

# QUEENSLAND RSL NEWS

**VIETNAM  
VETERANS' DAY**  
REMEMBERING  
AUSTRALIA'S SERVICE

**THE TROPICAL  
TECHNIQUE**  
ROLLINGSTONE RSL SUB BRANCH  
— A SHINING EXAMPLE OF  
FRIENDSHIP AND COMMUNITY

## SERVICE IMMORTALISED

A STATUE TO HONOUR  
CALOUNDRA'S WARTIME  
HISTORY

## Remember to Remember

WHY WE PAUSE ON  
11 NOVEMBER



**RSL**  
Queensland

2022 // EDITION 04

The official publication of the Returned & Services League of Australia (Queensland Branch)





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*RSL Queensland*

*current membership: 32,031*

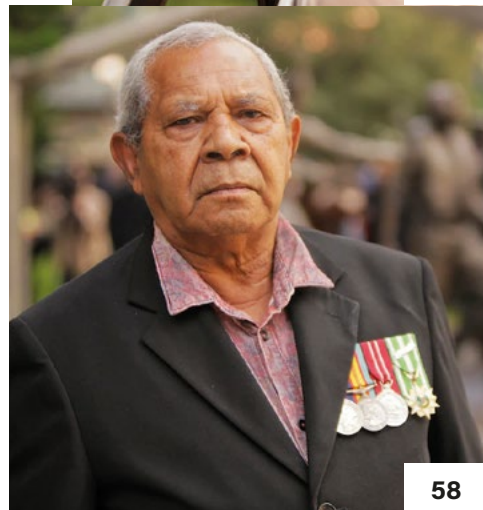
*Queensland RSL News average*  
*distribution: 33,000*

**Submissions:** Editorial and photographic contributions are welcome. Please contact the editor for guidelines. Preference will be given to electronic submissions that adhere to word limits and are accompanied by high resolution photos. Originals of all material should be retained by contributors and only copies sent to *Queensland RSL News*.

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### Front Cover

Decorated Army veteran Corporal Daniel 'Dan' Keighran was an honoured guest at this year's Remembrance Day service at the Shrine of Remembrance at ANZAC Square, Brisbane.

# WELCOME TO OUR *new Board*

**IT WAS** with great pleasure that we introduced members to our new RSL Queensland Board of Directors on 28 October.

Congratulations to Ash Naughton, who was elected to the role of Strategy Development and Execution Director. I also welcome Tony Orchard (Director – Financial Management), Chris Hamilton (Director – Stakeholder Engagement and Advocacy) and Nic Gould (Director – Legal, Governance and Risk Management).

You can read more about our new Directors on page 69.

## **THANKS TO OUR MEMBERS**

This has been a long journey, and I wish to acknowledge the decision of members and their focus and support of this outcome, which has allowed us to continue to maintain our core values and focus on veterans.

The governance structure may have changed, but our priorities have not. Veterans and members continue to be our priority. With a new State Board to work on State Branch and strategic matters, the newly formed State Council of District Presidents is 100% focused on matters of their Districts.

The journey has included acceptance of the new structure at our June AGM, nomination of veteran candidates, an election, and finally now the

“*The governance structure may have changed, but our priorities have not. Veterans and members continue to be our priority. With a new state Board to work on State Branch and strategic matters, the newly formed State Council of District Presidents is 100% focused on matters of their Districts.*”

commencement of the new Board. Along the way, a great deal of work has been done by delegates, members, staff, District Secretaries, Sub Branch volunteers and the District Presidents who formed the previous State Board.

You have shown tremendous commitment throughout this process, and I'd like to express my personal thanks to all of you who have helped along the way.

I also want to offer my heartfelt thanks to the outgoing Board, the District Presidents. They leave the Board having navigated us through the difficulties of the COVID era, refocused us on veterans, developed and agreed upon a new strategy, and successfully governed us to a healthy business position.

## **WHY WE PAUSE ON REMEMBRANCE DAY**

This Remembrance Day,

I was honoured to attend the service at the Shrine of Remembrance in ANZAC Square, Brisbane. We were joined by numerous dignitaries, including Dan Keighran VC, the Governor of Queensland Dr Jeannette Young AC PSM, Queensland Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk MP, and Brisbane Lord Mayor Adrian Schrinner, as well as many veterans and ADF representatives.

Through Remembrance Day services around the state and our Remember to Remember campaign, RSL Queensland helps keep the spirit of those who have suffered or died alive. Each year, we ask all Australians to pause, reflect and honour those who gave their tomorrow for our today.

When we pause, among those we remember are those who died for our country in the Great War. The losses were unimaginably large. No Australian family

was left untouched. Around 10 per cent of Australia's adult male population was either killed or wounded.

Yet after all the years, it can be challenging to know how best to honour their sacrifice. In all our towns and cities there are, of course, memorials to them, but there is, I believe, another memorial – an equally important memorial – and it's us and the way we live our lives, a memorial they would wish for.

Great nations are not great because of their material wealth or their size, they're great because of their national character – *our* character.

I like to think that those who laid down their lives for our future are looking down and saying, “We did not die in vain... our sons and our daughters have made a good thing of the freedom and the land that we kept for them.”

That, I believe, is the best way for us to respect their sacrifice, for us to remember them. That's why Remembrance Day is important.



**RSL Queensland  
State President  
Major General  
Stephen Day DSC, AM**





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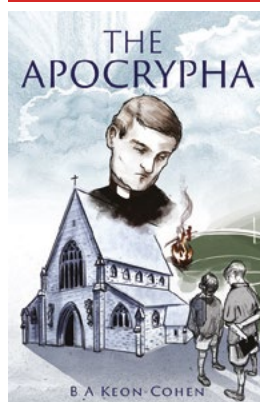
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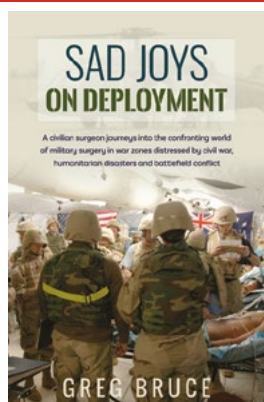


ISBN: 978-1-925707-92-2

Young boys and girls are sexually abused by Father O'Halloran at a parish church choir in Melbourne. A secret self-help society, The Apocrypha, is organised by victims Ashley and Keith.

The secret Society is discovered, raided by teachers and Ashley is interrogated by the Principal. O'Halloran is quickly removed by church authorities to a mountain retreat where he experiences, he believes, a magical epiphany.

Years later, Ashley and Keith and their girlfriends, Samantha and Felicity, all "survivors" and all damaged, navigate life in their twenties as best they can. Ashley and Keith reluctantly initiate criminal proceedings against their abuser. Will the Apocryphals bring O'Halloran to account once and for all and finally achieve "justice"?



ISBN: 978-0-9578709-6-3

Greg Bruce is an orthopaedic surgeon who served in the Royal Australian Air Force. Between 1995 and 2008, he was sent overseas on ten military deployments to humanitarian disasters, local conflicts and war zones, including the most attacked US base in Iraq.

The restricted medical resources, dangers and harsh living conditions made military surgery very different from civilian practice.

There were good experiences and horrible experiences and readjustment and reflection on return home. Are you ever the same again?

Greg Bruce was made a Member of the Order of Australia in recognition of his military service in 2007.

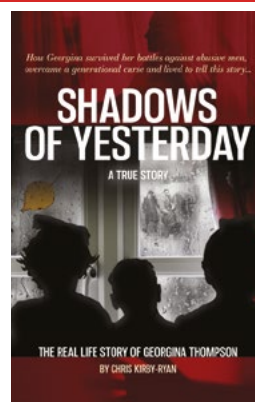


ISBN: 978-0-9578709-8-7

Rosie Franklin is an enthusiastic teacher and sports coach who, through her desire for adventure, cements a teenage school friendship into a loving relationship with Chas Anderson. Chas, a local, daredevil stunt pilot, is also a well-known crop-duster.

Together they weave their dreams for the future, unaware of the betrayal by friends and associates to undermine their aspirations.

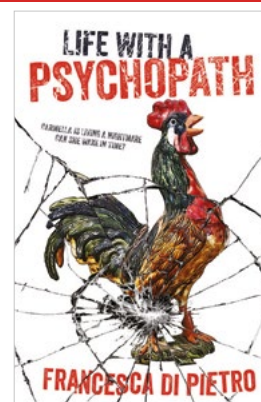
From the days of settlement during the early 1900s in the mid-western New South Wales farming region, to the 1980s, there is generational discord, inheritance arguments, and jealousy, all of which ultimately create dissension between the characters, while adventurous pursuits continue in the isolated, NSW, country town of Gunnedah.



ISBN: 978-1-925707-98-4

From the age of two, Georgina experienced the vilest abuse and cruelty, unimaginable for the average person. It seemed that everywhere she turned, every man who came into her life had just one purpose in mind. How could a two, four or even a six-year-old understand why grown men would want to touch her body? Georgina had no concept of decency and no role models to help shape her future. With a mother who ignored her pleas for help, Georgina and her siblings had nowhere to turn.

Despite a mother who suffered a long history of abuse, uncles cursed with evil, a gangster for a father and later a stepfather whose sins outtrumped all others, Georgina survived her battles, overcame the generational curse, and lives to tell this story.

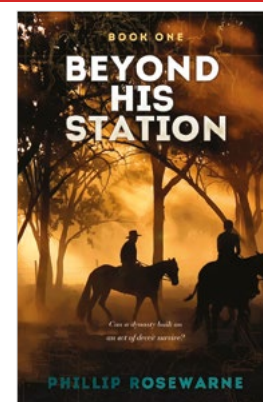


ISBN: 978-1-925707-71-7

Carmella is an intelligent and confident woman. She's overcome bullying and racism in her childhood and built a successful life for herself.

When Carmella meets the charming Shaun, she thinks she's hit the jackpot. Recovering from a rocky first date, the relationship develops into a promising connection, but then degenerates, in stages, into an abusive disaster. The previously strong Carmella finds herself adhering to insane rules set by Shaun.

Just as Carmella thinks her life has hit rock bottom, she obtains the assistance of gifted psychologist who offers her a fresh perspective. Is this crucial support enough for Carmella to find the strength to leave Shaun or will she be stuck in this terrifying nightmare forever?



ISBN: 978-0-6484916-6-8

After his parents die, John Summers grows up on his relatives' sheep grazing property situated in central western New South Wales. Although treated as an outcast by his adoptive family, John has a close relationship with his grandmother, who holds a mysterious secret.

Tired of his treatment by the family, John, aged 18, pilfers a considerable sum of money from his grandmother and disappears. His guilt consumes him as he builds his own dynasty, marrying a compliant woman and having children, who also follow in John's footsteps. All the time, John fears facing the consequences of his shocking theft and guilt weighs heavily on him. He sets in train many events, all which have the potential for far-reaching ramifications into the future.

# HELPING VETERANS AND THEIR *families thrive*

**IT'S BEEN** a productive year, 2022 – one where we at RSL Queensland, and across our League, have provided care, commemoration and camaraderie to veterans and their families. In doing so, we have created an environment where veterans and their families can – and have been – supported by us all.

This success has been down to our combined efforts, and in particular those volunteers across the state who make that connection with veterans and their families every day.

## **OUR 2030 STRATEGY**

As we look towards 2030, it's important that our strategy reflects who we are and how we can provide for the needs of veterans – not just to the veterans and their families, but also to the broader community.

We've brought that together under three key goals: care, commemoration and camaraderie. These are the guiding lights that we'll be using to develop who we are as RSL Queensland and how we can help the League deliver those goals to veterans and their families.

Our outgoing Board has been very instructive and highly engaged, ensuring we bring together the broader League and that RSL Queensland is positioned as an enabling organisation to:

- facilitate care for veterans and their families
- recognise and commemorate veterans in the community, and
- provide environments whereby camaraderie can

“Over the past few years, we have increased our services – including advocacy, wellbeing, employment, and homelessness. We have also been working with other organisations to help create an environment where care can be delivered to veterans and their families wherever they may be.”

flourish for veterans and their families as they're in service, transition through service, and for the remainder of their lives.

## **THE FUTURE OF VETERAN SERVICES**

Recognising that one of our key goals is care, RSL Queensland has been working to facilitate the Veteran Services plan. This will define where we're going to invest our care model moving forward.

Over the past few years, we have increased our services – including advocacy, wellbeing, employment, and homelessness. We have also been working with other organisations to help create an environment where care can be delivered to veterans and their families wherever they may be.

I look forward to continuing to update members on where those initiatives are and how we're going to connect across the broader League on delivering those initiatives. Although there are so many Sub Branches working

collaboratively with us in supporting veterans, we still hear that many Sub Branch volunteers are not aware of the services available.

A good starting point is our website, which lists all of RSL Queensland's services. Our teams have been widely promoting [rslqld.org](http://rslqld.org) at District meetings and the AGM to ensure delegates are aware of what's available. We also have RSL Queensland staff located across the state, so please reach out to them if you have questions.

## **REFLECTING ON REMEMBRANCE DAY**

On Remembrance Day, I was at ANZAC Square in Brisbane to pay my respects to those that have gone before us. Like all of us, I enjoyed being able to wear a poppy and take the time to reflect on those who paid the ultimate sacrifice and those that have suffered in an ongoing way for our freedoms.

We were honoured to have Dan Keighran VC helping us promote this year's Remember to Remember campaign, and I'd

like to thank him for his support. He's a very busy man, but he's a man who keeps giving to the community the same way that he did in service.

## **A GIFT OF CHRISTMAS SPIRIT**

The annual Christmas Spirit Hamper drive has now become a tradition at RSL Queensland. This year we packed about 600 hampers, due to arrive at District offices and into the Sub Branch community in early December.

These hampers are designed for those who may need some additional support over Christmas, but also to recognise the contribution of those who have done exceptional work in our community.

These hampers are important. They connect people who may be feeling socially isolated over the Christmas period and remind them that there's an organisation full of good people across Queensland who care about their wellbeing.

I'd like to thank all of you for providing support to our mates across Queensland. I wish you all a safe and happy Christmas season, and I look forward to engaging with you again in 2023.



**Robert Skoda**  
**Chief Executive Officer**  
**RSL Queensland**



# Helping veterans and their families, so they can get on with more of the good.



127

individuals and families helped into safe, permanent housing



277

nights spent in RSL short-term accommodation



\$857k

provided in emergency funding



3,871

calls handled



57

jobs found for veterans and their partners



1,732

claims submitted

Between July–September 2022, RSL Queensland provided a broad range of programs and services to support veterans and their families.

**FIND OUT MORE**

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# MAILBOX

## BEAUTIFUL COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Bunnings has again exceeded its care for our community, providing much needed support for Goodna RSL Sub Branch and the Women's Auxiliary after recent floods. The Bundamba store manager contacted us through the Women's Auxiliary to provide any necessary goods, including boxes, cleaning products and wrapping paper, to store memorabilia and artifacts that survived the flood damage.

They continue to assist our fundraising efforts by allowing us to hold sausage sizzles and craft stalls. This money has enabled us to continue supporting the local veteran community, particularly after the floods.

Bundamba staff also repaired and cleaned up in time for ANZAC Day 2022. Until we can get back to our own facilities, the Bundamba store has provided us with the use of their own meeting rooms for our executive committee meetings. It is a pleasure to work alongside such community-minded people and their organisation.

**Judith Van de Pol**

**Goodna RSL Sub Branch President and Membership Officer**

## CLARIFICATION ABOUT THE NMBVAA

In *Queensland RSL News* – Edition 3, 2022 and the 26 October Member Update, we published details on the disbandment of the National Malaya & Borneo Veterans Association Australia (NMBVAA) Qld Inc.

We wish to clarify that the NMBVAA Qld Inc. – which became a state incorporation in 2009 – has disbanded, though its Brisbane Branch and Sunshine Coast Branch members will continue meeting socially. The National Malaya & Borneo Veterans Association Australia (NMBVAA) Inc. – which was incorporated in 1995 – remains very much active.

In Brisbane, the Queensland and Brisbane Branch of NMBVAA Inc. meets at 11:00am on the fourth Tuesday of each month at Wynnum RSL Sub Branch, and new members (including the wives and widows of those who served) are welcome. For more information, please visit [nmbvaa.org.au](http://nmbvaa.org.au).

We apologise for any confusion.

## CAPTION CORRECTION

On page 82 of *Queensland RSL News* Ed 3 2022 we had an incorrect name in one of our captions. It should have read "Pictured at the service are Vietnam veterans, Currumbin Palm Beach RSL Sub Branch Secretary Roger Collins, left, and member Gary Chad (not Ray Piper)". We apologise for this error.

## WWII VETERAN PROJECTS

I am a 95-year-old WWII veteran and a member of Kawana Waters RSL Sub Branch, and I'd like to let other members know about two of my projects. One is to get remaining WWII veterans to write their memoirs – before it's too late. Within five years, most of us – if not all of us – will be gone. If you require assistance to write your memoir, please contact me on 0417 958 257. I have already done this with several of our members.

The second project is to get our seven WWII Sub Branch members, together with their partners or next of kin, to meet for morning tea. This idea was such a success that our president at the time offered for our Sub Branch to sponsor us and we've now been meeting every month for the past five years. Unfortunately, we are down to four veterans as three have since passed away. Their wives and supporters still come along each month, with 11 joining us in September. We are known as The Mouldy Oldies.

I would like to encourage all Sub Branches across Australia to start something similar. I'm sure some members in their 90s get bored and would enjoy the company of like-minded veterans for a chat.

**Phil Wilkins**

**Kawana Waters RSL Sub Branch**



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# NEWS

## THE PREMIER'S ANZAC PRIZE

**THE** 2023 Premier's Anzac Prize is proudly presented in partnership with RSL Queensland. The 2023 recipients have now been announced and we congratulate the successful students of the 2023 Premier's Anzac Prize.

We are proud to support this initiative, as it provides eight Queensland high school students the opportunity to engage with the ANZAC tradition first-hand and explore how the ANZAC legacy relates to modern Australian life.

RSL Queensland has signed a three-year corporate partnership (2023-2025) with the Department

of Education and is a platinum sponsor of the initiative.

The Premier's Anzac Prize is a highly enriching program for young history enthusiasts. Prize recipients are required to take part in activities that build their knowledge and understanding of the ANZAC spirit and its relevance in modern Australian and global contexts.

Tasks include research and commemoration of service people, community engagement and fundraising projects, and participation in a two-week tour of Europe visiting key sites important to Australian war history. Students will be involved in learning about life at the Front and the history of our ANZACs overseas during WWI.



Learn more at [education.qld.gov.au](https://education.qld.gov.au)



# AUSTRALIAN PARTNERS OF DEFENCE

**AUSTRALIAN** Partners of Defence (APOD) is an Australian owned and operated organisation founded by veteran families, for veteran families. Since 2012, APOD has been working with businesses of all sizes to deliver exclusive offers to serving Australian Defence Force personnel, reservists, allied forces, veterans and their immediate family members.

In partnership with the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA), APOD is now able to extend membership access to all Veteran Cardholders through a DVA subscription to APOD.

This gives you free access to thousands of offers through the APOD program, while DVA continues to provide this benefit to all Veteran Cardholders.

Enjoy all of the benefits of being an APOD member, including savings on everyday shopping, accommodation, experiences, gift cards and special offers.

