephone or videoconferencing instead of face-to-face.

The Australian Government has also confirmed that vulnerable people, including eligible members of the veteran community, will soon be able to order their Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) and Repatriation Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (RPBS) prescriptions remotely, and have their medicines home-delivered to reduce their potential exposure to COVID-19.

Open Arms - Veterans & Families Counselling

Open Arms is open for business. If you are feeling unwell, or have concerns about the spread of COVID-19, call us on 1800 011 046 and we'll reschedule your appointment or discuss options for conducting your session via telephone or video conferencing.

Anzac Day 2020

On 18 March, the Australian Government made the difficult decision to [cancel Australian-led overseas Anzac Day services](#). Major domestic services have also been cancelled.

Australians are encouraged to mark Anzac Day in their own way.

We will provide more advice on the [DVA website](#) shortly.

Health Care Consumers' Association

Dear All,

HCCA wants to ensure that we all have the best information and advice about COVID 19 to stay well. The following is a list of websites, helplines and information from trustworthy sources.

COVID 19 TRUSTWORTHY SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Local ACT Advice

ACT Health

For all local advice on coronavirus in the ACT, go to the [ACT Health - public health alert COVID-19 website](#). You can also follow ACT Health [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

National Advice

HealthDirect

[healthdirect website coronavirus hub](#). This is evidence-based, updated information that includes a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section.

[healthdirect Symptom Checker](#) is an online tool that allows people to check their symptoms using a simple self-guided process. This is for both COVID 19 and other illnesses.

healthdirect helpline (Ph. 1800 022 222 – operates 24/7) is triaging people calling with symptoms. Call to talk directly to a nurse 24 hours a day, every day of the week about any health-related issue. There may be long delays due to the increased number of callers.

National Coronavirus Health Information Line

1800 020 080 – phone line providing non-clinical information about COVID-19. The line operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week. **If you require translating or interpreting services, call 131 450.**

Commonwealth Department of Health

For all national advice on coronavirus in Australia, go to the [Commonwealth Department of Health - Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) health alert website](#).

[Australian Health Sector Emergency Response Plan for Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)

[COVID-19 National Health Plan – Primary Care – Bulk Billed MBS Telehealth Services](#)

Resources to use and share

World Health Organisation (WHO) Hand Washing Advice – access [videos on thorough steps for hand washing](#) to use and [posters to display at sinks for hand washing](#).

COVID-19 [social media assets](#) from Health Direct Australia

infographics for where to get help, how to prevent infection, and mythbusting

videos explaining how to self-isolate – a 12-second version and an 18-second version

COTA ACT acknowledges the threat the coronavirus, COVID-19 poses to our community and across the world.

We are especially conscious that older people, and people with pre-existing medical conditions (such as asthma, diabetes, heart disease), are more vulnerable to becoming severely ill with the virus. We also recognise the risks of prolonged isolation.

We are monitoring developments and taking the advice of federal and state health officials. We will do all we can to act on that advice for the benefit of the older people we serve, the employees and volunteers who make up the COTA ACT team and the broader community.

As an employer and community citizen, COTA ACT is mindful of our responsibility to do all we can to contribute to efforts to stop the spread of the virus and to minimise risks to our employees, volunteers and community.

In weighing these facts, we advise that COTA ACT will –

- postpone all public events indefinitely
- encourage all employee interactions with older people to be by telephone, or online (excluding Seniors Card applications)
- implement ways of maintaining contact, providing information and continuing to support older people through phone calls
- shift meetings where practicable to electronic, telephone or video formats
- adopt all protocols with regard to social distancing and hygiene
- require that people (employees, volunteers or visitors) do not attend COTA ACT if they are unwell with cough, fever, other respiratory, cold or flu-like symptoms or if they have not isolated themselves for at least 14 days following overseas travel
- require any employee or volunteer diagnosed with COVID-19 by a health professional to remain quarantined for 14 days and return to work only once a medical certificate clears them for work
- require any employee or volunteer with suspected COVID-19 to immediately self-isolate and return to work only if there are no symptoms or earlier if the person has been confirmed as having tested negative for COVID-19
- suspend employees from commercial travel
- require all employees and volunteers to follow good hand and respiratory hygiene including –
- covering coughs and sneezes with an elbow or a tissue and disposing of tissues properly
- washing hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds or more or using alcohol-based hand sanitisers
- cleaning and disinfecting surfaces
- avoiding contact with others if sick
- require a distance of 1.5 metres to be kept between people and avoid physical contact.

We are sorry that we cannot continue being out and about with our community in the short term. We will continue to review our approach. In the interim we will do everything we can to keep in contact with older people and to keep open alternative channels of communication.

For more information please contact:

Jenny Mobbs, Chief Executive Officer on 6282 3777



Council on the Ageing (COTA) ACT postpone Seniors Week 2020

In response to the Australian Government's health advice regarding the Coronavirus (COVID - 19) all ACT Seniors Week events hosted by the Council on the Ageing (COTA) ACT, have been postponed. This includes the Chief Minister's Concert, ACT Seniors Week Expo and the Positive Ageing Awards. ACT Seniors Week was planned to run next week from Monday 23 to Sunday 29 March 2020.

A Public Health Emergency was enacted in the ACT by the Minister for Health, Rachel Stephen-Smith MLA. The public health emergency will be in effect across the ACT for a period of five days from Monday 16 March 2020.

