

# RSL WODEN VALLEY SUB-BRANCH ENEWS



November 2021



## Australian War Memorial

Thank you to all those who observed a minute's silence and joined us, online or in person, for the Remembrance Day National Ceremony.

The Commemorative Address, given by Australian War Memorial Director, Mr Matt Anderson PSM, can be found on our website:

<http://ow.ly/LPYV50GLPjV>

Photos of the National Ceremony and the Diplomatic Corps wreath laying are available on our Flickr page: <http://ow.ly/VopP50GLPjW>

[#RemembranceDay2021](#) [#WeRememberThem](#)



## President's Message

We have just received formal advice that our Sub-Branch has been allocated \$113,000 under the 2021/22 BEST Grant program. As the BEST Grant is based on the nature and level of support and services we provided to our members and others in the Veteran Community during 2020, I thank everyone who contributed to what is an outstanding effort that has been acknowledged through this grant. Well done all round and please keep up the good work as every little bit helps.

Recently I was appointed to a standing committee that is based on RSL National and includes senior representatives from each branch. With the ACT Branch President, John King, I have contributed to an ACT Branch submission that has been grouped with those from other branches into a consolidated submission on behalf of RSL Australia. The overall submission is or will soon be available on the National website, and will have links from our site also. Copies of both the League's submission and the ACT submission are available from our office either by email or in hard copy.

Lastly, I note that Rania Kalimeris will be leaving us at the end of the year to return to Greece to engage with some of her family. On her return to Australia, she plans to do some tertiary studies that will take her out of the workforce. While we will formally thank her for the work she has done with us for about four years when we gather at the Christmas party, I offer my thanks to her for dedication to our members and the gleeful persona she has presented when going about her daily business.

Thanks again to everyone who has contributed to all any of our work this year, especially as we faced the COVID restrictions, and I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at the party on 15 December.

Jim Gilchrist

## SUB-BRANCH ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING (OGM) SCHEDULED FOR TUESDAY 30 NOVEMBER 2021

Dear members,

The final Sub-Branch OGM for 2021 will be held on Tuesday 30 November 2021 at 1400 hours in the Sub-Branch office, Holder. We look forward to seeing you there.

Regards,

Greg



**Greg Kennett**  
Secretary  
Woden Valley Sub-Branch  
Australian Capital Territory  
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W: [www.rslwoden.org.au](http://www.rslwoden.org.au)

**RSL Woden Valley Sub-Branch**  
is pleased to invite members and their guests  
to the

# **ANNUAL CHRISTMAS LUNCH**

**Wednesday 15 December**  
**12:00noon for 12:30pm**  
**Orion Room Canberra Southern Cross Club Phillip**  
**\$40 per person**

**Menu (alternate service):**

**MAIN**

**Roast Turkey or**  
**Slow Roasted Black Angus Sirloin**

**DESSERT**

**Traditional Christmas pudding or**  
**White Chocolate Pannacotta (gf)**

*Charge includes soft drinks, selected wines and beers.*

*Spirits at own expense.*

*Please RSVP by 3pm 8 December 2021*

*Phone 62851931 or email [admin@rslwoden.org.au](mailto:admin@rslwoden.org.au)*

*Direct Credit (Don't forget to include your name in transfer)*

*A/C name: Woden Valley RSL Sub-Branch*

*BSB 062-908, Account 1084 1897 (include your name)*

*Credit Card; Phone 6285 1931*

*By cheque: mail to 14/27 Mulley Street Holder ACT 2614*

*Sorry, no refunds are possible after cob 8 December 2021.*

Dear community partners,

COTA ACT have a new Aged Care Navigation service available to assist older Canberrans in understanding the Aged Care system. We would appreciate your assistance in promoting this service across your networks.