There are two easy ways for Veteran Cardholders to sign up:

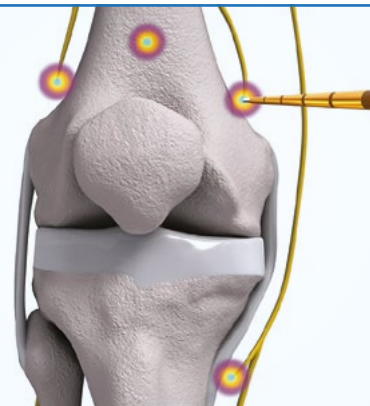
- New DVA Cardholders can sign up through MyService. Simply tick the box to subscribe to APOD when applying for a new Veteran Card. You'll get an email from APOD with instructions to verify your email address and create a password so you can log in to the APOD website.
- Existing DVA Cardholders can sign up through the APOD website. You will need to have your Veteran Card ready to provide your DVA file number and name exactly as it appears on your card to automatically authenticate your free APOD access.



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## YOUR MENTAL WELLBEING

Dear Mind is Queensland Health's first campaign focusing on positive mental health and wellbeing. It encourages people to create a healthier relationship with their mind by practising simple mental health wellbeing activities.

*The practical tips and advice can be found at [mentalwellbeing.initiatives.qld.gov.au](https://mentalwellbeing.initiatives.qld.gov.au)*

## ACCESS TO THE DEFENCE, VETERANS' AND FAMILIES' ACUTE SUPPORT PACKAGE

**LEGISLATION** has recently passed in Parliament to enable the Defence, Veterans' and Families' Acute Support Package. This package expands the existing Family Support Package to provide more practical services and flexibility for families.

*For more information, including eligibility requirements, visit [dva.gov.au](https://dva.gov.au)*

## DVA'S HEART HEALTH PROGRAM

**DVA'S** Heart Health Program aims to improve veterans' physical health through exercise, nutritional education and lifestyle management. The program is free and open to all veterans and peacekeepers with operational service and those covered under the ADF firefighter scheme who have not previously participated in the program.

Veterans who need further information are encouraged to contact DVA on 1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372) or Open Arms – Veterans & Families Counselling on 1800 011 046, who will work with them to access the most appropriate care.

*The Heart Health program website [veteranshearthealth.com.au](https://veteranshearthealth.com.au) provides further information on eligibility and program locations.*





# RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

As an RSL Queensland member, you're part of a network of volunteers who share the bonds of service and are committed to giving back to the veteran community. Renew your membership today.



To renew, visit your local Sub Branch or call the Memberships team on 133 995 to pay over the phone. For any assistance, email [memberships@rslqld.org](mailto:memberships@rslqld.org)



**RSL**  
Queensland



# REMEMBRANCE DAY: WHY WE REMEMBER ON 11 NOVEMBER



*The 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month is a moment not only to pause and remember all those who have served and sacrificed in wars and conflicts across the world, but also to reflect on the historical events that led to this day of significance.*





Shrine of  
Remembrance,  
ANZAC Square,  
Brisbane.



originally announced to mark the anniversary of the Armistice that ended fighting with Germany in World War I, Remembrance

Day today gives us all the opportunity to acknowledge the service personnel who died while serving in wars, conflicts, and peacekeeping operations.

### **SIGNATURES THAT ENDED FOUR YEARS OF CONFLICT**

At 5am on 11 November 1918 in a railway carriage in France, representatives of France, Britain and Germany all signed a document that would put an end to four years of conflict. Six hours later – at 11am – those signatures would bring into effect the Armistice that ended World War I.

Across the world, people rejoiced and celebrated the news, including in Australia. Despite the late hour of the day in Australia, school, fire station, and church bells around the country rang, waking hundreds of people to share the news that war was over.

Alongside the excitement, there was also a notable sense of loss and grief. More than 60,000 Australian soldiers had made the ultimate sacrifice, more than 150,000 had been wounded or taken prisoner and some 23,000 soldiers were missing. Very few families did not have some link to the war effort.

It would take another six months of negotiations before the Treaty of Versailles was signed in June 1919 and for exhausted troops to return home to their loved ones. For many, while they returned home, they never truly left the horror of the battlefields behind.

### **A MOMENT OF SILENCE SPARKS TRADITION**

On the first anniversary of the Armistice (11 November was known as Armistice Day until after World War II) King George V asked all the people of the British Empire to observe two minutes' silence at 11am.

It is a tradition still honoured today during Remembrance Day services as we remember all who have served in the Australian Defence Force, in World War I and in all wars, conflicts, and peacekeeping operations since.

The tradition was formalised in Australia in 1997 by Governor-General Sir William Deane, who issued a proclamation declaring 11 November to be Remembrance Day and urging all Australians to observe one minute of silence at 11am on 11 November each year.

Today, we encourage all Australians to attend a service and honour those who have served. If you can't make it to a service, it's easy to set a reminder on your calendar, switch your phone to 'do not disturb' and pause for one minute to remember. It's a simple action that means so much.

### **OTHER REMEMBRANCE DAY TRADITIONS**

While it may be the best-known Remembrance Day tradition, the minute's silence is not the only custom carried out on 11 November.

The red poppy is equally as significant to Remembrance Day. Known as the 'Flower of Remembrance', the red poppies were among the first to flower in the battlefields of northern France and Belgium after the conflict ended. The vivid red bloom was adopted in England in 1919 as an emblem to honour the dead and help the living, and Australia followed suit in 1921.

Today, poppies are worn on Remembrance Day – on the left lapel – in memory of those who served and made the ultimate sacrifice, and to recognise their acts of gallantry.

Other traditions commonly seen on 11 November include wearing a sprig of rosemary as a sign of remembrance and loyalty, and flying flags at half-mast from 10:30-11:03am.

# Courage UNDER FIRE

*Decorated Army veteran Corporal Daniel ‘Dan’ Keighran was an honoured guest at this year’s Remembrance Day service at the Shrine of Remembrance at ANZAC Square, Brisbane. During the commemoration, Dan paused to reflect on all who have worn a uniform and the sacrifices they’ve made.*

 **Lani Pauli**



**IN 2012**, Corporal Daniel ‘Dan’ Keighran was awarded the Victoria Cross for Australia – the highest award in the Australian honours system – for his actions in the Battle of Derapet in Afghanistan in 2010.

He was only the third soldier, and the first member of the Royal Australian Regiment (RAR), to receive the Victoria Cross for Australia since the award’s introduction in 1991\*.

Dan joined the Army at 17 years of age in 2000 and served in East Timor and Iraq. He later deployed to Afghanistan in 2007 with the Special Operations Task Group as a Bushmaster Protected Mobility Vehicle driver, and then again in 2010 with the 6RAR Battle Group as part of Mentoring Task Force One.

Dan was deployed on multiple operations, clocking up nearly 12 years’ full-time service. He says his first few deployments were working with foreign governments, and it was a deployment to East Timor with the United Nations operation that started to shape him as a soldier.

“It was my first operation as a young soldier going forward,” he



“*I don't think what I did was really brave; it was what was required at the time.*”



says. “I learned so much about myself as a leader and operations. For the first time I was out there doing the job of an infantry soldier – a combat soldier on the ground.”

“Then Iraq was my first time in what you could consider a real war zone, where all of a sudden you are dealing with explosive devices and an enemy force.”

#### AN ORDINARY DAY

It was a day during his deployment to Afghanistan that perhaps defined his career as a soldier – a day that Dan recalls being “the fight of his life.”

Today it's known as the Battle of Derapet, and it's where Dan's courage during enemy fire was acknowledged with the Victoria

Cross for Australia. His actions during the battle were paramount in allowing the Coalition forces to withdraw without further casualties.

“I remember walking into the village of Derapet and as I walk around this building I remember looking up and seeing an enemy pulling the trigger on a PKM machine gun and a burst of fire comes back at me. It is a sound I will always remember – the sound of a bullet as it travels past your head.

“It was a three-and-a-half-hour firefight, and it was at the point when we were pretty much outnumbered, with about 40 people strong on the ground and facing well over 100 Taliban fighters.”

By this point in the conflict, one of his comrades had been wounded with a bullet in his shoulder. Unfortunately, the soldier passed away from the injury.

Dan says knowing they lost a soldier in combat is probably the hardest thing he's had to deal with.

“The way I saw it, I had no other courses of action available, so I



**ABOVE:**  
Army veteran Corporal Daniel 'Dan' Keighran VC meets Queen Elizabeth II during an audience with her at Buckingham Palace, London, on 6 November 2013.

**LEFT:**  
Dan joined the Army at 17 years of age and served in East Timor, Iraq and Afghanistan. He was deployed on multiple operations, clocking up nearly 12 years' full-time service.

drew fire onto myself to enable the others to work on the casualty and potentially identify targets to help in targeting enemy fire as I drew fire away from the guys treating him.

“I don't think what I did was really brave; it was what was required at the time. It was a decision based on weighing up risks and knowing a helicopter was coming to get my mate, I had medics in my team who could look after me if something happened, and I was wearing ballistic plates.”

#### REMEMBRANCE DAY

As for what service means to Dan in light of Remembrance Day, he says it's so much more than continuing family traditions.

“It's about giving back to those that aren't able. Service for me was always about signing up for something greater than myself,” he says.

“As someone who has seen war and the horror of it, who has lost mates in combat, I absolutely understand the importance of recognising that service and making sure every Australian is aware of what happens when someone puts on that uniform. ←

\*Australians were eligible for the Victoria Cross under the Imperial system of honours, until the award was instituted (as the Victoria Cross for Australia) in the Australian honours system in 1991.

# KEEPING *the spirit* OF SERVICE ALIVE

*For Sunnybank RSL Sub Branch member Ibraheem Malik, Remembrance Day signifies a day to reflect on the people and communities impacted by conflict.*

 **Lani Pauli**



**MOVING** to Australia from Pakistan in early 2000, Ibraheem's father was a soldier of the Crown, who served with distinction on the front line of WWII.

"My dad was a member of the Royal Indian Engineers and served during the Second World War in the Burma campaign," he shares.

"I was just 28 years old when my father passed away in 1998. Remembrance Day has become

**ABOVE:**  
Ibraheem Malik marches on ANZAC Day with his community.

special for me because it isn't a day about glorifying war; it is about the people who have paid the ultimate sacrifice. People who have gone through something unexplainable."

## **EXPERIENCES SHARED THROUGH THE WRITTEN WORD**

His father's time in service was not something ever shared with Ibraheem until the night before he passed away.

"He gave me some very old papers and files. At the time I didn't open them; I just kept them in a safe place. I brought them with me to Australia and it wasn't until early 2014 that I looked at them and started to understand the experience my father had during his time serving.

"It was in reading his service booklet and finding out that he served with honour and was awarded the 1939-45 Star and Burma Star for his distinguished service that I got to know my father."

## **CONTINUING THE TRADITION OF SERVING COMMUNITY**

Ibraheem joined Sunnybank RSL Sub Branch in 2015 and since then, much like his father, has dedicated his time to serving his community. In addition to his work with the Sub Branch he is a volunteer for the Queensland State Emergency Services.

"Since joining I've spent a lot of time advocating in my community to the younger people about what ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day are about and volunteering for the ANZAC Day Appeal and



“

*Remembrance Day has become special for me because it isn't a day about glorifying war; it is about the people who have paid the ultimate sacrifice. People who have gone through something unexplainable.*

”



Remembrance Poppy Appeal, attending the services, marching in the parade,” he explains.

“Sunnybank is a very special Sub Branch. It’s very inclusive.”

Ibraheem is currently working on a project called Muslims for Remembrance.

“It is a project close to my heart. It is basically uncovering the untold stories of Muslim ANZACs and their dedication and their loyalty to the country they were living in. Initially, my exhibition was a part of Remembrance Day in 2018, and since then we have made it a part of every ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day here at Sunnybank Sub Branch.”

#### **A DAY FOR FAMILY**

Remembrance Day for Ibraheem is a day to reflect and spend time with his family.

“My son and I lay a wreath every Remembrance Day. I’ve been fortunate to learn more about my father’s service through the Royal Indian Historical Society in England and a day like Remembrance Day is a moment for me to pause and remember his sacrifices.

“I remember one piece of advice my father gave me. He said, ‘Son, always remember, wherever you live you should be known as a beneficial human being for your fellow beings.’” ←



# IN LOVE *and war*

*War widow Jenny Gregory says Remembrance Day is a chance to “actually stop and think” about the sacrifice that their loved ones, and all service people, have made.*

 **Belinda Crossman**



**ABOVE:** War widow Jenny Gregory at the ANZAC Square and Memorial Galleries, where visitors can leave messages of remembrance on post-it notes in honour of those who have served and sacrificed.

**WHENEVER** her husband, Winston Gregory, departed for duty, Jenny knew that he might not return. It was one of many sacrifices she – like all Defence partners – made for many of the eight years Winston served in the Australian Army.

“When you’re married to a person in military service, we are kind of collateral damage as well,” Jenny says. “We are the ones who

virtually say, well, okay, you can go to war.

“Not only are they prepared to give up their lives for their country, but we are prepared for them to do that as well, which I think is huge.”

#### **LIVING AS A SOLDIER’S WIFE**

Originally a police officer, Winston was 20 when he was called up to national service. And it was during

his first deployment to Malaysia, in 1966, that he first got to know Jenny. Winston later enlisted as a regular soldier, serving in Vietnam, Australia, and Singapore.

“The hardest time for me was his time in Vietnam,” Jenny says. “Now there’s mobile phones, internet, etc., but we had to wait for letters in those days, so it was a long time. I had two small children and the biggest thing, I think, was loneliness. You’ve got no one to talk to.”

But loneliness wasn’t Jenny’s only problem at the time, as she later discovered.



“My hope is they appreciate and honour those who have been prepared to serve, and all those who died for their country – all over the world, not just Australians – and remember that we have our freedom because they served.”



**ABOVE:**  
Jenny in the ANZAC Square and Memorial Galleries.

**BELOW:**  
Jenny watches a video on one of the screens in the ANZAC Square and Memorial Galleries.

**OPPOSITE INSET:**  
Jenny fondly recalls the day she married her late husband Winston.

like Christmas when the sense of loss hits hardest.

#### A TIME TO REMEMBER

Although Jenny thinks of Winston all the time, Remembrance Day is a chance for war widows like her to “actually stop and think” about the sacrifice that their loved ones, and all service people, have made. And she hopes that others around Australia will do the same.

“My hope is they appreciate and honour those who have been prepared to serve, and all those who died for their country – all over the world, not just Australians – and remember that we have our freedom because they served.”

“Singapore was a very interesting experience because Winston was seconded to the US Narcotics Bureau and worked in narcotics control. I didn’t know half of what he was doing. He was working undercover and if I was to see him out and about in Singapore, I wasn’t to recognise him or say hello.

“He told me many years later that the family was actually in danger while he was doing all of that, and apologised. He got a lot of commendations for that service, so I’m very proud of his service.

“He was a good husband, a wonderful father. I loved him.”

#### WOMEN LOOKING AFTER WOMEN

After Winston’s passing in 2013, Jenny found herself “at a bit at a loss”. She joined her local War Widows group, quickly rising to their executive before becoming State President in 2016.

Founded in 1947, Australian War Widows Queensland (AWWQ) supports widows, carers and families affected by Defence service, offering everything from social connection to referral services, affordable accommodation, and member advocacy. AWWQ has 27 Sub Branches and social groups, all of which Jenny tries to visit yearly.

“The main thing I’ve tried to do is get the name of War Widows out there – show what we can do, that we are women looking after women.

“When you become a war widow, it is quite isolating. The biggest problem for the war widows is that they don’t want to go out on their own. Our groups keep them together. It’s about being with other ladies who’ve been through the same thing.”

This company and understanding make all the difference, Jenny says, particularly on special occasions



# The power OF A HUG

*On a rough day, a comforting hug from a loved one can be a gentle reminder you're not alone and bring you a sense of peace.*

 **Lani Pauli**



**YOU** can imagine how many times a simple hug brought Warwick couple Bruce and Belinda McGowan closer during their 17 years together. So, when Bruce was faced with the impossible task of saying goodbye to Belinda in May 2021, you can also imagine the power of them being able to hug each other one last time as they faced one of life's hardest moments.

**ABOVE:**  
Bruce McGowan shares special memories of his life with his wife, Belinda, with a friend.

## **A LEGACY OF A LIFE OF SERVICE**

Flight Lieutenant Belinda McGowan served in the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) for almost 33 years.

"She was very dedicated to her time in service," Bruce shares. "She joined the RAAF in 1988, starting as a comms operative, before facilitating and teaching leadership and management to junior ranks.

"Growing up on a farm, joining the Air Force allowed her to grow and give back. Her kindness was probably her biggest core value."

## **GOODBYES MADE KINDER**

Bruce was able to hold and hug Belinda as she passed away from cancer, thanks to a palliative care cuddle bed. A cuddle bed allows family members and loved ones to lie together as the loved one passes or receives treatment.

The Cuddle Bed Program was something Bruce and Belinda started planning before she passed, and Bruce carries on the work as part of Belinda's legacy.

"We had seen the cuddle beds in city hospitals, but in regional areas the most common solution was to push two single beds together. Belinda and I felt strongly that regional hospitals deserved the opportunity to have cuddle beds and that is what inspired The Cuddle Bed Program," Bruce says.

"It's my goal that every regional hospital in Australia has the opportunity to have at least one cuddle bed to support their palliative care patients."

While the experience it offers families is invaluable, each bed is an investment of \$22,000. To date, Bruce has been able to fundraise and secure three cuddle beds for regional



“ For me, Remembrance Day has always been to remember the people. Not only those who lost their lives but the people who are connected to serving members of Defence. ”

hospitals, including Warwick Hospital, where Belinda passed away in 2021.

#### REMEMBRANCE DAY

Bruce says that 11 November has always been about the people.

“For me, Remembrance Day has always been to remember the people. Not only those who lost their lives but the people who are connected to serving members of Defence.

“All serving members have

mothers, fathers, brothers and sisters, or children. That’s what Remembrance Day means to me. Remembering the community and the people within it.”

#### HONOURING OUR VETERANS

Warwick RSL Sub Branch President John Skinner says the Sub Branch was pleased to support Bruce and also donated a bed to the program.



**ABOVE:** Thanks to a palliative care cuddle bed, Bruce was able to hold Belinda as she passed away from cancer in May 2021. “It’s my goal that every regional hospital in Australia has the opportunity to have at least one cuddle bed to support their palliative care patients,” says Bruce.

“Belinda was one of our main flag bearers and spoke at a couple of different services. She was such a likeable lass. Very friendly, easy to talk to, and she made friends wherever she went,” John recalls.

John says Remembrance Day is part of Australia’s heritage and an opportunity to honour those people who hold a special place in our hearts. A Vietnam veteran himself, John remembers six close friends he lost during the war.

“We were at Dak Do, where a land mine went off that killed three and wounded 23. Two of those people were in front of me and their bodies took the blast that saved my life. They were some of my very good friends, and that touched me quite deeply at the time.

“Remembrance Day used to be a time when all Australians stopped. Now it doesn’t seem to be quite like that, but I believe we’re bringing it back.”





Draw to  
**REMEMBER**

# TEACHES KIDS REMEMBRANCE THROUGH ART



*More than 3,500 Queensland kids marked this  
year's Remembrance Day in a creative new  
way, tapping into their inner artist.*











**EQUIPPED** with coloured chalk and history lessons from RSL Sub Branch volunteers, children took to school pavements across the state, sketching vibrant, heart-warming murals paying tribute to our service people.

It was all done as part of *Draw to Remember* – a pilot initiative launched by RSL Queensland, designed to teach primary school children the significance of Remembrance Day and encourage remembrance through art.

The activity connected veterans with students from 55 participating primary schools across Queensland, each nominated by a local Sub Branch.

RSL Queensland Commemorations Manager Terri Morris – who conceived and projected the initiative to reality – describes the pilot as “a huge success”.





*“It gave children the freedom to explore their creative strengths in a no-rules activity, where they could draw what Remembrance Day means to them. It’s inspiring to see that children as young as five years old already have so much rich knowledge into the origins of the day.”*

“Bringing our network together with schools allowed children to admire and connect with a real local veteran and hear stories of their time serving,” Terri says.