COTA ACT CEO Jenny Mobbs welcomed the ACT Government's decision to enact a Public Health Emergency. "We were all ready to go with ACT Seniors Week 2020, but people's health is very important especially older Canberrans, given this unprecedented outbreak of Coronavirus."

"COTA ACT takes the health of older Canberrans very seriously. This Public Health Emergency that has been enacted gives us a chance to think about how we can support older Canberrans, especially as we move into the colder months when the Coronavirus may be at an even greater risk to older people."

COTA ACT has postponed ACT Seniors Week 2020 and hopes to host the Chief Minister's Concert, Seniors Week Expo and the Positive Ageing Awards in spring this year.

"With social distancing being encouraged, we are concerned that older Canberrans will be the ones who feel isolated and alone. We will try to make sure older Canberrans aren't left isolated and want them to know that we are at the end of the phone," said Ms Mobbs.

"COTA ACT staff will be available to answer calls between 9:00am – 5:00pm Monday to Friday. If you have any questions regarding your Seniors Card or any other services that we manage please call: 6282 3777 or visit our website: <https://www.cotaact.org.au/>."




For media enquires please contact Anna Judith on 6282 3777 or ajudith@cotaact.org.au



#MuseumAtHome

Our galleries and exhibitions are temporarily closed but we're still telling stories about our nation's servicemen and servicewomen and the Australian experience of war.

Research a family member, explore our interactive digital experiences, listen to podcasts, and watch videos about the amazing objects in our collection.

Follow the Australian War Memorial on [Facebook](#) , [Twitter](#)  and [Instagram](#)  for daily updates or to ask us your questions!



Podcasts

18 March 2020



Watch

19 March 2020



On Closer Inspection 360-degree experience

20 March 2020



Blogs

21 March 2020



Online Exhibitions

22 March 2020



The Diggers' Requiem

23 March 2020



Learning from Home

24 March 2020



Virtual Visit

25 March 2020



Our Continuing Story

27 March 2020

Australian War Memorial - New memorial for military working dogs



Sergeant Stuart Conlin, left, at the new memorial, *Circling into sleep*. Photo: Courtesy Defence



The Australian War Memorial has unveiled a new memorial dedicated to, and created by, military working dogs and their handlers.

Military working dogs have served alongside Australia's defence forces since the First World War, and continue to play a vital role in domestic and international operations today. The memorial titled *Circling into sleep*, unveiled on 24 February in the Memorial's Sculpture Garden, honours generations of dogs who have served, given their unconditional loyalty and, in many cases, their lives, to a common cause.

Acting Director of the Australian War Memorial Major General (Ret'd) Brian Dawson said the new memorial serves as a reminder of the invaluable contribution of military working dogs, as well as the special bond between dogs and their handlers.

"The Australian Defence Force has a long tradition of working with dogs, from the First World War through to operations in places such as Afghanistan, East Timor and Somalia," Major General (Ret'd) Dawson said.

"In 2017, the ADF commissioned the Canine Operations Service Medal, becoming the first military in the world to specifically recognise and honour the contributions of military working dogs."

The ashes of Aussie, Military Working Dog 426, were interred within the memorial on 4 December 2019. As a military working dog, Aussie served in Australian domestic and international operations including the Solomon Islands in 2004 and four deployments to Afghanistan with the Explosive Detection Dog Team. Described as a tireless worker, Aussie began to slow down after retirement and died in 2017, aged 16.

"Dogs including Aussie, whose ashes are interred here, have detected explosives, searched for and attacked the enemy, provided base security, and laid their lives on the line to save others. Unveiled on the National Day for War Animals in Australia, this memorial is a fitting tribute to their loyalty, bravery and sacrifice," Major General (Ret'd) Dawson said.

Circling into sleep was created by renowned artist Steven Holland, with help from an Explosive Detection Dog called Billie and her handler. Billie was trained to walk in a tight circle on a bed of soft clay to create the paw-print track which spirals into the memorial, representing the steps of a dog as it circles into sleep.

"This is the dogs' memorial. It is low to the ground and humble," Mr Holland said.

"The tear stone and the paw prints symbolise the remembrance of military dogs. Through their playfulness and curiosity, their intelligence and insight, their bravery and their faithfulness, they made a profound impact."

SOCIAL ART PROGRAM FOR VETERANS



We held the first Social Art Program Session for our veterans on 18th March. Transport was provided by Community@ Work. The 10 participants found the session very enjoyable and relaxing.

The program has been put on hold until further notice but we do hope to resume as soon as possible.





Burrangiri

***Social and recreation
support.***

***Next RSL Woden Valley
Sub-Branch***

SUSPENDED

UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

***Call Rania on
02 62851931***

- **Eddison Day Club meetings**
- **Carers Friendship Group**
- **Friday Coffee Catch up**

**SUSPENDED UNTIL
FURTHER NOTICE**

Did you know?

**E-News and The Serviceman
are also readily available to
read on our website
www.rslwoden.org.au**



Contact Us

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

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14/27 Mulley Street
HOLDER ACT 2611***

62851931

admin@rslwoden.org.au

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

Or drop in for a coffee
Fridays at 10.30am

Our office hours are
9am-3pm Mon-Fri