With regards,

Neille Williams

*COTA ACT's new service for those navigating Aged Care pathways:*

*Our team of Aged Care Navigators can now provide one on one help to people who need assistance to better understand and use the aged care supports available to them. Appointments are offered by phone or in person at the COTA ACT offices in Hughes, as well as other locations across the ACT region.*

*Navigators will help you with a range of inquiries, including understanding what supports you can receive to help you remain safely in your own home, understand your options for residential aged care (if that is your preferred option), help you to register with My Aged Care, provide referrals and information about ACT services and help you find a local aged care provider.*

*Older people in the ACT and region who need additional assistance with aged care services and supports are all welcome to this free service, as are their friends and family members.*

*You can book a time with your Navigator by calling COTA ACT on 6282 3777 or emailing us at [info@cotaact.org.au](mailto:info@cotaact.org.au).*



# Public registration now open for Ceremonial Hearing and Hearing Block 1

Community members are invited to register their attendance for the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide's [Ceremonial Hearing](#) and [first Hearing Block](#) on EventBrite.

These hearings are open to the public and will also be webcast. More details on the webcast will be made available closer to the hearing dates.

[Register now](#)

The Ceremonial Hearing, to be held on Friday 26 November, will explain how the Commissioners will conduct the inquiry. The first block of public hearings where participants will give evidence begins in Brisbane on Monday 29 November 2021.

Due to COVID regulations and capacity limits, anyone proposing to attend the [Ceremonial Hearing](#) and/or [Hearing Block 1](#) must pre-register.

Please be aware that these hearings may contain material and images that are triggering for some people. The public nature of the hearings also means that there may be people in military uniforms and military service providers in attendance.

For further updates from the Royal Commission, follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

## **Please note the general conditions of entry at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre:**

- All visitors must check-in via the QR code.
- Do not attend the hearing if you have been in a current COVID hot spot and/or are unwell.
- The hearing room will have capacity limits in line with Government regulations.
- Adhere to social distancing regulations.
- Security screening of persons and bags attending the hearing will be undertaken.
- A number of items are prohibited in the venue, examples include: bags larger than A4, glassware/glass bottles/cans, weapons of any kind, large flags/posters/banners larger than A4 size, motorbike helmets, large umbrellas, bicycles, scooters, skateboards. The Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre reserves the right to add items to the prohibited list at any time. Visitors may have personal items confiscated by Security or be requested to check items into the cloak room.
- Food, hot drinks, photos or videos are not permitted to be taken in the hearing room.

The Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre has the right to refuse entry or remove any persons who do not comply with entry requirements. The Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre website has further details.

Please refer to the [Queensland Health website](#) for current COVID-19 updates.



## **A change to the treatment of military invalidity benefits following federal court decisions**

Please see information below from ComSuper regarding a change to the treatment of military invalidity benefits as a result of Federal Court decisions.

Grateful if you could please distribute this information to any interested parties. Please contact the dedicated team with any questions regarding this matter - [invaliditytaxation@csc.gov.au](mailto:invaliditytaxation@csc.gov.au) or by calling 1300 006 727.

## **An important update for veterans who receive an invalidity pension**

### **CSC WEBSITE UPDATED MONDAY 15 NOVEMBER [Tax-Changes-to-Invalidity-Pensions](#)**

CSC has made the decision to immediately start work on implementing a number of changes that will adjust or maintain fortnightly invalidity pension payments, with the aim of having these changes implemented by the next pension payment run on 18 November. At the start of September we alerted veteran customers that the planned changes to invalidity pensions were being delayed. At that time CSC was instructed to halt implementing the changes following a number of Federal Government politicians expressing their concern that some veterans would be receiving less 'in-the-hand' each fortnight.

To date CSC hasn't received any formal direction or guidance in regard to a resolution. However, we are very aware of the stress and anxiety that this issue has caused many veterans and we know that our veteran customers want some certainty about their fortnightly income, especially leading into the holiday period.

### **What happens now and when will it happen?**

A video and further information can be found on the CSC website [here](#).