“It gave children the freedom to explore their creative strengths in a no-rules activity, where they could draw what Remembrance Day means to them. It’s inspiring to see that children as young as five years old already have so much rich knowledge into the origins of the day.”

The feedback from schools has been “really positive”, and the children’s drawings have shown impressive flair and insight.

Colourful and unique, they feature soldiers and sailors, jets and military dogs, sunsets and slouch hats, rainbows of poppies, and those immortal words – ‘lest we forget’.

“The quality of the drawings that came back from the schools was inspiring. It’s truly heart-warming to see children of all ages putting their all into their drawings,” Terri says.

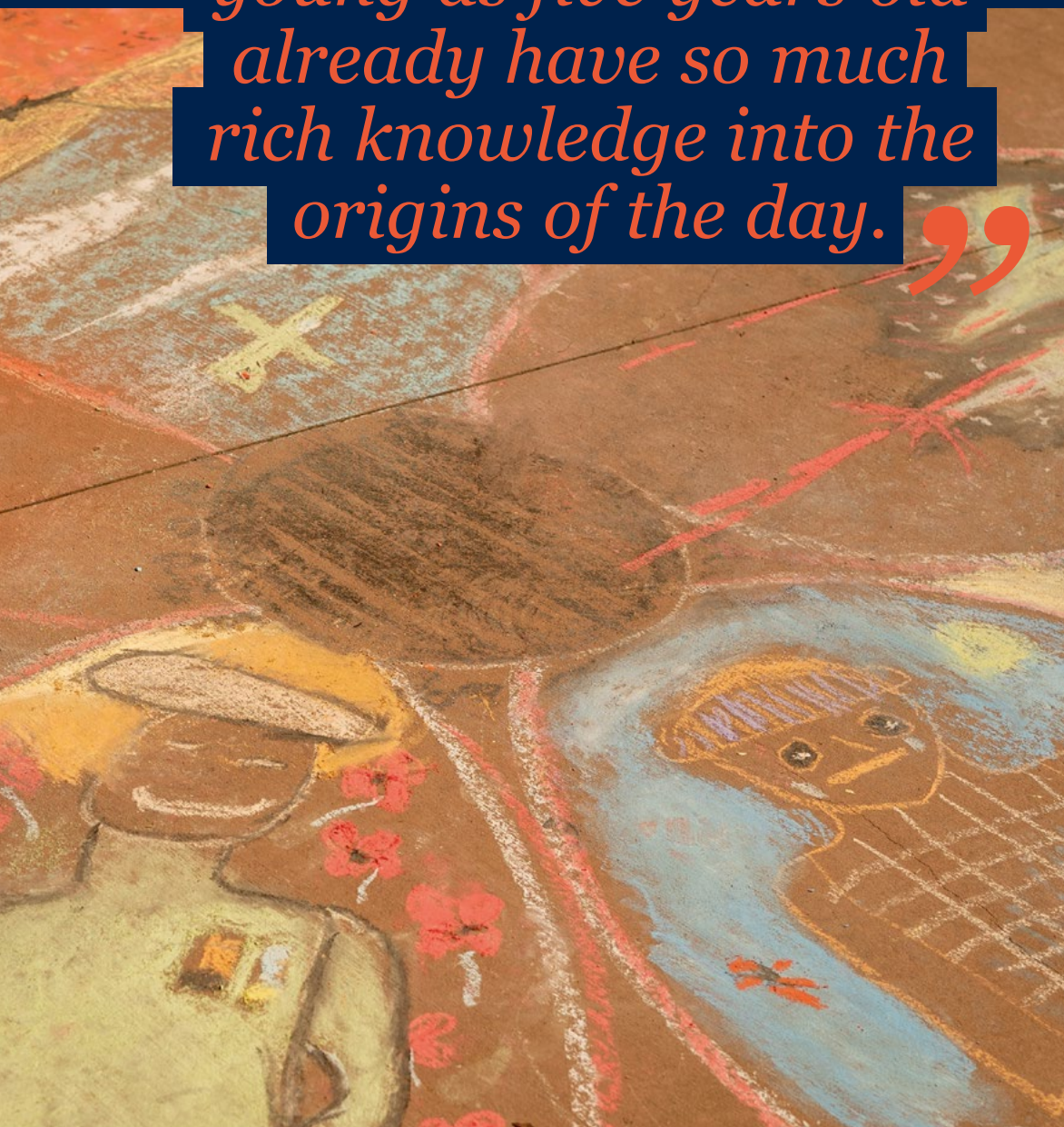
“I have thoroughly enjoyed trying to interpret their stories of remembrance through art. It was refreshing to see a variety of drawings, from Indigenous and international flags through to animals and great-grandparents who served and live on in the memories passed down through their families.”

Keeping those memories alive is what makes activities like *Draw to Remember* so important, Terri says.

“It’s a unique way that we can engage children in commemoration to keep alive the spirit and memories of those who have sacrificed.

“We couldn’t have done it without the support of the RSL Sub Branches and members.”

Following the pilot’s success, RSL Queensland hopes to share *Draw to Remember* with more schools next year. ←







**REMEMBER**  
to remember

**2022**







CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: RSL Queensland State President Stephen Day DSC AM with Remembrance Day ambassador and highly decorated Australian Army veteran and Victoria Cross for Australia (VC) recipient, Corporal Daniel 'Dan' Keighran VC; Pictured at the Brisbane service were Jai Baas Becking, Heywood Frank, Tung Ho, Gary Buckler and Alison Hishon; Author and humanitarian aid worker Jacqueline Pascarl was adorned in poppies at the Remembrance Day service in Brisbane, and is pictured with Mark Mackay; Lord Mayor of Brisbane Adrian Schrinner talks with other guests at ANZAC Square; Janet Harvey and her son Edgar paid their respects at the Brisbane service. Edgar's father is in the 8th/9th infantry at Enoggera. Janet's grandfather served in WWII and her great-great grandfather served in WWI.







CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: Paying their respects at the Chinchilla service were Roy Smith, Dan Mulligan (a parent of one of the cadets), John Moffitt, and (back row) Glen Morse and Col Pitt; On 11 November, RSL Queensland staff joined communities across Queensland to commemorate Remembrance Day. At Holland Park/Mount Gravatt RSL Sub Branch service, RSL Queensland staff, left to right, Maggie Tsai, Ileana Isijanovski, Scott Ellem, Tony Meacham, Laura Carr and Dashan Zhou, are pictured with veteran Tom, left, and Gregory Dinte, centre, who received his 50-year membership certificate on the day; Pictured after fulfilling their duty as the catafalque party at Gracemere & District RSL Cenotaph are members of 31st/42nd Royal Queensland Regiment, from left, CPL James Lowe, Guard Commander, PTE Johnson, PTE Lobegeiger, SPR Zahl, PTE Dahlheimer, and PTE Lehtonen; Members of the 1st Regiment RAA - Gallipoli Barracks (pictured) commemorated Remembrance Day with an installation of poppies at the barracks.





CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Members of the 1st Regiment RAA - Gallipoli Barracks (pictured) commemorated Remembrance Day with an installation of poppies at the barracks; Australian Army Cadets participate in the Chinchilla Remembrance Day service; Forest Lake and Districts RSL Sub Branch commemorated Remembrance Day with local schools, including Pallara State School, who took part in Draw to Remember. The school did two projects including a mural (pictured) which will be sealed so it can be enjoyed for years to come.







CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Paying their respects at the Charleville Remembrance Day service were, left to right, Charleville RSL Sub Branch President Greg Field, Deputy President George Donohue OAM, Sean McConnell, Ron Reid and Rob Hickson. Crowds of up to 70 people gathered at the cenotaph, including many young people from local schools and scouting groups; Year 10 music student Jaide Parks represented Palm Beach Currumbin State High School as a solo vocalist during Currumbin RSL's Remembrance Day Service. Jaide did an outstanding job leading the New Zealand national anthem during the service and joined the community choir for the Australian anthem; More than 200 guests attended Banyo RSL Sub Branch's Remembrance Day Service and 50 attended the lunch hosted by the Banyo RSL Citizens' Auxiliary. President Michael Frawley is pictured reading the Ode, with Rev. Bob Rogers to his side.; Charleville State High School students at the Remembrance Day service; Goondiwindi RSL Sub Branch members Brian Copeland, Clinton Billsborough and Robert Collins at the cenotaph in Goondiwindi Town Park on Remembrance Day. Photo by Wayne Pratt.







CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Members of Malanda RSL Sub Branch and the Malanda Men's Shed worked shoulder to shoulder to spring clean the Eacham Memorial Gates ahead of their Remembrance Day service. Malanda's service was led by Christine Reghenzani, President of Malanda RSL Sub Branch and Commander in the Royal Australian Navy. Prayers were led by Deacon Alban Hunt and there was a recital of a story about a young Australian who enlisted as a horse handler and driver in World War I. Students from Malanda State High, Malanda Primary and Butchers Creek Primary took part, each reading a paragraph of In Flanders Fields by John McCrae; Pictured at the Helensvale Remembrance Day service were Simon and Debs Pohatu (Rtd Army Warrant Officer with the New Zealand Defence Force) with granddaughter Layla Clark; Hervey Bay locals and visitors turned out in droves for the Remembrance Day commemoration service at Freedom Park hosted by Hervey Bay RSL Sub Branch. Students (pictured) from Hervey Bay schools were amongst the 45 wreath layers at the cenotaph and the Light Horse War Memorial, together with representatives from ex-service organisations including the RAAF Police and RAAF Dog Handlers, Hervey Bay Ex-service Women's Association and Open Arms. More than 300 members and their guests attended the luncheon at the RSL & Services Memorial Club after the service; Maroochydhore RSL Sub Branch members, including Major Donald Graham (pictured), visited Brisbane for the Remembrance Day service at ANZAC Square; Fantastic weather encouraged an above average crowd to attend Pine Rivers RSL Sub Branch's service this year which highlighted 75 years of Peacekeeping duties with two guest speakers, Wing Commander (Rtd) John Thynne and Capt Anthony Crowley (OC 2CER). Pine Rivers member John Barrett (pictured) laid a wreath on behalf of the many Vietnam veterans who attended the service this year.





CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: The Rosewood RSL Sub Branch Remembrance Day service was well attended by younger generations including grandsons of the Sub Branch's Treasurer Ian Luetchford, William and Mark (pictured); Vietnam veteran Trevor Hatch passed the tradition of Remembrance Day to future generations for them to carry on and uphold the reverence of the day (pictured) at the Redlands RSL Sub Branch service; Miles RSL Sub Branch member Fred Thompson is reunited with his mate Colin Meacham – 43 years after serving together in Townsville – at their Remembrance Day service; Paying their respects at the Stanthorpe service were, from left, former President Cyril Charlwood, Director Kevin Ross, Director Peter Beacroft, Director Robert Swaine, Director and Treasurer Tom Page, guest speaker Graeme Caesar, Director and Ceremonial Officer Greg Williams, Director Nick Hese, Stanthorpe Sub Branch member Geoff Davis and former Deputy President Norm Steele; TS Kookaburra Naval Cadets took part in Stanthorpe RSL Sub Branch's Remembrance Day service at Weeroona Park Cenotaph; Mundebbera RSL Sub Branch collaborated with Mundubbera State School for Draw to Remember. Year 6 students produced a commemorative mural to mark the day; Mudjimba RSL Sub Branch commemorated Remembrance Day with student representatives from Good Samaritan Catholic College, Pacific Paradise State School and the Bli Bli State School Choir. The MC for the day was Robert Walford, representing the Sub Branch in the absence of President Graeme Wong. Special thanks to SQNLDR Peter Hobeling and PLTOFF Shamira Hobbler and the cadets of 207 SQN Australian Air Force Cadets for providing the Catafalque Party commanded by Cadet Flight Sergeant Will Halter and to guest speakers COL Clay Sutton (Rtd) and Padre Major Bob Strong (Rtd); City-New Farm RSL Sub Branch was supported by the community in its annual Remembrance Day Poppy Appeal, including Navy cadets from Training Ship Brisbane, Jenny Gregory from Australian War Widows Association and Sub Branch Secretary Adrian Pate.











FROM TOP TO BOTTOM: The Rosewood RSL Sub Branch Remembrance Day service was well attended by younger generations including students from Ashwell and Rosewood State Schools; Both the young and elderly pay their respects at the Centenary of Anzac Memorial during Woodgate Beach's Remembrance Day 2022.






ABOVE: Four-year-old Lane Deighton paying his respects at the Townsville Remembrance Day service at Anzac Park;  
BELOW: Member for Mundingburra Les Walker MP laying a wreath at the Townsville service.





*The pint-sized Rollingsstone RSL Sub Branch is a shining example of how friendships and community were forged out of one Sub Branch in Queensland's tropical north.*

 Sarah Webb



# THE TROPICA



**I**t's a scorching hot afternoon on the palm-fringed dunes of Townsville's Balgal Beach, but Rollingstone RSL Sub Branch President Ewan Cameron is barely raising a sweat.

Everything from the heat to the postcard-perfect views is business as usual for the passionate local veteran.

When asked how he feels about running the small but mighty

nearby Sub Branch to a backdrop this breathtaking, he shrugs and laughs.

"It's paradise one day, and perfect the next."

"In fact," he admits, while gesturing at the golden sand that quickly becomes the sapphire sea, "I don't even notice it anymore."

This is partly because the former RSL Queensland Vice President spends his time in a pristine beachside pocket just a 40-minute

drive north of Townsville, where any given day it looks as though the landscape has been digitally enhanced.

But it's mostly because Ewan continues to dedicate endless hours to bettering the lives of local veterans and the wider community from inside and out of the humble Rollingstone Sub Branch – where diversity, inclusion and care are at the very core of their manifest.

#### **BIRTH OF ROLLINGSTONE RSL SUB BRANCH**

Nestled between Ingham and Townsville, and perched at the start of the 'great green way' that stretches all the way to Cairns, Rollingstone comprises a sleepy



# TECHNIQUE





village with a school, post office, and a police station.

Boasting a population of just 125 in the village and 1,550 in the district – and sandwiched between impossibly green peaks that frame the coastline – Rollingstone is also just a stone's throw from the picturesque beach hamlets of Mystic Sands and Balgal Beach. There, laid-back holiday homes are dotted among rustic fishing shacks and family abodes that are all but a meander from the shore.

It's also where Ewan and a handful of others decided to co-launch the Rollingstone RSL Sub Branch back in 2000, following his 25 years of service in the Army.

"When we were looking at finding a home for the RSL (Sub Branch), we approached one of the owners of the Mystic Sands Golf Club, who said he had been a Fleet Air Arm Pilot – he'd flown A-4 Skyhawks. He told us that if we didn't have the RSL at his place, he wouldn't talk to us," Ewan says.

"So, now it's the home of Rollingstone RSL Sub Branch and the owner has even put that on his bus.

**ABOVE:**  
Rollingstone  
RSL Sub Branch  
President  
Ewan Cameron  
dedicates  
endless  
hours to  
bettering the  
lives of local  
veterans and  
the wider  
community.

**RIGHT:**  
Rollingstone  
RSL Sub Branch  
President Ewan  
Cameron chats  
with members.

"But our home is not so much about the bus or the golf club or the wonderful surrounds we have. It's instead the place where you can hang your hat and the kind of place where you know that you can achieve what you want. Our home is our castle."

Back then, when the Sub Branch was in its infancy, Ewan says their unofficial status as 'the new kids on the block' paved the way for new ideas and opportunities that

allowed them to craft innovative ideas to better engage not just their members, but the wider community.

"I think the most interesting thing we've been able to do over the course of the Sub Branch is launch our community engagement activities," Ewan says.

"While we always had a good social contingent, we principally started off around the families, and then there were the friends of the members, and so ended up expanding to include a good social group.

"We took the opportunity to form a Citizens' Auxiliary out of that group of social members and I think that was what widened our membership base. That was then seen by the community, and they quickly realised they could join the RSL Queensland Sub Branch without having served."

### **BIG IMPACT BY SMALL BUT MIGHTY SUB BRANCH**

Since those remarkable beginnings, Ewan says the Sub Branch has gone from strength to strength. And while membership has ebbed and flowed over the years – with COVID-19 causing a drop in numbers – the Rollingstone cohort has remained







a shining example of the power of community.

"I think the main reason we've been able to do things [well up here] is because we've got a community where people suggest things," Ewan says.

"I also think it's the unique nature of the community. Rollingstone is halfway between Townsville and Ingham ... and generally, there are a number of community organisations, clubs and other charities around here, with most locals tending to be in more than one.

"So, the clubs and the communities and associations tend to work together, because they've sometimes got the same committees and they can easily cooperate. And it just seems to be that RSL Queensland has a range of property that we can all use. It's a bit of give and take all around."

Ewan says this give and take has allowed the Sub Branch to launch powerful community engagement programs over the years to raise participation in suicide awareness and support mental health.

They've also raised the profile of military services and support

throughout the region, with a striking memorial erected at Balgal Beach in 2004. This memorial has since become a coveted location to witness the Dawn Service on ANZAC Day.

"Other members come from diverse backgrounds and they're able to bring some fantastic ideas to our Sub Branch. For example, we've currently got a group who are making purple wreaths to commemorate the service of animals in war," Ewan says.

"I think the fellowship side of the Sub Branch is important, and people like to demonstrate that in different ways. That might come out of a Friday afternoon raffle, where one of our members meets a traveller from an RSL in New South Wales or South Australia, and suddenly we've got communication happening across state borders.

"And that's just the benefit of having these travellers turn up and say 'g'day.'"

### **FUTURE OF ROLLINGSTONE RSL SUB BRANCH**

While COVID-19 sparked a decline in membership, Ewan says their pint-sized Sub Branch has already hit the ground running in a post-pandemic world, with the launch of new programs, increased community activity and, as a result, several new memberships.

"We're kind of back to where we were pre-COVID, but in a refreshed way," Ewan says.

"At the moment we've got 43 RSL Queensland League members, and 32 auxiliary members.

"I think the community's aware of what each of us does and I think it keeps our community out here going."

And as to why he does what he does and why their work matters, Ewan says this: "While I was serving, I had soldiers looking after me. It's now my turn to look after them." ←





# A STATUE TO HONOUR CALOUNDRA'S WARTIME HISTORY

*Caloundra's role in WWII has been cast in bronze at the Kings Beach Amphitheatre, with Caloundra RSL Sub Branch unveiling a memorial on 13 August in honour of those who served.*

 **Lani Pauli**







**LEFT:** A bronze statue to honour Caloundra's wartime history was unveiled by veterans at the Kings Beach Amphitheatre on 13 August.

**BELOW:** Students from Kawana Waters State College march in the statue unveiling ceremony.

**BOTTOM:** The statue is modelled off 104-year-old Sunshine Coast veteran Faye Clarke, centre, and her husband Jack Clarke.

**MOST** visitors to this Sunshine Coast town wouldn't know the role Caloundra played during WWII.

During the war, from 1939 to 1945, many homes were commandeered by the Armed Forces, with the Caloundra School in Queen Street becoming the headquarters for the American Army. The town was also considered a restricted area by the Australian Defence Force.

Likewise, its proximity to the shipping channel made it the perfect place for an observation area for shipping movements.

#### A HISTORY TO BE RECOGNISED

It is said that 30 Army units formed up at Kings Beach to farewell Australia before joining the war efforts overseas.

It is these troops that Caloundra RSL Sub Branch President Heather Christie and Welfare Officer Gary Phillips wanted to honour in a bronze statue unveiled at Kings Beach on 13 August.

"This beach represents the last memories of home for the young men and women in the photos we have of this time before they went off to war," Gary says.

The bronze statue is of a soldier, nurse and wounded





*“The nurse who the statue was modelled on, Faye Clarke, is now 104 years old and was with us at the unveiling on 13 August, Victory in the Pacific Day.”*



**ABOVE:** The local community gathered to unveil the memorial at Kings Beach on the original parade ground, with a military presence and band.

**RIGHT:** A veteran plays the bagpipes during the memorial unveiling.

soldier on a single plinth. And the decision to place the statue at the Amphitheatre reflects back to the site being the parade ground for 24,000 to 30,000 troops who trained in the area during WWII.

“The nurse who the statue was modelled on, Faye Clarke, is now 104 years old and was with us at the unveiling on 13 August, Victory in the Pacific Day.

“This is our heritage, and it is imperative we are reminded of the bravery and sacrifice these men and women gave and those who continue to serve in the defence of Australia.”

The project has been more than three years in the making, with it finally coming to life thanks to the generous donation of a local philanthropist.

“The statue would be around \$300,000 to create the piece, and we made every effort to fundraise the amount or apply for grants. We were very fortunate to have local philanthropists Roy and Nola Thompson step forward and commit the amount needed to build it,” Caloundra RSL Sub Branch President Heather Christie says.

#### A STATUE BROUGHT TO LIFE

With funding secured, the Sub Branch chose local artists Mark Snell and Jane Bailey of Larvaworx Art Studio in Coolumb.

The local community gathered to unveil the memorial at Kings Beach on the original parade ground, with a military presence and band.

“It was a great afternoon and evening, with the Queensland Air Museum and War Birds Airforce Model Aeroplane Club providing military displays and the Kawana State College drama group providing and setting the theme, with more than 90 young people portraying the VICTORY,” Gary says. ←





# MATES 4 MATES

THE QUARTERLY MAGAZINE  
FOR OUR DEFENCE COMMUNITY

## Recovery through wellness.

HOW A NEW FOUR-DAY PROGRAM  
IS BENEFITING VETERANS.

+ **A SNAPSHOT OF 2022.**  
HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE LAST 12 MONTHS.

## Mentally preparing for the holidays.

HOW TO MAKE THIS TIME OF YEAR LESS  
OVERWHELMING.

+ **FINDING MATESHIP AND  
SUPPORT ONLINE.**  
BEHIND THE SCENES OF ONLINE SERVICES.





## A message from Emma.

**As we begin to wind down from the year we've had, here is our final issue of the Mates4Mates magazine for 2022.**

**T**his time of the year is a great opportunity to reflect on the wide range of wonderful recovery pathways the team have provided for the veteran community and their families across Australia and online. You can read more about these activities, programs and good news stories on page 4 as we share a snapshot of 2022.

One of these programs has been our new Four-Day Wellness Program which was run in South East Queensland, North Queensland, Tasmania, Northern Territory, and New South Wales throughout the year. You can find out more about this program on page 3 and how it's helping veterans manage post-service challenges now and in the future.

Support looks different for everyone, and our Online Family Recovery Centre has been there to ensure no veteran or family member goes through recovery alone. Our online activities and programs have increased exponentially throughout 2022 and we provide a behind-the-scenes look on page 6 at how it all comes together on the screen.

While the holiday season can be a joyous occasion, it can also be a challenging time for others, particularly those in the Defence Force community who have been impacted by service. The Mates4Mates team are here to provide support both in our centres and online, and our clinical team have listed some tips for mentally preparing for the holiday season on page 7.

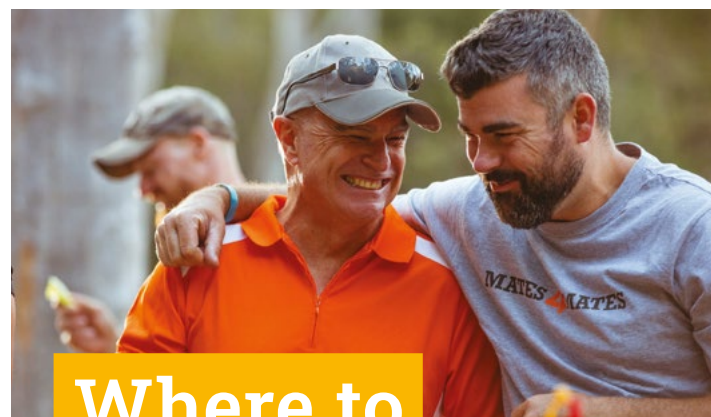
As you read through these stories, I'd like to wish you and your family a safe and happy holiday season and I look forward to seeing you all in the new year.

*Emma*

**General Manager of Mates4Mates**

## Thank you.

Thank you for your continued support this year for veterans and families who have been impacted by service. Once again, we have seen the power of our community who are willing to support one another. From the entire team at Mates4Mates, thank you!



## Where to find support.

**A**ll Mates4Mates centres will be closed from Friday, 23 December 2022 to Monday, 2 January 2023. The centres will re-open on Tuesday, 3 January 2023.

If you need support over the holiday period, there are many organisations that offer 24-hour support.

**Lifeline**  
13 11 14

**Suicide Call Back Service**  
1300 659 467

**Open Arms**  
1800 011 046

### Make the call that makes the difference.

Contact Mates4Mates to find out about our services, how you can access support or get involved.

[mates4mates.org](https://mates4mates.org)

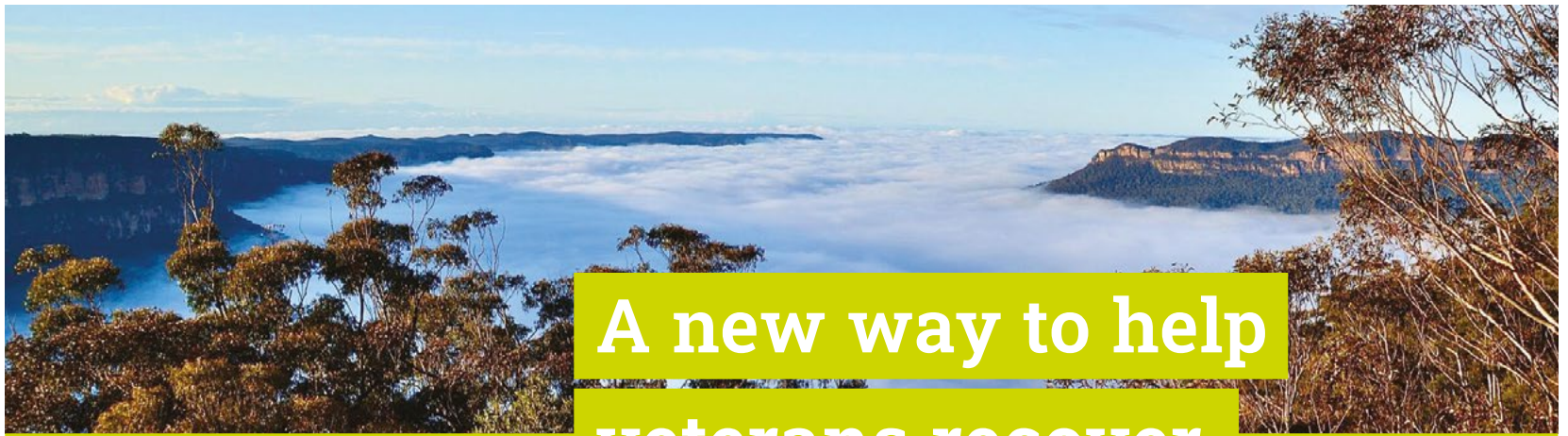
**1300 4 MATES**

**Keep up to date,  
follow us:**

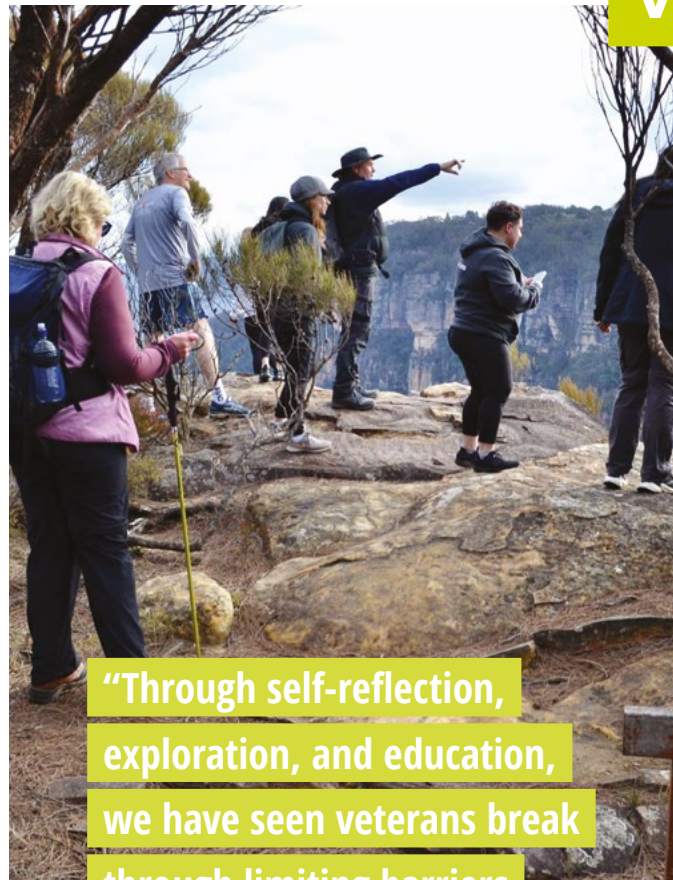


Mates4Mates supports current and ex-serving Australian Defence Force members, and their families, who have been impacted by their service. We are an initiative established by RSL Queensland. If you would like to contribute to our magazine please contact Mates4Mates Marketing team via [marketing@mates4mates.org](mailto:marketing@mates4mates.org) or call 1300 462 837.





# A new way to help veterans recover.



**"Through self-reflection, exploration, and education, we have seen veterans break through limiting barriers and engage in more fulfilling activities and relationships. Many participants have expressed their gratitude for the program which has propelled their life forward. For some, it has been described as a life changing experience in the most positive way."**

**— Stacey, Counsellor**

**After the success of the Three-Day Wellness Programs in 2021, Mates4Mates expanded on its wellness offerings to veterans impacted by service by introducing the Four-Day Wellness Program in 2022.**

**T**he Four-Day Wellness Programs have been designed to help veterans find new ways to better manage post-service challenges that they may be facing in their recovery, in a non-judgemental and inclusive environment.

Each program allows veterans to participate in interactive group workshops that can help them to develop healthy coping mechanisms that will support them in managing their mental and physical health now and into the future.

The program is run by a friendly team of Mates4Mates psychologists, counsellors,

social workers and exercise physiologists dedicated to helping veterans get the most out of the four days.

Across 12 locations this year, from Fraser Island and the Blue Mountains to Cradle Mountain and Kakadu National Park, veterans took the time over the four days to invest in themselves and their recovery alongside other veterans.

This program is open to all veterans who are registered with Mates4Mates. Be sure to keep an eye out on our website **[mates4mates.org](https://mates4mates.org)** for opportunities next year. Please note places are limited.

## **Four-Day Wellness Group Workshop Topics**

- **PTSD and other mental health disorders**
- **Relationships and communication skills**
- **The challenges of transitioning from the Defence Force**
- **Improving pain management**
- **Physical activities**
- **Effective mindfulness and relaxation skills**



# A snapshot of 2022.

Across our centres and online, the Mates4Mates team provided a wide range of new programs and activities throughout 2022. Here is a snippet of those highlights, all with the aim to help support veterans and their families impacted by service.



## January

### New online programs

A variety of new online activities were delivered to veterans and their families this year, but none as popular as the 'Imagine This!' weekly activity. With a different theme each week, participants respond in their own, unique way through different mediums such as poetry, nail art, crosswords – the list goes on!



## February

### First Four-Day Wellness Program

O'Reilly's Rainforest Retreat was the first location for our new Four-Day Wellness Program which saw seven veterans find new ways to better manage post-service challenges in a safe environment.

### The Top End gets active

As services in the Northern Territory continued to expand, veterans and their families began to access free group physical training (PT) and group hydrotherapy classes, led by an exercise physiologist, to improve their health and wellbeing.

## March

### Creating community connections

More than just a 4-week archery skills workshop, the newly developed Community Connections Program was piloted in North Queensland with the aim to help veterans impacted by service find their place in the civilian world and make local connections.

### Supporting partners and carers

A brand-new clinical program, the Partners & Carers Program was designed to support partners and carers of veterans and current serving Defence Force personnel by providing them with strategies to support their own mental health and wellbeing.

## July

### Expanding in Tasmania

Clinical and social services for veterans and their families in Tasmania grew as we welcomed an additional liaison officer for the North and Northwest, newly developed telehealth and online meeting rooms in Hobart and Launceston, as well as a new social worker.



## August

### Construction in the NT

It was an exciting milestone when construction commenced for the Northern Territory's new Veteran and Family Wellbeing Centre, located in Stuart Park, with the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Matt Keogh touring the new site. Works are scheduled to finish shortly with the centre opening early next year.



### Bridge to Brisbane

Over 400 Mates4Mates supporters walked, ran and wheeled to the finish line in this year's Bridge to Brisbane, an iconic charity fun-run held on 28 August. Mates4Mates was a proud charity partner this year, with over \$15,000 raised for veterans and their families who have been impacted by service.



## September

### Women's Health Week Program

Successfully held across all our locations for the first time, this clinical program was designed to help women, both veterans and family members, increase their awareness and understanding of women's health topics and increase their physical and psychological wellbeing skills.

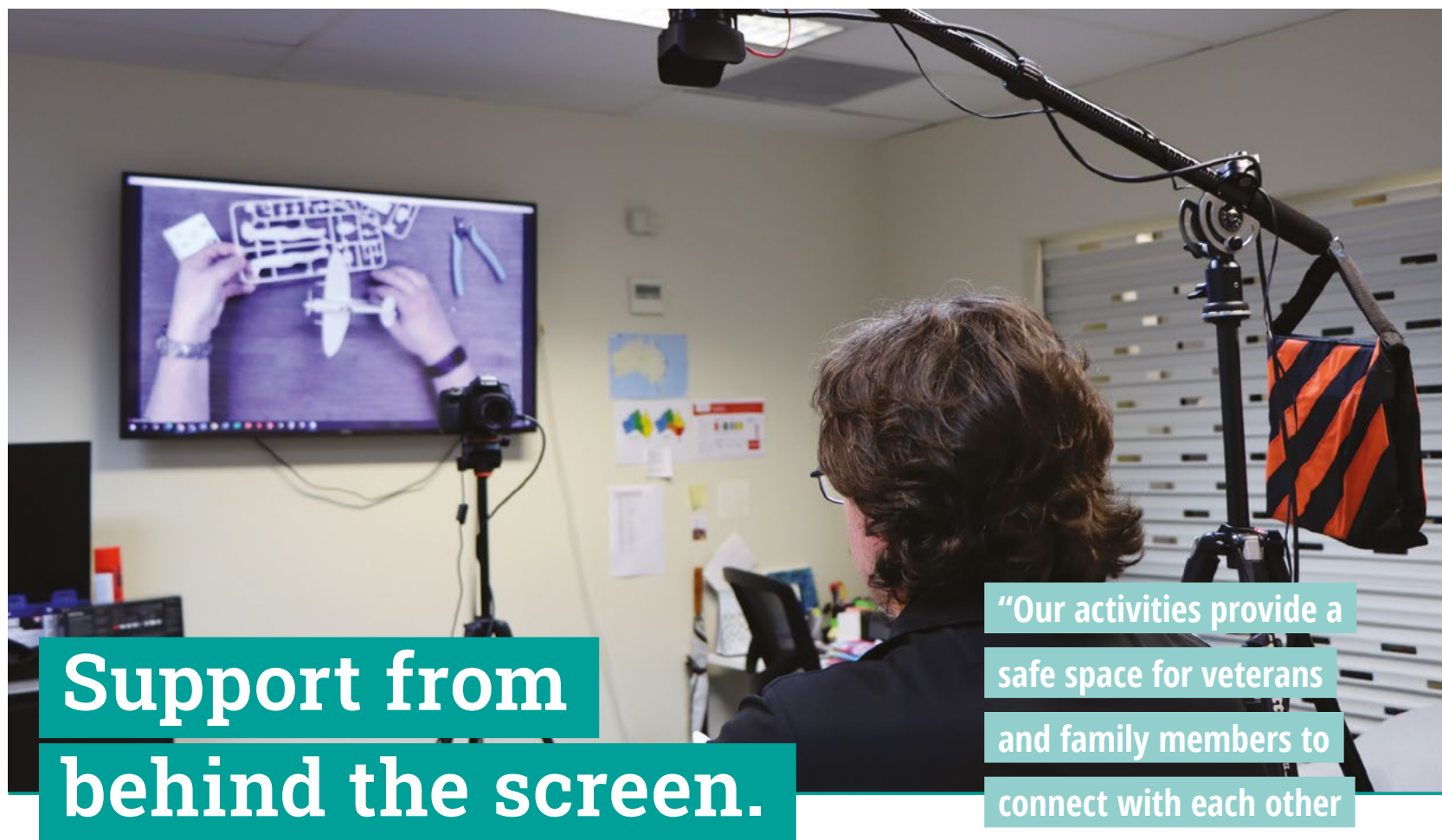


## October

### Veterans' Health Week

Supporting veterans' health and wellbeing, 'Eat Well' was the focus of this year's Veterans' Health Week. Thanks to funding from the Department of Veterans' Affairs, our centres offered a range of activities that provided education around making better nutritional choices.





# Support from behind the screen.

“Our activities provide a safe space for veterans and family members to connect with each other and build strong authentic relationships.”

— Kyle, Online Liaison Officer.

**In-person support is not practical for every veteran. While geographical barriers tend to be first thought of, other boundaries such as service-related mental health impacts can make it difficult for veterans to access support this way. Online services can bridge this divide.**

**T**he ability to connect with a community of like-minded people, while feeling safe, has significant benefits in a veteran's recovery journey.

“We have seen people who were unable to leave the house now independent and driving themselves to appointments. We have seen people find new hobbies and passions that have reinvigorated their lives. We have seen smiles and so much laughter,” explains Steve, the Regional Manager for Online Services.

“Our activities provide a safe space for veterans and family members to connect with each other and build strong authentic relationships,” adds Kyle, Online Liaison Officer.

Starting with two weekly activities in April 2021, coffee catch-ups and trauma-informed yoga sessions, the online timetable has grown over the past 18 months. Activities in 2022 included a range of creative workshops as well as a second weekly coffee catch-up that is more suitable for veterans located in Western Australia.

‘Jamie’s Ministry of Food’ cooking course received the greatest attendance, with the ‘Introduction to Photography’ activity always a fan favourite, booking out within mere hours. The monthly ‘Trivia Night’ also draws a crowd, with teams designing their own t-shirts and hats just for the occasion.

Designed as live and interactive experiences, the good news is that you only need an internet browser to access Mates4Mates online services. Behind the scenes though, the high-tech gear is required. The more complex activities include multiple cameras for streaming, camera stands to get the best angles, and video mixing desks, microphones and studio lighting.

“All of this is to try to put veterans and family members ‘in the room’ with us,” adds Steve.

If you’d like to get involved with Mates4Mates or find out more about our online services, call us on **1300 4 MATES** or email the team at **[onlinefrfc@mates4mates.org](mailto:onlinefrfc@mates4mates.org)**.