# RSL WV Sub-Branch OGM 26 October 2021

The first (non-dinner) RSL WV Sub-Branch OGM since July finally took place on the afternoon of Tuesday 26 October. Having measured up the rooms available to us since we lost access to the Southern Cross Club, we concluded that only the corridors at the Grant Cameron Community Centre could meet the COVID requirement for four square metres of space per person.





## **The Hon Andrew Gee MP**

Minister for Veterans' Affairs  
Minister for Defence Personnel  
Federal Member for Calare

## **The Hon Michael McCormack MP**

Federal Member for Riverina

### **MEDIA RELEASE**

12 November 2021

#### **HOME OF THE SOLDIER MARKS 70<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY**

Kapooka, the 'home of the soldier', today celebrates 70 years of training Australian soldiers to be among the best in the world.

Around 350,000 Australians have now passed through the iconic Army Recruit Training Centre (ARTC), located at Blamey Barracks in Kapooka, near Wagga Wagga in New South Wales.

Today's anniversary was marked with a graduation parade for around 60 of Australia's newest soldiers, attended by Governor-General, His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd).

Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Defence Personnel Andrew Gee said the quality of our soldiers and the international regard in which they are held was testament to the training received at Kapooka.

"The standards of training, mentoring and leadership shown by the staff at Kapooka over the last 70 years has ensured our nation has been protected by soldiers of the highest calibre," Minister Gee said.

"Generations of graduate soldiers from Kapooka have proven their worth in every conflict and emergency the nation has faced since the Korean War.

"The 'home of the soldier' is a uniquely Australian asset that contributes to both our national security and our national character, through the standards and loyalty instilled into every recruit."

Member for Riverina Michael McCormack said the Blamey Barracks in Kapooka remains a world-class training establishment right in the heart of the Riverina.



"Every Australian soldier begins their career at Kapooka, to learn the basic skills and the foundations to grow into capable, confident military leaders," Mr McCormack said.

"We should admire and respect the achievements of this base over the past 70 years, and also recognise its previous service as the training base for Australian Army engineers in World War II."

Originally commencing operations in 1951 as the 1st Recruit Training Battalion, much of the base's existing structures can be traced back to 1966, when the Governor of New South Wales Sir Roden Cutler, VC, KCMG, CBE, opened the new facilities for both National Service and Regular Army recruits as the Vietnam conflict escalated.

Between 1965 and 1972 alone, in excess of ten thousand National Servicemen trained at Kapooka, and in 1985 Kapooka became responsible for the training of female recruits.

Soldier training at Kapooka includes fitness, weapons handling, combat skills, first aid, teamwork and self-organisation skills.

#### **Media note**

A package containing file photos, recent training imagery and photos from today's parade will be available this afternoon at: <http://images.defence.gov.au/S20213393>

A video package including recent training, current staff interviews and today's parade will be available this afternoon at:

<https://innovatehub.sharepoint.com/:f:/s/mediahub/EkkKLXBklyVCmpaiYqbY-fYBPqQ7INsswvcHb491T3JKZA?e=I8GzJh>



#### **Subscribe to receive the latest news from ACT Government**

If you're interested in receiving the latest Canberra news and updates about what is happening in Canberra, you can subscribe to the [Our Canberra email newsletter](#) or the [Community Partners email Bulletin](#) (fortnightly news from the Community Services Directorate).

<https://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/seniors/newsletter>.



## **The Hon Andrew Gee MP**

Minister for Veterans' Affairs  
Minister for Defence Personnel Federal |  
Member for Calare

### **MEDIA RELEASE**

19 November 2021

## **UNKNOWN HMAS SYDNEY II SAILOR NAMED AFTER 80 YEARS**

Eighty years after the Australian warship HMAS *Sydney* (II) sunk off the West Australian coast, the only body recovered from the tragedy has now been identified.

New DNA evidence has confirmed Able Seaman (AB) Thomas Welsby Clark from New Farm in Brisbane as the previously unidentified sailor.