# Mentally preparing for the holiday season.

*Written by Tamsin Wallace,  
Mates4Mates Psychologist*

**The holiday season can be a challenging time for veterans and their family members who have been impacted by service. Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), isolation and other challenges related to the holidays can be overwhelming or trigger an increase in symptoms.**

Holidays can bring out the best in people but can also cause stress and tension. Shopping centres become more crowded and noisy and an increase in social activities can cause an exacerbation in anxiety and depression. Expectations of the 'perfect holiday' as often portrayed in the media can also be challenged by the reality of the holidays, further increasing distress and dissatisfaction.

Another common experience for veterans during the holiday season is feeling undeserving of celebrating and this may increase isolation. They may choose to not participate, avoid social events or use unhealthy strategies such as drinking alcohol to cope with an increase in anxious symptoms or to avoid painful memories.

Family members may also struggle as they cope with the demands of the season as well as the changes that may happen for their loved one who is struggling with PTSD or other mental health issues.

Overall, this time of year can bring a sense of loneliness and guilt, and this can have a significant impact on relationships with friends and family and increase the likelihood of interpersonal conflict.

While some might find it difficult to acknowledge the challenges of the holiday season and find it hard to reach out for help as a result, there is support available and communication is key. Whether it be letting your loved ones know you can get overwhelmed during this time or speaking with other veterans who feel the same way, this intentional communication with others can help decrease the feelings of isolation.

If you are feeling overwhelmed, it's okay to take time for yourself and step away from any situation if needed. Remember, you are just as deserving as anyone else in celebrating the holidays and you can use this time to engage in self-care and activities that are important to you and those you care about.

## Advice from a psychologist on mentally preparing for the holiday season:

### 1. Communicate with loved ones.

While discussing your mental health will take vulnerability, it will allow your family or friends the opportunity to support you where they can and help them to understand what you are experiencing.

### 2. Seek professional support.

Talk to a mental health specialist, for example a psychologist, counsellor or social worker, to develop an individualised plan that will provide effective strategies for you to use over the holiday period.

### 3. Create a self-care plan.

Find the things that help 'fill your cup' and give you a better headspace to deal with the stress of holidays. This might be daily visualisations, exercising, taking time out in nature, or making a plan of events to attend, ensuring you don't feel overcommitted in social settings.

**If you or someone you know is in crisis and needs immediate support over the holiday period, contact 000 or attend your nearest hospital. For 24-hour support, phone Open Arms: 1800 011 046 or Lifeline: 13 11 14.**



# MATES4MATES

Here for those  
impacted by service.



## Join Mates4Mates

Find a way forward from  
service-related injuries.

Support for all current and ex-serving Defence Force  
members impacted by service, and their families.

- ✓ Psychology appointments
- ✓ Physical rehabilitation and wellbeing services
- ✓ Social connection activities
- ✓ Skills-based recovery programs



[Join Mates4Mates](#) Register today



# VIETNAM VETERANS' DAY

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Remembering Australia's service



The year 2022 marks 60 years since the start of Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War.

Commemorated every year on 18 August, Vietnam Veterans' Day provides an opportunity to honour and remember the sacrifices of those who died and thank the 60,000 Australians who served during the 10 years of our involvement in the Vietnam War – Australia's longest military engagement of the 20th century.

Over the decade-long commitment, 521 Australians died and some 3,000 were wounded. Fifteen thousand national servicemen, known as Nashos, served.

Vietnam veterans continue to contribute and play an important role in our ex-service community. Here, we chat with veterans and their families about their experience during the war and the circumstances they faced upon their return.

Lest we forget.



# *A day to embrace the recognition they deserve*

**LIKE** so many others, veteran Roger Collins stepped up to defend his country when the call came to deploy servicemen to Vietnam.

Yet, unlike veterans before them, Roger says there was no fanfare when they returned home.

"There was nothing. Sometimes the recognition of what has transpired is more important than monetary compensation,

for example," he says.

It wasn't until several years later that Roger was ready to get involved with the Defence community. He's now Secretary of Currumbin Palm Beach RSL Sub Branch and Deputy President of Gold Coast District RSL.

Joe Gates, committee member at Currumbin Palm Beach RSL Sub Branch, went to Vietnam with the 2nd Battalion, Royal Australian

Regiment and had a similar experience upon coming home.

"I was in Vietnam for a year as a radio operator in the signal platoon of support company 2 RAR," he says. "I went back in 1971 with 4 RAR for another six months.

"Coming back to Australia was a bit strange. Some of us came by ship on the HMAS *Sydney* and others by aircraft. Both times I touched down in Townsville late





# VIETNAM VETERANS' DAY



at night and there was barely anybody in the building.

"I met my family, and we jumped in a cab and went home. We had been advised to wear civilian clothing because there'd be talk of possible protestors being around."

"We thought that after all this time, after being in Vietnam for 12 or 13 years and the war's finished and we were home, that there might be some recognition."

## JUST HOW IT WAS

Roger, who joined the Navy when he was 16 years old, says talking about his time in Vietnam is something he's only recently started to do.

"I joined the Queensland Police Service after leaving the Navy and was active for 30 years. It has only been recently that my colleagues have discovered I served. We just didn't talk about it. It's sad, but that's what happened."

He started his Naval career with 12 months on HMAS *Leeuwin* in Fremantle, before joining HMAS *Rushcutter* for specialist diving training, and then being drafted to the HMAS *Vampire* (which is now at the Maritime Museum at Darling Harbour, Sydney).

"On board the HMAS *Vampire* we went to the Far East, the Southeast Asian Treaty



Organisation and the Indonesian Confrontation was about to happen. We were a part of that, which ran concurrently with Australia's involvement in Vietnam," he says.

"The *Vampire* was also part of the escort of HMAS *Sydney* and the first battalion into Vietnam. I think the longest I spent at sea was 28 days, continuous patrolling up and down to Meleka Straits."

Roger left the Navy in 1969 and has recently enjoyed reconnecting with mates from those days.

"I didn't get involved with the RSL until the 1990s, after going to a Dawn Service with a mate. And now one of my grandsons is 28 years old and in the Air Force, and another, who is 18 years old, wants to join the Air Force. It makes me realise how young we were going off to battle at 16 or 17 years old.

"We weren't old enough to vote or legally go into a hotel, but we were able to go into war zones and operational ships.

"The whole memory of my service

is the mateship. You make very firm friends, and they remain with you for your whole life," he shares.

## THE IMPACT OF A DESIGNATED DAY TO COMMEMORATE

"Vietnam Veterans' Day is healing. It is a way we can honour the 500 that made the ultimate sacrifice and the thousands that were wounded. It is a day that can outlast us," Roger says.

"Having a service in recognition is an important part even all these years later. It is very, very important for all of us who didn't get any recognition in those days.

"We're hosting our second commemorative service this year, and I'd encourage any veteran who attends to embrace the ability to talk to people and reconnect.

"I'm very proud to be in a position where I can offer support and have a part to play in offering support for veterans. I love whatever role I can play in being involved in helping veterans improve their quality of life." ←

**ABOVE:**  
Vietnam veteran Roger Collins is now Secretary of Currumbin Palm Beach RSL Sub Branch and Deputy President of Gold Coast District RSL.



## *One war, one family and one battle to break the binds of PTSD*

**IT'S** been 60 years since the Vietnam War rippled out in seismic waves across Southeast Asia.

But until just 12 months ago, RSL Queensland Executive Assistant Renata Rafferty could still feel its crippling effects.

The daughter of a Vietnam veteran and granddaughter to prisoners of war in Siberia and Germany, Renata grew up in a household shaped by post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

And it wasn't until October last year, when Renata accepted a job at Mates4Mates, that the 'battle after the war' finally abated.

Sharing her story as part of RSL

Queensland's commemoration of Vietnam Veterans' Day on 18 August, Renata said the long road to recovery was only possible through the organisation's lifesaving services.

"As soon as I saw that job description for Mates4Mates, I knew I'd found my purpose," she says.

"They offer these incredible services to veterans and their families, and I could see that it was the right support for my parents, the kind of support we'd always wanted."

### **THE BATTLE AFTER THE WAR**

Renata's parents, Irena and Henryk

Fabisiak, met at a Polish dance in Sydney and fell in love soon after.

It was just after Vietnam, and while the joy of starting a family took centre stage, the hangover of the war sat like a heavy cloud in the background.

"Back then, if you served, it was like you were left on a ledge. People just walked away. People didn't want to know about the war, and they just didn't want to know you," Henryk says.

And then there was the PTSD.

"As soon as I entered a shop or a restaurant, I would immediately have to put my back against the wall. I had another friend who served who was the same. We had to make sure that we had eyes on the room.

"There was a lot of anxiety."

With good help hard to come by, and support services in Sydney doing little to heal the scars, Henryk learned to lean on alcohol – especially when ANZAC Day rolled around, and one drink turned into several.

### **THE LONG REACH OF TRAUMA**

The devastating effects on her husband's mental health meant Irena, like many partners of veterans, was soon saddled with the role of "supporting backbone".

As the years trickled by, the secondary effects of PTSD also took their toll, and soon after, the cracks in their marriage began to show.





*"As soon as I saw that job description for Mates4Mates, I knew I'd found my purpose. They offer these incredible services to veterans and their families, and I could see that it was the right support for my parents, the kind of support we'd always wanted."*



"There was many a time where I thought, 'Is this really worth it? Is staying together really worth it?' Because you don't want to go through it all again. And it's bloody hard," she says.

"It's hard for the kids. It's hard for you and it's hard to see your partner going through it and you can't be there to help them because you don't know how to help them."

For Renata, it translated into a childhood all but devoid of emotion and years spent struggling to relearn them.

"I grew up idolising my dad and I didn't realise it was to my detriment, because I was idolising someone who was hiding their emotions and pushing everything down until one day, it just exploded," she says.

"We only found out later on how that affected us all.

"People just don't realise that PTSD can have a lasting and long-term effect on not only the person who is suffering from it, but the family that are trying to support and help.

"Because you feel like you have to be that support person for absolutely everyone."

#### THE ROAD TO RECOVERY

While it has been 60 years since Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War, it's only been a few months, Renata says, since her parents' healing journey started.

"Soon after I joined Mates4Mates, I started mentioning their veteran services in conversations to Mum and Dad and then I started dropping off flyers and newsletters. Eventually I got Mum on board and then Dad followed, and that was the key.

"They're now accessing psychology sessions and classes that are making the world of difference. It would have been just phenomenal if we had these around when we were growing up.

"Seeing how much Mates4Mates has helped, and seeing the change in my dad, it's just everything," she says.

"They now have that safe place, that place where they feel comfortable, and at Mates4Mates it's a one stop shop of services."

While Renata made the transition to RSL Queensland earlier this year, she says working for organisations that have such a positive and personal impact on her own life leaves her at a loss for words.

And that, she laughs, is something that doesn't happen often.

"Getting up and going to work each day, knowing that I'm making a difference in veteran's lives is all I can ask for." ←

**ABOVE:** It has been 60 years since Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War, but for Irena and Henryk Fabisiak it's only been a few months since their healing journey began.

**OPPOSITE:** Irena and Henryk with daughter Renata Rafferty, who helped her parents on their road to recovery after joining Mates4Mates.



## *Military life gave a sense of belonging*

**YOU** can imagine that growing up in the 1950s in regional Queensland as a young Aboriginal boy wasn't always easy for Vietnam veteran Uncle Noel Pope.

Living in a community still guided by discriminatory laws that segregated Indigenous people, Uncle Noel grew up trying to find a place to belong.

The Wulli Wulli and Gooreng Gooreng man recounts going to the movies with his brother and having to sit on the opposite side to their non-Aboriginal friends.

"The little town that I was brought up in was experiencing all kinds of segregation and racism, but when I joined the military, it was the first time in my life that I was fully accepted," the RSL Life Member says.

"The day I enlisted to serve I agreed to defend and protect our country because that's who I am. I will always be a soldier, for the rest of my life."

### **SERVING IN VIETNAM**

Uncle Noel served in the Royal Australian Infantry Corps and Australian Army Assistance Group Vietnam.





"My brother was called up to national service and as Aboriginal men in those days, our best job prospects were probably labour jobs, which weren't paying very much. When my brother went into national service, he called me and asked why I didn't try to enlist, too."

Uncle Noel was 22 in 1972 when he went to Vietnam, and he was one of the last 28 soldiers left in Vietnam as part of a guard and escort troupe that didn't return home until 1973.

"I served in Vietnam all up for 14 months. When I first started my training and was sent to Canungra, I never thought I was going to go to Vietnam, although I wanted to," he says.

"I enjoyed the training. I was really good at it, but because all of the media were saying our efforts in Vietnam were winding down, I never thought I would get there."

When they landed in Vietnam, Uncle Noel was shocked at the devastation.

"I wasn't expecting that when we arrived. Our role was to support the other serving groups and other Australians still on the ground. We were changed over to work as embassy guards, essentially.

"I was taken up to Cambodia and was part of a guard party for an embassy ambassador for peace talks."

## COMING HOME

When he returned to Australia, Uncle Noel had almost finished serving his three-year contract with the Army and says his life changed a lot after coming home.

"I started questioning not only myself, but what I was doing and what I was going to achieve," he explains.

"Joining the military gave me equal footing and there was no racism in the military that I experienced. I felt very comfortable there."

*"If we could ever build a bridge of reconciliation, it's where the white man puts the bolt in and the black man does up the nut. And if we use glue, the glue has to be called respect. That bridge will stand forever."*

"But I wasn't okay. I had post-traumatic stress and it took me a while to find the right community to help me realise what I was going through."

"Still, I achieved all I wanted to. Being there when they lowered the Australian flag to signify the war was over, stays with me to this day."

## NATURE HEALS

One place Uncle Noel says he found peace when he returned home was in the bush.

"The rocks, the hills, rivers and trees. They were all able to bring about change in some of the things I was working through. As an Aboriginal I knew the land, I knew how to survive on the land."

It wasn't until he came across the Theodore RSL Sub Branch many years later that he felt a level of comfort with his community again.

"I've been a part of this Sub Branch now for 11 or 12 years and I can look back on my life in the military and be proud of what I did.

"But today, the biggest thrill I get is watching my grandkids march."

As part of his work with the Sub Branch, Uncle Noel and his Sub Branch President co-created a program of retreats for

veterans experiencing PTSD.

"We came up with our idea to give a more on-the-ground type of support for veterans. We would take veterans on a four- or five-day camp sometimes with their children," he says.

"Sitting around the campfire started a conversation among the group and brought everyone together.

"I started to study post-traumatic stress and found ways to help the veterans in our community. It wasn't rocket science or anything, it was just veterans talking to veterans.

"Still today, so many veterans want to shoulder it all themselves and the point I try to share with them is that you can't do it on your own."

As for the future, Uncle Noel's wisdom offers insight into what drove him when he enlisted and what gives him the motivation to keep supporting members of his RSL community today.

"If we could ever build a bridge of reconciliation, it's where the white man puts the bolt in and the black man does up the nut. And if we use glue, the glue has to be called respect. That bridge will stand forever." ←

**OPPOSITE:**  
Vietnam veteran Uncle Noel Pope co-created a program of retreats that gives more on-the-ground type of support for veterans experiencing PTSD.



# CAREER CHANGE SPURS VETERAN TO REPRESENT AUSTRALIA AT INVICTUS GAMES

*Competing in the Invictus Games has enabled Gaythorne RSL Sub Branch Advocate Taryn Barbara to restructure and rediscover her focus again.*

**LOSING** the only career you've ever known – or planned for – wasn't something Gaythorne RSL Sub Branch Advocate Taryn Barbara expected.

The now-Brisbane-based mum of two was medically discharged from the Army after 14 years of service in 2018.

"I joined the Army straight after I finished school in 2004," she says.

She cultivated a Defence career, participating in a range of humanitarian operations including supporting flood clean up and becoming a physical training instructor. Unfortunately, a cumulative back and hip injury meant she was medically discharged.

"I tried rehab, which worked initially, but not long term – which meant I couldn't continue working in Defence. It was a hard time," she explains.

"I lost my identity, and everything I could once do, I couldn't do anymore. I wasn't sure where I could go from there."

## **PRESENTED A NEW FOCUS**

During Taryn's transition to civilian life, a friend suggested she sign up for the Invictus Games and Taryn made the team.

The Games are a multi-national sporting event for wounded, injured or sick service men and women, and have been held in London, Orlando, Toronto, Sydney and The Hague (2022).

"After I left Defence, one of the biggest things I noticed was that when things around you aren't

great you tend to focus on all the things that aren't in your life anymore. It can be difficult to set goals when you're in that headspace.

"Being selected to be on the Invictus Games team in 2018 and 2022 let me restructure and rediscover my focus again.

For more information about the Invictus Games, visit [invictusgamesfoundation.org](https://invictusgamesfoundation.org)







Having to go to training, being involved in something, really let me start to see things positively again."

Taryn competed in swimming, volleyball and powerlifting and won five medals, including four gold and one silver. She says it is humbling to see others around you with similar stories.

"It is quite humbling to see others around you in a similar circumstance. You can help each other out. Everyone has good and bad days, and in that environment, everyone knows what you're going through. They understand what you're talking about – you all speak the same language."

### A NEW FRAME OF MIND

Competing at that level helped Taryn find structure again in her personal life.

"When you leave Defence, the structure you are used to is one thing you lose as well. So, getting back into training and having to go out – even when I didn't feel like it – let me restructure my life. And I got to bring people along with me and help them out."

She says competing at the Games was absolutely amazing.

"There are so many people there from all different walks of life, who have had something challenging come their way. And you're seeing them just push forward and kick goals. I can't put into words what the atmosphere was like. It was very inspiring."

Taryn says post-Invictus Games, she has started setting some smaller challenges for herself.

"Swimming is one of my main sports and it's something I've really had to learn. There is a lot of technique to it."

Taryn volunteers her time helping fellow veterans in her role as an Advocate and is a big supporter of the community Gaythorne RSL Sub Branch has given her.

"We don't connect with our RSL Sub Branches enough. Just being a part of the community has been great and allowed me to give something back. I went through my own tough time, and I see a lot of others in a similar place. I can offer them a friendly face to turn to and know they're heard."

"Just come and say hello to people. Some people aren't sure what the atmosphere will be like, and they can be reluctant to come and see. It's a welcoming environment and if anyone is wanting to meet like-minded people or help in general – your local RSL Sub Branch is definitely a place to start." ←



# Career steps

## GUIDED BY A COMMUNITY THAT UNDERSTANDS YOU

*Ex-serving Defence member Jacinta served for more than 18 years before taking the leap into civilian life. Her project coordination skills – along with guidance from the RSL Employment Program team – supported her to work in Government, not-for-profits and now as a Project Manager for Boeing Defence Australia.*

**FINDING** an employer who not only understands but encourages your unique strengths and sees your transferable skills as an asset can sometimes be like finding a needle in a haystack.

But they do exist, and RSL Employment Program partner organisations like Suncorp and Boeing are proof that you can find meaningful employment as you look to shape your career after leaving Defence. Likewise, they are

organisations where you are not only welcomed, but introduced to a community to help you thrive.

With support from the RSL Employment Program, an evidence-based service that helps employers understand the value of hiring ex-serving Defence members and their partners, you can be 'always prepared' and ready to put your best foot forward.

### SEEING BOTH SIDES OF THE COIN

Alex O'Connor, Talent Acquisition Specialist at Boeing, has

experience on both sides of the fence. As the partner of a current-serving Defence member, she is familiar with having to move every few years for your partner's work, and in her role with Boeing is responsible for hiring ex-serving Defence members.

Alex, whose husband served in the Army as a Nursing Officer for more than 20 years, says they travelled up and down the eastern coast of Australia while supporting his career.

"We've moved from Townsville to Brisbane to Melbourne and back to Townsville again. And during this he's been deployed within Australia and overseas," she explains.

### HIRING THROUGH THE LENS OF A SHARED EXPERIENCE

As both a recruitment specialist and the partner of an ex-serving Defence member, Alex knows it can be hard for ex-serving members and their partners to



**ABOVE:** A Royal Australian Air Force Boeing Aircraft in flight.

**RIGHT:** As the partner of a current-serving Defence member, Talent Acquisition Specialist Alex O'Connor understands the need to move every few years for your partner's work, and in her role with Boeing is responsible for hiring ex-serving Defence members.





translate their experience and skills to civilian roles or explain why they have had to move jobs so often.

"Veterans or ex-ADF members are facing something unknown to them when they leave," she says.

"A lot of organisations don't understand how to read a CV of someone who has served in the military.

"They bring such value to an organisation – an openness to change and an adaptability, as well as resilience. They can look for solutions to work as a team and come up with a positive outcome."

One example is Boeing Project Manager and ex-serving member Jacinta Veitch, who was referred through the RSL Employment Program.

Jacinta, who served for more than 18 years and is now the Project Manager on the Wedgetail aircraft for Boeing Defence Australia, says she's found a supportive environment that is rich in culture, diversity and inclusion.

"As veterans, we have some amazing skills that translate well into the civilian world – like quickly adapting to new environments, accepting guidance and direction, and having independence to work on our own," she says.

"I had worked up to the rank of Major before I left Defence. When you leave, like many other ex-Defence members, I found it hard to know what industry and what job I would like to do. I wanted something that would maximise my strengths and abilities."

"I was lucky that in the years leading up to leaving I had been involved in project roles, including coordinating Defence exercises, so I had transferable skills that I knew could translate. Still, putting those skills into civilian terminology so employers would understand what I



could bring to an organisation was something I needed help with."

#### LEADING BY EXAMPLE

Alex champions the way Boeing welcomes the ex-serving community and gives them a sense of belonging.

"We have many veteran employees around the world, and we have a Boeing Veterans Working Group. We find it gives them a familiar sense of community and lets them see they aren't alone.

"They see first-hand that others have done it before them and find that new support network. Anecdotally, I've been told from veterans who have joined Boeing that they felt like they've joined another family because we do have such a tight-knit veteran community."

#### THE HELP YOU NEED TO TAKE STEPS AHEAD

Jacinta is an advocate for any ex-serving members to reach out to the RSL Employment Program.

"I was able to make links into roles and organisations that I otherwise wouldn't have been able to," she shares. "The program was able to help me review my CV and really support my search for work outside of Defence.

"If you've left Defence, start the process. They are there to help you find the right fit for you."

#### SOUND LIKE YOU?

The RSL Employment Program works with more than 200 Australian employers who are interested in hiring veterans. Learn more about how the RSL Employment Program can support you at [rslemployment.com.au](https://rslemployment.com.au). ↩

**ABOVE:** Boeing Project Manager and ex-serving member Jacinta Veitch, RSL Employment Program Senior Manager Teegan Crump and Boeing Talent Acquisition Specialist Alex O'Connor.



To learn more about how the RSL Employment Program can support you in the search for meaningful employment, visit [rslemployment.com.au](https://rslemployment.com.au)



# WONDAI VETERAN RECOGNISED FOR SERVICE

*It took 75 years for 96-year-old Leonard McLeod to be recognised for his extensive service to our Defence Forces, with the awarding of the 1939-45 Star.*

**LEONARD** – or Len to his mates – is likely the last surviving Australian veteran to be issued the award, which made his recent participation in the Sydney ANZAC Day March even more bittersweet.

"It was a marvellous reception. They received us very well. It was unbelievable to see," he says.

"To see the reception personally and the people lined up along the side of the road – it must have been five or so thousand.

"ANZAC Day was one of the best things. I felt bad in a way that my friends and fellow veterans all around the islands we operated in didn't get any recognition. And now I'm going down to Sydney, leading a march, thousands of people lining the streets to clap us along."

It was only for his daughter seeing an advert in a local paper calling out for anyone's parents or family members who had served in the Small Ships to call, that he was made aware of their participation in the ANZAC Day March.

## **A COMMUNITY TO MAKE IT REAL**

Len is a member of Wondai RSL Sub Branch, which, together with the Wide Bay Burnett District, was able to help fundraise the cost needed to send Len to Sydney to attend.

Wondai RSL Sub Branch President David Scrimgeour is clearly moved as we talk, showing how much it meant to him and their community to be able to help Len

attend the ANZAC Day March.

"We worked with our District President Trevor Williamson to submit an application to the Charitable Objects Fund to seek a grant to help us get Len to Sydney. It covered his flights and accommodation so that he could take part in this truly special day," David says.

"When Len returned from Sydney, we were able to present him with a medallion from the US Army Small Ships Association together with a Certificate of Appreciation, which we'll display in the entry to the Wondai Diggers Memorial and Citizens Club."

The hotel that Len and his family stayed in while in Sydney – The Grace Hotel – was also symbolic as it is the site of where Len enlisted in the Small Ships at just 18 years old.

The US Army Small Ships consisted mostly of Australians who were considered too old, too young, or medically unfit to serve in the Armed Forces during the war. Their work was known as 'Mission X' and the 3,000 strong troupe served alongside US Army personnel and other nationalities including New Zealanders, Canadians, Chinese, Danes, and Filipinos.

But it wasn't Len's first time in the Defence Force.

"I first joined the Army when I was 15," he shares. "I was as tall as any of the 18-year-olds enlisting alongside me. I was about six-foot-one in those days.

"I would go in as my friends who

were already 18 enlisted. They'd ask me how old I was, and I'd say 21. They'd look me up and down before throwing me out."

Hearing Len recount his service history is like hearing the pitch for a Hollywood action movie. By the time he joined Small Ships he had already enlisted four times under three different names, 'celebrated' his 16th birthday in Papua New Guinea, served as a 'biscuit bomber' dropping essential supplies to troops, and hiked through the Papua New Guinea jungle solo with tropical dysentery and dengue fever to return to safety.

## **A SERVICE HISTORY KEPT OUT OF THE SPOTLIGHT**

After serving in the Small Ships, Len says no-one knew anything of the work he and his peers had done as part of the troupe.

"I would tell workmates about what we had done, and I felt like they looked at me as if I was making it up," he says. "So, I decided I wouldn't say a word to anyone, except my daughters. For about 50 years I never heard the words Small Ships."

Shortly after Len moved into a nursing home, Small Ships' secretary Daniel O'Brien visited him.

"It was the first time I had heard the name mentioned in so long. And that's where this whole journey really started."

The visit was organised by Len's daughter, Denise, who contacted Daniel after reading something about the Small Ships.

"I found an email address and phone number and called him," she says. "My sister and I knew Dad's story but no one else talked about it.

"When I read 'Small Ships' all his stories came back to me. When I called Daniel, he came at the first opportunity and the rest is history."

Today, Len lives in Wondai with his daughter Denise and son-in-law. ☛

### **CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:**

Wondai veteran Len McLeod attending the ANZAC Day memorial in Sydney; Len pictured with the Hon Tanya Plibersek MP; Len receives certificate of appreciation from Wondai RSL Sub Branch President David Scrimgeour; Len with a fellow veteran at the ANZAC Day Memorial Service and Len and his fellow veterans journey through Sydney's ANZAC Day march.







# HONOURING THE LIFE OF VETERAN JOE COTTRELL

*WWII veteran and Sandgate RSL Sub Branch member Joe Cottrell sadly passed away just weeks after celebrating his 100th birthday. Surrounded by his mates, family and RSL members, Joe celebrated his milestone birthday on 30 July 2022.*

**BELOW:** World War II veteran and Sandgate RSL Sub Branch member Joe Cottrell, front centre, with, from left, Sandgate RSL Sub Branch Acting President Don Baker, LTCOL John Anderson, Joe's son Rick Cottrell, and daughter Susan Bathson, Sub Branch secretary Andrew Law and Sub Branch Wellbeing Officer Terry Slader.

**JOE** served in the British Army from 1939 until 1943 when he was injured, and he moved to Australia in the 1950s as a '10-pound Pom.' A patriot, at 17 he was too young initially to join the Army in WWII, so instead joined the Lightkeepers – a form of British home guard.

When old enough, he enlisted and was allocated as a paratrooper to 1st Parachute Battalion (the Red Berets). Formed in 1941 from volunteers from various infantry regiments, it became part of the 1st Parachute Brigade, the only airborne infantry unit from Britain that served in Africa.

In 1943, after completing training, he made his first 'operational jump' into North Africa. After

weeks of patrolling, raiding and contacts across their Battalion area of operations, Joe's platoon encountered German soldiers occupying some high ground. Joe Cottrell sought cover from the open ground in a nearby ravine.

"I moved across open ground until I got to a ravine where there was some cover. All of sudden I heard a ping, then another ping on my helmet," Joe says.

That ping was a bullet hitting the helmet he was wearing. Joe was knocked out, suffering a head wound.

"I was injured and lucky enough to be picked up in a jeep by friendly forces. When I woke up, I saw angels and thought I had gone to heaven."

Those angels were the nurses that cared for him while he was in hospital.

Sandgate RSL Sub Branch Acting President Don Baker says Joe's story illustrates the rich tapestry of experiences within our veteran community and the shared military history between Britain and Australia.

"Our veterans are truly remarkable," Don says.

"It was an honour to be able to visit with Joe, a member of our RSL, in his 100th year and listen to his story. A story of sacrifice and service to country. A story that many of our serving, ex-serving and families share through their connections to our Defence Force."

Lieutenant Colonel John Anderson, the Chief of Staff 16th Aviation Brigade, says Joe's 100th birthday was a great opportunity to connect with the veteran community.

"It's not every day you get to spend time with an ex-serving member in their centenarian year," LTCOL Anderson says.

"I feel honoured to represent the Army and very privileged to have met Joe and presented him with a certificate from the RSL for his 100th birthday while listening to his extraordinary stories."

Don says that Joe's passing will be felt by everyone who knew him.

"Joe was a gentleman and an absolute character of our Sub Branch. When presented with the ANF from Anika Wells MP at our monthly social event, he provided us with insight into the history of the Sandgate RSL, including dances on a Friday night and other social meetups. His parting comments were, 'I'm so impressed to see that this same type of spirit still lives on. As you walk in here you can feel that belonging and it is wonderful. God bless you all.'"

"He will be sorely missed by all that had contact with him." ←





# FORMER TECHNICAL SAILOR FINDS HAVEN IN THE ARTS



Join Edge Hill/  
Cairns West  
RSL Sub Branch  
for 'Coffee  
Connections' at  
10am on the last  
Friday of each  
month (Warhaven  
Veterans Residence  
Common Room,  
Cairns). Family and  
friends welcome.

*A new mental pursuit helped Former Warrant Officer and Edge Hill/Cairns West RSL Sub Branch member Mark Richardson through a life-changing ordeal.*

**MARK** had a long Navy career – serving 27 years within the Marine Engineering department. His career took him to a range of interesting locations, including ports throughout the Middle East as part of a deployment to HMAS *Kanimbla* (II) in 2002.

After discharging from the Navy in 2007, Mark worked as an engineering manager at Green Island, located immediately off the Cairns coastline, before retiring.

Unfortunately, Mark contracted an infection in his right foot, which would drastically change the course of his life.

Having been a 'can do' sailor for the previous 27 years, Mark ignored the pain. So, by the time he and his wife, Kerry, attended the emergency department, they were told what no one wants to hear: Mark would have to have the limb amputated.

As a result, Mark was left with a profound sense of loss and an unshakeable low mood that followed him everywhere.

To focus on something completely different and novel, the former Technical Sailor enrolled in

a Bachelor of Arts course at James Cook University.

"I enrolled in the Bachelor of Arts to keep my mind active," Mark says.

"Physically, I could not do what I used to; however, this was not an issue with studying. My wife, Kerry, noticed an improvement in my mood straight away so I continued studying until successfully completing my degree last year."

After graduating with distinction, Mark went searching for a new pursuit and is now the new Edge Hill/Cairns West RSL Sub Branch Secretary.

The role sees Mark putting the knowledge and discipline gained from his degree to great use. Along with collecting and curating material on military history, including World War II, Mark delivers presentations and guest speeches on military history at his Sub Branch's monthly coffee catch-ups.

"We are extremely fortunate to have someone like Mark on the team," Edge Hill/Cairns West RSL Sub Branch President Kristen Rice says.



Edge Hill/  
Cairns West  
RSL Sub Branch  
Secretary Mark  
Richardson  
with original  
World War II  
journals from  
soldiers, sailors  
and airmen,  
alongside Sub  
Branch President  
Kristen Rice.

"We crossed roads on ANZAC Day earlier this year and Mark happened to be looking for something to do post-Arts degree."

"As someone who had a career in the Navy technical department for 20 years, I find it inspiring that Mark can complete a Bachelor of Arts degree, proving anything is possible despite what physical limitations you may have." ←



A photograph showing two men sitting at a white table in a library. On the left, a younger man with glasses and a dark green polo shirt sits with his hands clasped, looking towards the right. On the right, an older man with white hair and glasses, wearing a blue polo shirt, sits with his hands on a small box on the table, looking towards the younger man. In the background, there are bookshelves filled with books and a wooden display board with several yellowed documents pinned to it.

# VETERAN ADVOCATE AMONG LAST AUSTRALIANS TO BE AWARDED OAM BY QUEEN ELIZABETH II

*Kevin Winkleman has been advocating for veterans for more than 25 years. The Townsville local received his Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in the General Division in recognition of his services to veterans and their families in Australia's largest garrison city.*

**KEVIN** was one of 51 Queenslanders awarded an OAM in the Queen's Birthday Honours list announced by Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk in June 2022, placing him among the last in the nation to receive the honour from Queen Elizabeth II. He assists veterans and their families with claims to the Department of Veterans' Affairs in his current role as Pension Officer and Advocate at the Townsville RSL Sub Branch.

Kevin's passion for advocating for the needs of veterans stems from his lived experience as part of the Defence community, with several of his family members having

served with the Australian Defence Force (ADF).

"The satisfaction is there, helping them to achieve ongoing help, which is a result of their ADF service. We've helped them get the help they needed," he says.

RSL Queensland State President MAJGEN Stephen Day DSC AM says he was grateful to Kevin for his lifetime of commitment to service, which was representative of the RSL's core values.

"On behalf of RSL Queensland, I would like to extend our congratulations and give thanks to Kevin for his long-standing dedication, generosity and advocacy work, which has

enriched the lives of countless Queensland veterans and their families," Stephen says.

"Kevin represents the commitment to stand shoulder to shoulder with our veteran community, which is central to everything we do at RSL Queensland."

Kevin says he almost did not accept the OAM, with the news of the honour arriving on the same day one of his referees passed away.

"I ummed and ahed about whether I would accept it, but he would actually want me to go ahead and do it, so I did," Kevin says. ←





# WELCOME TO OUR NEW BOARD OF DIRECTORS



*On 28 October, we introduced the new RSL Queensland Board of Directors to members after voting for the final position closed on 27 October. Congratulations to the four new Directors, whom you can meet on the following pages.*

## **The RSL Queensland Board is comprised of:**

- Four skills-based Directors
- State President Stephen Day DSC AM
- State Deputy President Wendy Taylor
- State Vice President Bill Whitburn OAM
- State Council Chair Les Nash, who represents the State Council of District Presidents.

The Board provides strategic direction for RSL Queensland to meet its mission – to provide care,

commemoration and camaraderie to enable veterans and their families to live with dignity and respect.

Elected by members, the skills-based Board provides RSL Queensland with the right mix of experience and representation to serve the needs of members and the veteran community.

As veterans, the Board Directors bring a unique and critical understanding of the lived experiences of our ADF personnel.



# Meet the new Directors on the following pages...



## Tony Orchard

### **DIRECTOR**

Tony has 25 years' experience working in the financial industry, holding leadership positions including the role of Senior Business Financial Planner at National Australia Bank, which he held for five years. Tony's career includes operational and strategic experience gained through holding various roles on boards as a volunteer and in corporate management.

Tony served for seven years in the Australian Regular Army and eight years as a Reservist. He is an active member of the Ipswich RSL Sub Branch and was awarded the Australian Service Medal, United Nations Service Medal, and Australian Defence Medal.

Tony is a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD), is an Accredited Tax (Financial) Practitioner and holds a Bachelor of Business (Management), an Advanced Diploma of Financial Planning, a Diploma of Financial Services and a Diploma of Multimedia.



## Nic Gould

### **DIRECTOR**

As Managing Director and solicitor at Colwell Conveyancing Group, Nic has extensive experience in the areas of law, business strategy, risk management and governance. He has worked across the public and private sectors, including as a director of a number of private companies.

Nic has served in both the Australian Regular Army and the Army Reserves, having served in Afghanistan on two occasions and worked in an advisory role at the Australian Embassy in Jakarta with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Nic has a Bachelor of Laws, a Graduate Diploma of Legal Practice, a Certificate of Governance and Risk Management and a Graduate Certificate in Intelligence, and runs his own law practice.



## Ash Naughton

### **DIRECTOR**

Ash is the CEO and part-owner of TwentyFiveFour Group, a veteran-owned retail company which owns both On Duty limited (a distributor and retailer of outdoor and tactical gear) and Gunfire Coffee Limited. Prior to this, he spent four years as General Manager of Retail Food Group, running their global coffee roasting subsidiary company (Di Bella Coffee).

Ash is an active Reservist who has served in both a full-time and part-time capacity for more than a decade, participating in several operations and exchanges in various leadership and management roles. He is currently an Honorary Aide De Camp to the Governor of Queensland and will soon take up the appointment of Officer Commanding of Bravo Squadron, 12/16th Hunter River Lancers Regiment. He is also an active member of the Yeronga-Dutton RSL Sub Branch.

Ash holds a Bachelor of Commerce and Master of Business.





## Chris Hamilton

### DIRECTOR

Chris is the current CEO of RESQ Plus and is responsible for delivery of the Community Development Program in South West and Central Western Queensland. Chris has significant Board experience, having been the President and Chair of the Legacy Club of Brisbane, and a Director of Legacy Australia. He is currently a Director of Jobs Australia Ltd, and a member of the South West Queensland Hospital and Health Board and RSL Queensland's Governance Constitution and Awards Committee.

Chris served for more than 40 years in the Australian Army and the Army Reserves in full-time and part-time positions. His full-time roles saw him working in senior leadership positions in project management, training and infrastructure development in Canberra and Brisbane and overseas in Southeast Asia and the Southwest Pacific. He continues to act as Colonel Commandant of the North West Mobile Force in Darwin and the Pilbara Regiment in Karratha. He is also a member of Longreach RSL Sub Branch.

Chris has an MBA in Human Resource Management and Marketing, a Bachelor of Applied Science, a Diploma in Leadership and Management and an Associate Diploma in Horticulture. He is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

## OUTGOING BOARD BECOMES STATE COUNCIL OF DISTRICT PRESIDENTS



Thanks to our hardworking outgoing Board, the District Presidents, who will now form the State Council of District Presidents.

The 10 District Presidents are responsible for recommending to the Board actions relating to matters concerning or relevant to

District Branches, Sub Branches and RSL Queensland members.

District Presidents are elected by members in their District.





# RSL QUEENSLAND ADVOCATE DELIVERS FINANCIAL SECURITY TO THE FAMILY OF A DYING VETERAN

*RSL Queensland Advocate Deanna Pringle was able to bring some peace to Army veteran Garry Fairleigh in his final days.*

 **Sarah Webb**

**WHEN** Cathy Fairleigh looks back over the past couple of years, it's impossible to hold back tears.

Her husband Garry, a veteran who served for 20 years in the Australian Army, was diagnosed with a malignant melanoma that led to a 16-month battle before the doctors admitted defeat in December.

Garry lost that battle on Boxing Day in 2021.

"When we were presented with that diagnosis and told there was nothing the doctors could do it just took the feet out from under us," says Cathy.