The *Sydney* sank on 19 November, 1941 following an intense battle with the disguised German merchant raider HSK *Kormoran*, about 120 nautical miles (222 km) west of Steep Point, WA.

AB Clark is believed to be the only sailor to have made it to a life raft after the ship went down.

Despite surviving the battle and the sinking, he tragically died at sea in the life raft. His remains were found near Rocky Point on Christmas Island nearly three months later.

DNA samples collected from his body in 2006 have been extensively tested over the past 15 years and revealed both mitochondrial DNA, passed from mother to child, and Y chromosome DNA passed from father to son.

Research facilitated by the Sea Power Centre – Australia has successfully identified two living direct relatives.

Minister for Veterans Affairs and Minister for Defence Personnel Andrew Gee said the formal identification was a significant development in *Sydney's* story and an historic moment for Australia.

"To finally learn Tom's name, rank, service number and home town, 80 years after he was lost is truly remarkable", Minister Gee said.

"It says a lot about Australia that, despite the decades that have passed, our nation is still working so hard to identify those lost in war and ensuring we honour the sacred commitment to remember them.

"I know this is a terribly sad time for Tom's family. Like his brave shipmates, he died defending Australia, our values and way of life. His family should be immensely proud.

"The Office of Australian War Graves has agreed that next year Tom's grave in Geraldton War Cemetery will be marked by a new headstone bearing his name. He will be 'unknown' no longer.

"By identifying Tom, our nation honours all those who lost their lives in HMAS *Sydney* (II).

"His story helps Australia understand the immense sacrifice made for our country and also the loss and grief that is still felt by the descendants of those who perished on that day.

"Today our nation also extends its deepest sympathies to the descendants of the 644 other crew members who were sadly never recovered after that infamous battle.

"They gave their lives protecting our nation and fighting tyranny, and by ending the threat posed by the *Kormoran* they undoubtedly saved many other Australian lives.

"At this time we remember them and all of the 39,000 Australians who lost their lives in the Second World War."

Chief of Navy Vice Admiral Mike Noonan said AB Clark was just 21 years old when he died and was representative of the many young lives lost in the battle.

"Of *Sydney*'s total complement of 645 men no one survived. This included six Royal Australian Air Force members, eight Royal Navy personnel and four civilian canteen staff. Eighty-two officers and sailors were killed in *Kormoran*," said Vice Admiral Noonan.

"We revere the service and sacrifice of all who perished.

"Solving this World War II case involved specialists in DNA analysis, forensic pathology and dentistry, ballistics, anthropology, archaeology and naval history. I commend the combined effort spearheaded by the Sea Power Centre to confirm AB Clark's identity.

"The Australian Federal Police National DNA Program for Unidentified and Missing Persons was instrumental, as were the Australian National University, Australian War Memorial, University of Adelaide and University of Sydney, not to mention Able Seaman Thomas Clark's family."

"His long voyage is complete, may he Rest in Peace."

Dr Leigh Lehane, (a retired academic) was surprised and saddened to learn her Uncle Tom was the unknown sailor.

"To be quite honest it was a bit upsetting," she said.

However, she said establishing the truth was important.

"I am so grateful for the many, many people, well over a hundred, who helped ascertain the truth about his identity," Dr Lehane said.

She was born in July 1941, the month before her Uncle Tom joined *Sydney*. According to a family story he met his new niece on a final visit to Brisbane.

"He came and held me as a little baby. That's a very pleasurable thought because I don't think anyone else is alive now who knew Tom sort of eye to eye," Dr Lehane said.

Imagery of AB Clark and HMAS *Sydney* II can be found at: <https://images.defence.gov.au/S20213532>

Footage is available at:

[https://innovatehub.sharepoint.com/:f/s/mediahub/EqiOEYRt8ghDuXV\\_coAbN3wBCCwfU4I](https://innovatehub.sharepoint.com/:f/s/mediahub/EqiOEYRt8ghDuXV_coAbN3wBCCwfU4I)

[AjzWDuh0RBbTzlw?e=1o6AKM](https://innovatehub.sharepoint.com/:f/s/mediahub/EqiOEYRt8ghDuXV_coAbN3wBCCwfU4I?e=1o6AKM)

# Defence & Veterans Legal Service

The Department has recently been advised of the establishment of the Defence & Veterans Legal Service.