"We went from being a family who thought we were on top of this melanoma to being a family that had to quickly figure out how to say goodbye. His pain medication wasn't being metabolised

because his liver was completely compromised.

"His only wish was to be at home with his family and with the help of many caring people we were able to achieve that very quickly."

It was in those final weeks that Garry discussed with Cathy his concerns for her future and that of their family.

"I said, 'Why don't I go and talk to an Advocate at RSL Queensland and see if there is any way for them to help us?'

"Garry was a typical vet who didn't like asking for help, but this time he said yes," Cathy says.

"He was worried for me. I had no idea what services we could access or what RSL Queensland could do. All I knew was that Garry had a part pension from injuries he received during his Army service.

"I thought maybe we'd be able to get some help with what we expected to be a lengthy time of caring for Garry at home.

"So, I reached out, and that's when I met Deanna Pringle."

Deanna, a Compensation Advocate based out of the Toowoomba office, who served in the Defence Force before transitioning into the Reserves, was quick to act knowing Garry's

time was coming to an end.

"Our first meeting was at 10am at the RSL office. Deanna started going through the support that was available and then said she could apply for a Veteran Gold Card for Garry. But she warned me that it could take time," Cathy says.

"I left that office and four hours later she called and said, 'I can't believe I'm telling you this, but Garry has been approved for a Gold Card.'"

"When I passed on the news to Garry he just cried and cried. He said, 'You'll be alright now.'"

"Before Garry's discharge from the hospital, we had made some alterations to the property so he could be comfortable. This Gold Card meant we'd get financial assistance to cover those costs, not to mention assistance for medications.

"And for Garry, well, this meant he could relax and just enjoy his time with our girls and their families."

Garry was first diagnosed in June 2020. Over the course of 16 months, he underwent six surgeries and 25 radiation treatments while also receiving immunotherapy.

In December, at Garry's insistence, the family all came

**ABOVE:** Garry Fairleigh served for 20 years in the Australian Army. He was diagnosed with a malignant melanoma that led to a 16-month battle before the doctors admitted defeat in December 2021.





*“During that time, she took all the care and concern over compensation processes away. And while I know it’s part of her job description, there are people who simply do their job, and that’s fine, but then there are those who do it with such beautiful grace and compassion and that was Deanna.”*

together for a final family photo shoot.

Garry passed away just days later.

While it’s a story more akin to a rollercoaster that never fails to bring tears to Cathy’s eyes, she said Deanna had become a beacon of light in their darkest moments.

“During that time, she took all the care and concern over compensation processes away. And while I know it’s part of her job description, there are people who simply do their job, and that’s fine, but then there are those who do it with such beautiful grace and compassion and that was Deanna,” Cathy says. “She made such a difference to our lives.”

For Deanna, who joined RSL Queensland in January 2020, it’s indeed more than just a job; it’s a means to change and improve the lives of veterans and their families.

“Before this role, I served for several years and then ended up recruiting for Defence. During my time I had some injuries, but getting medical support from DVA isn’t always straightforward,” she says.

“It was so incredibly stressful trying to get my own claims in, and

after it all I just wanted to create a streamlined process.

“Now, as a Compensation Advocate, I can do that. I get to support people through their initial claims process and if we’ve got a diagnosis, I can submit a claim on their behalf through the Department of Veterans’ Affairs (DVA).

“And that’s how I met Cathy. She’s a beautiful lady and when

we were able to get that Gold Card for her and Garry in a matter of hours, she just couldn’t thank me enough. She sent a morning tea platter around and she wrote me a personal letter as well, and the effort she put in was so humbling.

“It makes the tough days doing this job really worthwhile. And making the toughest time in Cathy’s life a little easier is a strong reminder of why I do this job.”

**BELOW:** Garry and Cathy Fairleigh with their family just days before Garry passed away.











# NEW GMRF RESEARCH REVEALS THE CHALLENGES OF EMPLOYMENT AFTER SERVICE

*New research published by our research partners, Gallipoli Medical Research Foundation (GMRF), highlights the main challenges faced by veterans in finding and keeping employment after service. Results show that management strategies could be the key to supporting veterans through this transition.*

GALLIPOLI  
MEDICAL RESEARCH FOUNDATION





**LED** by RSL Queensland's ANZAC of the Year Award recipient and GMRF Principal Investigator, Dr Madeline Romaniuk, the Veteran Mental Health Unit research team explored the experiences of 35 Australian veterans who had experienced civilian employment post-discharge.

The findings revealed four main challenges for veterans in finding and retaining employment.

#### **1. Starting over**

Research participants said that challenges to employment included finding and applying for civilian jobs, finding meaningful work, starting at the bottom again and difficulty translating military skills to the civilian workforce.

"I just felt that it was going to take me years to establish

credibility and time and learn a new system again, so that was frustrating and just worn out," says one research participant.

#### **2. Mental health**

Veterans with a mental health condition reported experiencing perceived discrimination from employers about their treatment needs and about how this, as well as their symptoms, might impact their ability to get their job done.

"When I said, 'Look, I am having some trouble. I have got some mental health issues. I have got to have some time out and go into hospital', within three months I was gone," reported another research participant.

#### **3. Interpersonal cultural difficulties**

Results uncovered serious challenges faced by veterans when communicating with,

and working alongside, civilian colleagues. These included different language and communication styles, lack of teamwork and focus on the individual, misperceptions of military service, and variation in work ethic and professionalism. "They use different words that I don't understand because I have never been exposed to them and I don't know how to translate my words to their words because I actually don't know the civilian equivalent of what I am trying to say," is a frustration of another research participant.

#### **4. Organisational differences**

The differences between military and civilian organisational systems also proved to be a barrier to stable employment, particularly the lack of structure, role ambiguity and the lack of feedback apparent in civilian



*“Whether veterans are transitioning into civilian life or relocating, we know that finding meaningful employment is crucial in helping create purpose and direction.”*

settings in comparison to Defence.  
“My job description kept changing and it was driving me mad,” explained another participant. “I just needed that structure. I am so happy to work within a structure.”  
“These themes highlight the need for evidence-based ‘transition to employment’ initiatives to target factors affecting not just obtaining employment initially, but also employment retention among veterans,” says Dr Romaniuk.

**HOW DOES THIS RESEARCH HELP VETERANS?**

Findings from this research informed educational modules and information that RSL Queensland

offers employers as part of the national RSL Employment Program.  
Dr Romaniuk noted that research into veteran employment was vital to understanding the factors that contribute to the difficulties that veterans face in obtaining and retaining civilian employment.  
RSL Queensland funded this research as part of its partnership with GMRF, which is focused on helping veterans by enhancing their health and wellbeing through evidence-based programs.  
“RSL Queensland is proud to partner with Gallipoli Medical Research Foundation and fund this important piece of research,” says Troy Watson, RSL Queensland Deputy CEO Veteran Services.  
“Whether veterans are transitioning into civilian life or

relocating, we know that finding meaningful employment is crucial in helping create purpose and direction. Our award-winning RSL Queensland Employment Program recognises this and helps veterans and Defence partners secure employment through career counselling, application assistance, interview coaching, and connections with potential employers.”  
RSL Queensland’s aim is to connect veterans with long-term, meaningful employment and to help employers tap into the talent pool of veterans who are ready to work.  
“We remain committed to investing in research, targeted programs and proven initiatives to make the transition from service to civilian life as easy, smooth and accessible as possible,” says Troy.  
**NEXT STEPS FOR VETERANS SEARCHING FOR MEANINGFUL EMPLOYMENT**  
If you’re an Australian Defence Force veteran or the partner of a current or former Defence member, we can help you take the next step towards finding meaningful employment. Explore our free programs for ex-service people, partners and potential employers below.  
Visit [rslemployment.com.au](http://rslemployment.com.au) for more information.

***To learn more about GMRF’s veteran research programs or find out how to support their work, visit [gallipoliresearch.com.au](http://gallipoliresearch.com.au)***

The research provided recommendations for future initiatives to help veterans find employment. Read more about the recommendations for employment initiatives here.





# MATESHIP



## QUILTS GIFTED

Patricia Jacobson (pictured with Major General Laidlaw AM CSC and Captain Jenn Macklin RAN) has been recognised for her efforts making quilts for the Security Directorate of the Australian Defence Force. The six quilts she has made depicting women in service have been presented to Gender Advisors (female officers that look after the welfare of all female ADF members deployed overseas).

## 70 YEARS OF NATIONAL SERVICEMEN'S ASSOCIATION

The Bribie Island Branch of the National Servicemen's Association recently attended a special memorial event at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra. This final event recognised 70 years since national service started. 287,000 young men undertook national service training in 1951, with 212 making the ultimate sacrifice in Borneo and Vietnam.



## WELCOME LIFE MEMBERS

Banyo RSL Sub Branch and Citizens' Auxiliary members were recently honoured with Life Membership at a lunch held at Bribie Island RSL Sub Branch. Rev Bob Rogers, Shane Warhurst, Bruce Meiklejohn, Bob Standfast, Fay Coman and Richard Morse (pictured) bring the total of Sub Branch Life Members to six and Citizens' Auxiliary Life Members to six.

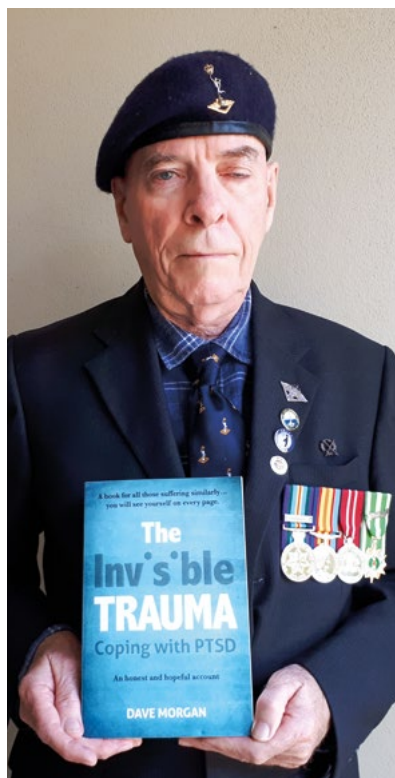






#### NATIONAL PEACEKEEPERS DAY IN BURLEIGH HEADS

On 14 September, the Burleigh Heads RSL Sub Branch gathered at the cenotaph in Memorial Park with members from the ADF, Australian Federal Police, and Queensland and NSW Police Services to commemorate National Peacekeepers Day. The guest speaker was Commander Danielle Woodward APM OAM and the Currumbin RSL Choir sang the national anthem.



#### CALOUNDRA MEMBER AUTHORS BOOK ABOUT PTSD

Caloundra RSL Sub Branch member Dave Morgan recently published his third book, *The Invisible Trauma*. Dave wrote the book to help Australians understand what war is like – especially the Vietnam War – and how post-traumatic stress disorder affects an individual and their family. He hopes the book will help improve the wellbeing, mental health, and lifestyle of veterans and their families. A portion of sale proceeds will be donated to Legacy Australia.



#### NEW LOOK FOR CROWS NEST TEAM

Crows Nest RSL Sub Branch's bar staff and committee proudly wear their new uniform shirts (pictured). The new-look uniforms let the team proudly 'show off' the RSL Queensland logo and represent their Sub Branch.





### KOREAN WAR VETERANS HONOURED

Members of Gracemere and District RSL Sub Branch Inc honoured their two Korean War veterans, 94-year-old Vince Mathers and 88-year-old Geoffrey Arnold (pictured), both ex-3RAR, with a lunch at Gracemere Hotel. These two veterans shared camaraderie and banter with the younger veterans and reminisced about their individual experiences during their respective deployments to Korea while they pored over their memorabilia.

### CAPTURING THE SOLDIER'S EXPERIENCE

After serving more than 30 years as a soldier in the Australian Army, Tweed Heads and Coolangatta RSL Sub Branch member Michael Kiker retired and turned his hand to writing. "I love the challenge of converting my many story ideas into exciting books I hope my readers will enjoy," Michael says. During his many years of service, he was told numerous interesting stories by soldiers from different conflicts, usually over a beer. While his books are fiction, Michael tries to include some of these true-life tales into his writing. "By doing this, I hope it gives my readers a chance to experience the life and death situations many of my mates have been in," he explains. Michael has published a trilogy set during the Vietnam War and a stand-alone book about a young man from Beechworth fighting on the Kokoda Track.



### 99 YEARS YOUNG

Forest Lake RSL Sub Branch member George Churchward, centre, was honoured with his Life Member Award at the recent South East District 100th dinner. He is pictured with RSL Queensland President Major General Stephen Day DSC AM, right, and Forest Lake and Districts RSL Sub Branch President Steve Ford, left. George served in Papua New Guinea, arriving in 1943, and has been a member of the Forest Lake Sub Branch since 2003.







**AUSTRALIAN PEACEKEEPERS DAY**

Hervey Bay RSL Sub Branch President Brian Tidyman spoke at the service to remember peacekeepers from the ADF and Australian Police Service. Locals, visitors and ex-service organisations gathered at the Cenotaph in Freedom Park and more than 10 wreaths were laid. Rev'd Jeff Jarvis offered prayers to those who lost their lives in their duties as well as those currently deployed in peacekeeping operations worldwide.

**IPSWICH WINS GOLDEN RIVET COMPETITION**

The Ipswich Flamingos (pictured) have taken home first place in this year's Golden Rivet Competition, held in September by the Naval Association of Australia Ipswich & West Moreton Sub Section. Teams from Redcliffe, Pine Rivers, WRANS and Ipswich competed in darts and indoor bowls in an attempt to claim the treasured trophy.



**QUEENAGERS WELLBEING AND FRIENDSHIP DAY**

Malanda RSL Sub Branch members recently celebrated Seniors' Week with an event at the Malanda Hotel. The event promoted physical and mental health and was brought together by local veteran women, giving them a chance to meet and bond with other veterans.



# **MUDJIMBA'S OLDEST MEMBER CELEBRATES 96TH BIRTHDAY**

Mudjimba RSL Sub Branch's oldest member David Pescott recently celebrated his 96th birthday. The Sub Branch describes David as one of their biggest supporters and 'Uncle Dave', as he is known, says the Sub Branch has always been somewhere he knows he can find camaraderie and support. It was also a fitting venue for his birthday celebrations (David pictured in 1944).



# **VIETNAM VETERANS' DAY IN MILES**

Vietnam veteran Roger Wickham addresses a small gathering at the Miles RSL Sub Branch commemorative service on Vietnam Veterans' Day.



# **EARNEST**

Maroochydore RSL Sub Branch member and WW2 veteran Earnest (Bill) Osborn celebrated his 100th birthday in November and was presented with a certificate by Sub Branch Welfare Advocate Denis Condon (pictured).







### SANDGATE WELCOMES NEWEST, OLDEST MEMBER

100-year-old James 'Jim' Grebert has been welcomed by Sandgate RSL Sub Branch as their 'newest, oldest member.' Jim has joined the Sub Branch after moving to the area and has already made new friends since joining. He served in the 58th/59th battalion in Papua New Guinea and Bougainville during World War II.

### A VISIT FROM THE GOVERNOR

Her Excellency, the Honourable Dr Jeannette Young AC PSM, Governor of Queensland, and her husband, Professor Graeme Nimmo RFD, recently visited Roma. They walked along a section of the Roma Heroes' Avenue and conducted a short wreath laying ceremony at the Roma Cenotaph, together with members of Roma RSL Sub Branch and Maranoa Regional Council. Photo courtesy of the Office of the Governor.

### STANTHORPE GATHERS FOR VIETNAM VETERANS' DAY

As COVID restrictions eased, Stanthorpe RSL Sub Branch welcomed more than 120 veterans, students, school staff and local community members to their Vietnam Veterans' Day service.





### 50-YEAR MEMBERSHIP ANNIVERSARIES CELEBRATED

Walkerstone-Pleystowe RSL Sub Branch members Dennis Doring and Allan Norman have both been awarded their 50th membership certificates by local member Julianne Gilbert MP. Dennis and Allan both joined the Sub Branch in 1970 after serving in Vietnam. Unfortunately, Allan passed away before he could be presented with his certificate. His wife Liz accepted in his honour.



### VIETNAM VETERANS' DAY IN WARWICK

Warwick veterans commemorated Vietnam Veterans' Day at the cenotaph in Leslie Park, with special guests including former SDESA secretary Barry Kelly, SDESA Qld Chaplain Willie Liebenberg, members of Warwick RSL Sub Branch, including President John Skinner, various schools, and the public. Four Year 11 students (pictured) participated in the ceremony accompanied by Principal Ross Jardine, and two wreaths were laid on behalf of Warwick State High School.



## WAR WIDOWS DAY COMMEMORATED

Stanthorpe war widows Bernice Steele, Bev McLean, Carmen Moore, Helen Corbett, Stephanie Garth and Maria Brandrett (pictured) enjoyed morning tea together in recognition of War Widows Day in October.



## AWAMO HONOURS CHINDITS IN LONDON

The Australian War Animal Memorial Organisation (AWAMO) has made a detour on their way home from the Ukraine. Stopping in London, President Nigel Allsopp visited the Chindit memorial and presented a bronze plaque to honour the animals that served during the campaign – 5,000 mules and horses, and 100 elephants. The plaque is expected to be displayed in the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire.



## REMEMBERING A CAREER WITH RAF

At 91, ex-serviceman Derek Olley has no intention of slowing down. The former Royal Air Force officer is an active volunteer in the Restoration Support Section (RSS) of the Air Force's History and Heritage Branch at RAAF Base Amberley. When Derek started his apprenticeship in 1947, George VI was the King of England. "I was given the King's shilling as a new recruit," he says. Derek served the RAF as a flight mechanic, working on various aircraft types including Avro Ansons, Avro Lancaster bombers, de Havilland Mosquitoes and Hawker Hurricanes.





# WIN

## THE WITNESS

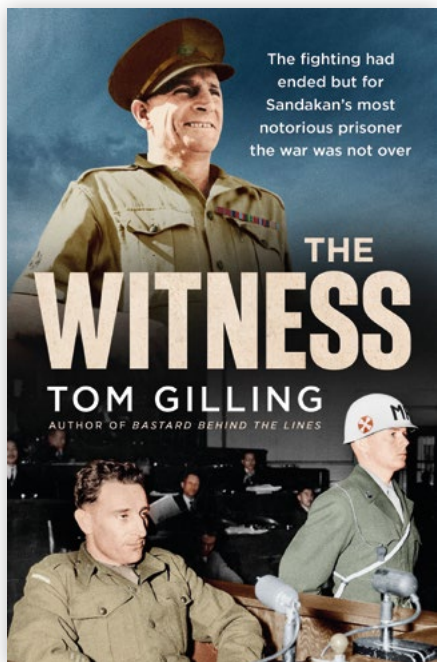
At the Australian war crimes trials that followed World War II, one prosecution witness stood out: Warrant Officer Bill Sticpewich.

During his three years in the infamous Sandakan POW camp, Sticpewich had seen hundreds of fellow prisoners die of starvation, sickness and overwork. Others were shot or bayoneted to death by Japanese guards on forced marches through the Borneo jungle. Of more than 2,400 Allied prisoners at Sandakan at the start of 1945, only six survived. It was Sticpewich's meticulous evidence that sent Sandakan's commandant and his murderous henchmen to the gallows.

But to his fellow prisoners, Sticpewich was not a war hero; he was a collaborator who avoided heavy labour and obtained extra rations by ingratiating himself with the Japanese.

Was Sticpewich a traitor or a man who did what he needed to do to stay alive? Drawing on wartime records, original interviews and the recollections of other survivors, *The Witness* reveals the compelling story of Australia's most notorious POW.