This nationwide service will provide free and independent information and legal support to assist Australian Defence Force personnel and veterans, as well as their families, carers and supporters, to safely share their experiences with the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide. The service commences from 1 November 2021. For your convenience, please see attached further information about the service, including contact details.

Further detail about these services can also be found at:

[Welcome to Defence and Veterans Legal Service — Defence and Veterans Legal Service \(defenceveteranslegalservice.org.au\)](https://defenceveteranslegalservice.org.au)

Regards

Liz

**Liz Cosson AM CSC**

Secretary

**Department of Veterans' Affairs**

T: 02 6289 6735 Ext: 616735

E: [Liz.Cosson@dva.gov.au](mailto:Liz.Cosson@dva.gov.au) | E: [Secretary@dva.gov.au](mailto:Secretary@dva.gov.au)



Call the Defence and Veterans Legal Service on 1800 33 1800 or visit our website [defenceveteranslegalservice.org.au](https://defenceveteranslegalservice.org.au)


 If you need an interpreter, we can arrange one for you for free. Tell us your language and we will organise it for you.

 If you are hearing or speech impaired you can contact us by calling the national relay service (NRS) on 133 677 or TTY 02 9219 5126.

Independent legal support to participate in the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide

Call 1800 33 1800 (FREE CALL)  
[www.defenceveteranslegalservice.org.au](https://www.defenceveteranslegalservice.org.au)



This service is an initiative of  
  
National Legal Aid





## Who are we?

We provide free, independent legal advice and support to anybody considering sharing their experiences with the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide.

We have staff across Australia who deliver a trauma-informed service. We are independent of the Royal Commission.

## What do we do?

We provide free and confidential legal advice to members of the public, including Australian Defence Force personnel and veterans, their families, carers, and supporters, about:

- taking part in the Royal Commission
- your legal rights when sharing information with the Royal Commission
- available legal protections when sharing information with the Royal Commission.

### **We can talk to you about how you can:**

- share your experiences in a safe way
- keep your experiences and participation in the Royal Commission confidential
- overcome barriers you might face in sharing your experiences.

### **We can also:**

- support you to make your submission
- support you in a private session
- connect you with other services, like counselling, advocacy, and other legal support not related to the Royal Commission.



Australian War Memorial ✓

16 hrs · 🌐

Calling all Australian Navy ex-DDG (Charles F Adams Class). All ranks and rates.

The Australian War Memorial is seeking to connect with former DDG sailors and officers to interview for the forthcoming AWM DDG Bridge Exhibition. We want to tell the history of all three DDGs through the eyes of the people who served in them.

If you're interested in participating please email [Andrew.schroder@awm.gov.au](mailto:Andrew.schroder@awm.gov.au) by 30 November to enable interviews to be coordinated early in the new year.

If you know other sailors or officers who served in [#HMASPerth](#), [#HMASHobart](#) or [#HMASBrisbane](#), please share this post with them as AWM would like to hear from as many DDG personnel as possible.

[#OurContinuingStory](#)



# Upcoming programs and workshops

10-Nov | Canberra

## Mental health first aid

Australian Capital Territory

Two Day Workshop (10 & 11 November)

Register interest

[More info](#)

22-Nov | Canberra (AT CAPACITY)

## Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training - ASIST

Australian Capital Territory

Two Day Workshop (22 & 23 November)

Register interest

[More info](#)

6-Dec | Canberra

## Managing pain

Australian Capital Territory

Two Day Program (6 & 7 December)

Register interest

[More info](#)

9-Dec | Canberra

## Understanding anxiety

Australian Capital Territory

Three Day Program (9, 16 & 23 December)

Register interest

[More info](#)

13-Dec | Canberra

## Mental health first aid

Australian Capital Territory

Two Day Workshop (13 & 14 December)

Register interest

[More info](#)

14-Dec | Canberra

## Sleeping better

Australian Capital Territory

Two Day Program (14 & 15 December)

Register interest

[More info](#)

4-Mar | Canberra

## Residential lifestyle management

Australian Capital Territory

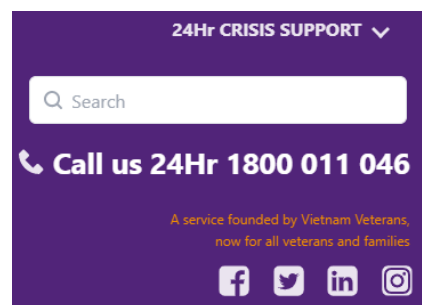
Two Weekends (4-6 March & 11-14 March)

Register interest

[More info](#)

For registration click link below:

[https://www.openarms.gov.au/get-support/programs-workshops/upcoming?field\\_state\\_target\\_id=15&field\\_session\\_type\\_target\\_id=All](https://www.openarms.gov.au/get-support/programs-workshops/upcoming?field_state_target_id=15&field_session_type_target_id=All)



**Carers ACT have recently opened another Respite Cottage in the ACT, named Naragana-Wali which is located in the quiet suburb of Isaacs.**

**Naragana-Wali, meaning Alive, Wellbeing and Coming Together was gifted to Carers ACT by a local Ngunnawal elder.**

**The low care Cottage has four double bedrooms and are designed and equipped for persons who are over 65, frail of aged and or are living with dementia. The house provides interactive day programs, overnight stays, and short-term respite stays.**

**The staff at the Cottage deliver, person centred quality care and understand the importance of clients making their own choices and taking part in the day-to-day life at the Cottage. The interactive programs consist of gentle exercise, craft projects, gardening, cooking and much more.**

**Naragana-Wali has been equipped with a range of the latest technology, tools and equipment to assist with providing in-home care. You can make an appointment to “test drive” this equipment by contacting the Cottage via the details below.**

**Carers ACT’s purpose is to support, connect and empower Carers to maintain their caring role and personal wellbeing.**

**To arrange an inspection and personalised guided tour please contact Sarah on 6296 9940 or email [naragana.wali@carersact.org.au](mailto:naragana.wali@carersact.org.au)**





# JOIN US EACH FRIDAY FOR GOOD COFFEE, CAKE AND CONVERSATION



**Did you know veterans (both women and men) informally gather at the Sub-Branch each Friday from 10am to noon to chat with others from a range of military experiences. Hear about services we offer if you need any assistance. It's also a lot of fun. Every Friday in the Corey Room from 10am to 12, enjoy free brewed coffee with something fresh and sweet at a safe place to share your experience as a Veteran.**

**Don't forget our Coffee Catch Up is open again from 10-12 every Friday in The Corey Room, Level 2A, of the Grant Cameron Community Centre, 27 Mulley Street, Holder.**



**Members and guests are welcome to join us for a chat and enjoy freshly brewed coffee with former service mates.**

**◆ Eddison Day Club meetings  
with Peter Sutton**

**Active again**

**Carers Friendship Groups are  
back in business**

**For details call  
Rania Kalimeris 6285 1931**

**Did you know?**

**E-News and *The Serviceman* are also readily available to read on our website [www.rslwoden.org.au](http://www.rslwoden.org.au)**



#### **Contact Us**

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

**RSL Woden Valley  
Sub-Branch  
14/27 Mulley Street  
HOLDER ACT 2611**

62851931

[admin@rslwoden.org.au](mailto:admin@rslwoden.org.au)

Visit us on the web at  
[www.rslwoden.org.au](http://www.rslwoden.org.au)

Or drop in for a coffee Fridays  
from 10.00am

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