*The Witness* by Tom Gilling is published by Allen and Unwin (RRP: \$34.99).



FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN one of four copies of *The Witness*, email your name, address and contact number to [editor@rslqld.org](mailto:editor@rslqld.org) (with the subject 'The Witness') or post to 'The Witness', PO Box 629, Spring Hill Qld 4004. Competition closes 24 January 2023.

## DUNKIRK TO D-DAY

Another rip-roaring World War II history by prize-winning author Jeff Steel. Bill Adlam's hair-raising escape from Dunkirk, his dramatic commando raids, and his storming of the D-Day beaches reads like fiction. It all happened.

Bill escaped the Dunkirk disaster via a bayonet charge into Nazi machine guns. He was presented with the Military Medal 'for gallantry under fire' by King George VI. Bill volunteered for commandos; he thrived on adrenaline.

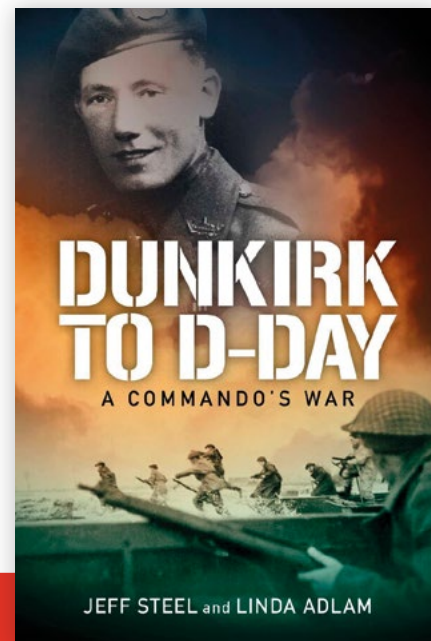
Number 4 commando took him to a surgical strike in the north of Norway. The stated objective: to destroy oil installations. It was a feint. Ian Fleming of the Secret Intelligence Service had masterminded the raid. Its real objective: to help break the Enigma code.

Number 4 Commando then sent him on a raid to Dieppe to spike naval guns to enable a landing by Canadian forces. Bill's commanding officer was Lord Lovat: cousin to Ian Fleming and (allegedly) template for the fictional James Bond.

Bill's prowess as a commando saw him headhunted to a top-secret location in the wilds of Scotland. There he trained others in the dark arts of 'butcher and bolt'.

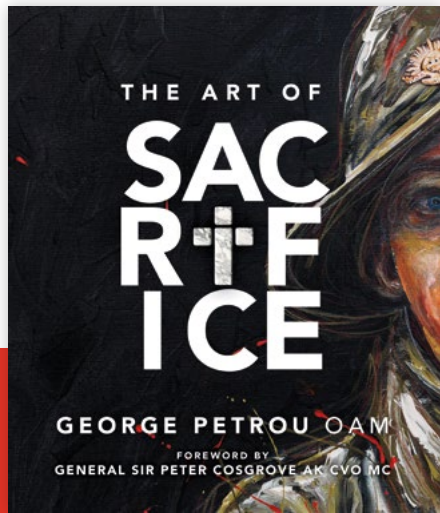
On D-Day morning, Bill passed over the sands of Normandy in minutes. The next two months saw him up against Hitler's elite army and Waffen SS divisions. The reader will ask the same question that Bill asked: how would he ever come out alive?

*Dunkirk to D-Day* by Jeff Steel and Linda Adlam is published by Simon & Schuster (RRP: \$32.99).



FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN one of four copies of *Dunkirk to D-Day*, email your name, address and contact number to [editor@rslqld.org](mailto:editor@rslqld.org) (with the subject 'Dunkirk to D-Day') or post to 'Dunkirk to D-Day', PO Box 629, Spring Hill Qld 4004. Competition closes 24 January 2023.





FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN one of four copies of *The Art of Sacrifice*, email your name, address and contact number to [editor@rslqld.org](mailto:editor@rslqld.org) (with the subject 'The Art of Sacrifice') or post to 'The Art of Sacrifice', PO Box 629, Spring Hill Qld 4004. Competition closes 24 January 2023.

## THE ART OF SACRIFICE

Haunting and poignant, this collection of portraits from renowned Melbourne artist George Petrou portrays a spirit like no other – the ANZAC spirit.

Ordinary people – Australians from all walks of life – have served our great nation with gallantry and sacrifice, displaying mateship, resilience and devotion to duty. *The Art of Sacrifice* captures the spirit of service in a fitting tribute to all ANZACs of every generation.

Using images of the past and the stories of today, the artist travels Australia and overseas to connect the past and present in a unique, powerful and evocative collection of outstanding portraits. It is a stunning contribution to the understanding and commemoration of all those who have served our great country.

*The Art of Sacrifice* by George Petrou is published by Big Sky Publishing (RRP: \$69.99).

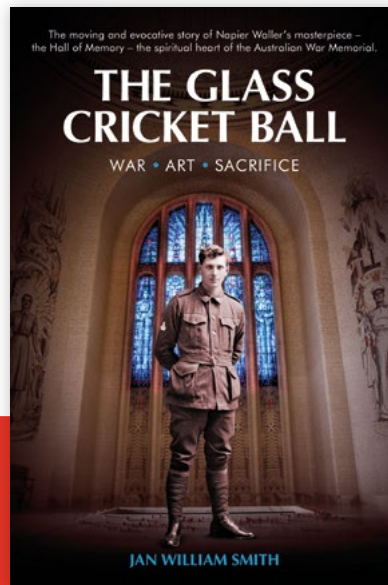
## THE GLASS CRICKET BALL

The one-armed Melbourne artist Napier Waller OBE CMG created the great Hall of Memory at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra. Waller died in 1972, without knowing that 20 years later his greatest work would be the place for a tomb that would be central to Australia's remembrance of war dead.

*The Glass Cricket Ball* is a story of Waller's life, the creation of a great artwork and the bringing home and re-burial of the remains of an unknown Australian soldier from a French World War I battleground cemetery.

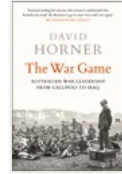
Napier Waller was a casualty at the battle of Bullecourt. A watercolour artist on the Western Front should be out of his comfort zone when his wounds include the loss of his right painting arm. But Napier Waller's answer was to become Australia's greatest monumental artist – with his left hand.

*The Glass Cricket Ball* by Jan William Smith is published by Big Sky Publishing (RRP: \$29.99).



FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN one of three copies of *The Glass Cricket Ball*, email your name, address and contact number to [editor@rslqld.org](mailto:editor@rslqld.org) (with the subject 'The Glass Cricket Ball') or post to 'The Glass Cricket Ball', PO Box 629, Spring Hill Qld 4004. Competition closes 24 January 2023.

## QUEENSLAND RSL NEWS WINNERS EDITION 3, 2022



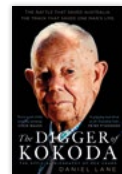
### THE WAR GAME

E Fryer, Corlette  
D Turner, Aitkenvale  
J Cotter, Kirwan  
C Palmer, Runaway Bay



### SECOND SON OF A SOLDIER SETTLER

B O'Keefe, Carseldine  
J Martin, Urangan  
J Bongard, Warner  
N Van Zutphen, Cooran



### THE DIGGER OF KOKODA

K Lawson, Childers  
C Rosenthal, Garners Beach  
G McIver, Hyde Park  
R Robertson, Bargara



### THE SCRAP IRON FLOTILLA

G Lee, Urraween  
J Lakey, Taigum  
A Adams, Little Mountain  
K Fenton, Maroochydhore

\* Winners' books will be posted to the addresses supplied in the weeks following publication of the magazine.



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RSL Art Union Draw No. 401 (AU401L) conducted by Returned & Services League of Australia (QLD Branch) ABN 79 902 601 713 of ANZAC House, 283 St Pauls Terrace, Fortitude Valley QLD 4006, under the following licence numbers: QLD: 29819, ACT: R22/00093, VIC: 10273/22, NSW: GOCAU/2332, SA: M14245. Prize value \$12,520,413. The total number of tickets available for AU401L is 5,276,000 which may include a maximum of 1,369,491 bonus tickets. Draw AU402L, licence numbers: QLD: 29819, ACT: R22/00191.2, VIC: 10464/22, NSW: GOCAU/2332, SA: M14304. Prize value \$3,633,275. The total number of tickets available for AU402L is 3,938,500 which may include a maximum of 999,581 bonus tickets. Drawn at ANZAC House. Winners notified by registered mail. Results for all draws published at [www.rslartunion.com.au/winners](https://www.rslartunion.com.au/winners) on the draw date of each Draw. Cheque, money order and credit card payments must be received by the close date of each draw to be eligible for entry. If an order is received after this date or if the draw is sold out, the order will be automatically entered into the following Prize Home Draw. Entrants must be 18 years or over. Proceeds are for the purpose of veteran welfare and support in Australia.



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Some items shown in pictures are for display purposes only. Selling costs and market variations apply when selling gold bullion. Floorplans are for illustration purposes only. Rental estimates and property values are based on third party appraisals and subject to changing market conditions. Statements about market demand are based on third party information that relate to the suburb generally and may vary based on individual property characteristics. RSL Queensland takes no responsibility for the accuracy of information provided by third parties. Travel is in the form of a voucher, is not redeemable for cash and must be booked directly with our selected supplier, subject to their terms and conditions. Information correct at time of printing. Terms and conditions apply, refer to [www.rslartunion.com.au](https://www.rslartunion.com.au).

**RSL**  
Art Union

*Nothing  
like it.*





**THERE** were moments of pure disbelief, ecstasy and irony when Redcliffe man Chris\* was told he'd won RSL Art Union Draw 399 – the \$10.6 million ultimate Gold Coast beach house.

Chris was initially speechless when Deborah Pescott, RSL Art Union General Manager of Lotteries, Commercial & Investments, called with the news. And ironically, he took the phone call while in Coolangatta for work – only minutes

away from the amazing million-dollar prize home at Currumbin that he'd just won!

Chris, whose grandfather served in the Defence Force, has been supporting RSL Art Union for some time and has only dreamt of winning – that dream is now a reality!

With uninterrupted ocean views, four bedrooms, two bathrooms, a swimming pool and \$322,594 worth of furniture and appliances, this breathtaking Currumbin prize home has it all.

Believe it or not, Chris has some tough choices to make. He can make the move to Currumbin to enjoy the ultimate beach life, rent out the property and earn an estimated \$171,600 per year, or sell it and become an instant millionaire.

However, as the news sank in, his first decision was to focus back on finishing off his last remaining jobs for the day before doing a quick drive-by of his new beach house.

And the good news kept coming. Because he bought an \$80 ticket book, he'll also take home a bonus \$80,000 in gold.

Congratulations, Chris – we wish you all the very best for the future.

Many thanks to you and all who support RSL Art Union. Every ticket sold helps veterans in Queensland and throughout Australia.

***\*Names changed for privacy reasons. ←***



# REUNIONS

## RAAF EQUIPMENT MUSTERINGS

A RAAF equipment musterings reunion for all supplier and clerk (box packers and mushrooms) will be held on 1 July 2023 at CSI Club Ipswich, Queensland. All partners are welcome. Contact Jacko via 0413 700 298 or [djjacko58@bigpond.com](mailto:djjacko58@bigpond.com) or Paul Noble via 0411 401 776 or [paulwaynenoble@hotmail.com](mailto:paulwaynenoble@hotmail.com). Bookings required.

# COMMUNITY CONNECT

## STAY AT A MILITARY MEMBERS CLUB IN LONDON

Did you know that the Victory Services Club in London offers accommodation, dining, and respite for current and ex-serving members of the Armed Forces? Founded in 1907, the VSC is in Central London (walking distance to Buckingham Palace and right next to Hyde Park) and is a tri-service military charity and membership organisation. They have 200 bedrooms, dining facilities, a large comfortable air-conditioned bar and seven event rooms. Current and former serving members of any rank in the UK, NATO and Commonwealth military all have access to a membership (and can therefore stay) at the club. Find out more at [vsc.co.uk](http://vsc.co.uk)



## NEED HELP?

Are you looking for someone or something, or seeking information? Do you need help from your local RSL community? Would you like to make contact with an RSL contributor? Email your request to [editor@rslqld.org](mailto:editor@rslqld.org)

## A FREAKISH REUNION

### SEEKING INFORMATION ON WOMAN FROM NUI DAT



Can any reader recognise the WRAAC/nurse in this photo taken at Nui Dat on December 28, 1969?

In 1969, the usual rotation of battalion units on operations was one month operations, two weeks back in Nui Dat. Our unit departed Nui Dat for operations in mid-October 1969 and found ourselves on continuous follow-up operations up until, and including, the Christmas period.

On December 28, 1969, we were extracted from the Nui May Tao and returned to Nui Dat. On landing at Nui Dat heli-pad and exiting from the helicopter, I was surprised to see a uniformed woman standing by herself on the outskirts of the camp.

I approached her and asked if I could take a photograph. She asked why. I replied she was the first woman I had seen in half months. She consented to the photo being taken.

Perhaps a reader of the *Queensland RSL News* would be able to identify the woman. If so, I would be overjoyed to learn of her whereabouts. I would be happy to have photos taken from the original slide I would be happy to show on to her or her family. Please contact CW Woodard.



In early 2016, while viewing some old slides I had taken in Viet Nam during 1969, I came across a slide I'd forgotten about. Being curious, I submitted the image and an article to *Queensland RSL News*. It was published in Ed 4 2016.

Much to my surprise, I received a card from Fremantle, Western Australia, some weeks later:

*"Dear Tasi, thank you so much for going to so much trouble in locating 'the girl in the photograph.' My family and everyone I show the newspaper article to are quite amazed (taken some 47 years previously). Carolyn Evcott from Surfers Paradise, with whom I served in Viet Nam 1969/1970, sent me the newspaper cutting stating, 'Is this you?' It certainly was. I will locate a recent photo and send it to you."*

*Regards, Rosemary Griggs (Ex-Red Cross 1969/1970 Viet Nam)*

I was wrong. Rosemary was neither a WRAAC nor nurse, but served with the Australian Red Cross. Rosemary stated she was stationed in Vung Tau, however when seating was available in a helicopter flying Vung Tau to Nui Dat, they could fly in/out to visit the wounded in the field hospital situated in Nui Dat. The more seriously wounded would be hospitalised in Vung Tau or repatriated to Australia if need be.

I produced photos of Rosemary from the slide and sent them to Fremantle for her and her family. I received a Christmas card from Rosemary with a photo of her marriage to Charlie, a retired ex-farmer. Rosemary does voluntary work for Save the Children Australia. Thank you for your past service, Rosemary.



# LAST POST

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	SERVICE NUMBER	SUB BRANCH
Conserdyne	Llewellyn	2781319	Redcliffe Sub Branch
Conway	Joseph	NX84955	Tewantin/Noosa Sub Branch
Cottrell	Gerald	6143025	Sandgate Sub Branch
Cross	Norman	16837	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Cummings	Gordon	1/704365	Geebung Zillmere Bald Hills Aspley Sub Branch
Cunnington	Darrel	110810	Bribie Island Sub Branch
Curtis	Leonard	R50093	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Daetz	Sterling	A15789	Maryborough Sub Branch
Darcy	Terence	2/5728	Cairns Sub Branch
Davenport	Brian	3/779060	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Davidson	Stanley	432676	Nambour Sub Branch
Davidson	Albert	157275	Mareeba Sub Branch
Derbyshire	Arthur	2239330	Maroochydore Sub Branch
Dewar	Peter	1687NS	Hervey Bay Sub Branch
Diggines	Edward	22456604	Redlands Sub Branch
Dimmock	Craig	A135077	Pine Rivers District Sub Branch
Dobell*	William	148094	Southport Sub Branch
Dodd	Kenneth	R57849	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Dunn	Russell	3411546	RSL QLD State Branch
Dunne	William	1/4504	Holland Park Mt Gravatt Sub Branch
Eastwell	Clyde	1/725151	Wallangarra Sub Branch
Elton	Anthony	P/SS939499	Gympie Sub Branch
Ely	Alan	A33677	Toowoomba Sub Branch

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	SERVICE NUMBER	SUB BRANCH
Evans	Horace	22146515	Sandgate Sub Branch
Evans*	George	1730663	Bundaberg Sub Branch
Feige*	Wiliam	Q273784	Redcliffe Sub Branch
Findlay*	Noel	119913	Coorparoo & Districts Sub Branch
Foley*	Barry	2/737452	Hervey Bay Sub Branch
Followes	Anthony	6410191	Currumbin/Palm Beach Sub Branch
Fraser	Graham	1734263	Cairns Sub Branch
Freeman	Raymond	435812	Currumbin/Palm Beach Sub Branch
Freeman	Donald	2/748632	Hervey Bay Sub Branch
Garrad	Thomas		Maroochydore Sub Branch
Gasparovic	Anton	3793161	Woodford Sub Branch
Gayner	Gordon	14319691	Hervey Bay Sub Branch
Gillies	Ian	1295	Redlands Sub Branch
Godwin	Stanley	44766	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Golding	Stephen	147286	Toowong Sub Branch
Gordon	Graham	1732086	Toowoomba Sub Branch
Graham	John	1/74344	Nambour Sub Branch
Graham	Walter	113682	Redcliffe Sub Branch
Gray	Allen	17726	Bundaberg Sub Branch
Green	Patrick	1717299	Banyo Sub Branch
Greenough	Colin	1/717869	Hervey Bay Sub Branch
Hall	Raymond	A24989	Beenleigh & District Sub Branch
Halloran	Raymond	1/730623	Hervey Bay Sub Branch
Hankey	Ian	79194	Coorparoo & Districts Sub Branch
Harper	Lawrence	FX669298	Maroochydore Sub Branch



LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	SERVICE NUMBER	SUB BRANCH
Harris	Colin	163374	Hervey Bay Sub Branch
Harrison	Brian	217700	Southport Sub Branch
Hart	Margaret	F2/1569	Tin Can Bay Sub Branch
Hay*	John	R107630	Bundaberg Sub Branch
Hayward	Malcolm	1735715	Caloundra Sub Branch
Healy	Peter	15374	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Herbert	Adrian	1/711836	Stephens Sub Branch
Hill*	Deane	52763	Coolum-Peregian Sub Branch
Hincks	Donald	1705287	Boonah Sub Branch
Hughes	Allan	A115269	Herbert River Sub Branch
Hughes (nee Kelf)	Catherine	NF446142	Currumbin/Palm Beach Sub Branch
Hulyer	Warren	2782206	Southport Sub Branch
Hutton	Bruce	444939	Maroochydore Sub Branch
Ireland	Terrence	R54365	Southport Sub Branch
Jackman	Michael	A1203721	Gaythorne Sub Branch
Jackson	David	1/46504	Hervey Bay Sub Branch
Jensen* (nee Fowler)	Shirley	NFX87552	Greenbank Sub Branch
Johnes*	Edward	2/7034451	Sherwood-Indooroopilly Sub Branch
Jones	Kevin	8557763	Gaythorne Sub Branch
Kerle	Stephen	R137994 / M8083010	Greenbank Sub Branch
Kinmonth (nee Clark)	Dorothy	VF518240	Caloundra Sub Branch
Ladner	Douglas	A113750	Herbert River Sub Branch

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	SERVICE NUMBER	SUB BRANCH
Lambert	Leonard	1735188	Maryborough Sub Branch
Lancaster	Richard	1201995	Farleigh & Northern Beaches Sub Branch
Laurens	Mark	1731654	Redcliffe Sub Branch
Lawrence	Phil	411388	Ashgrove-Bardon Sub Branch
Lehfeldt	Neville	1733761	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Lenz	Catherine	100714	Mackay Sub Branch
Leonard	David	A222785	Currumbin/Palm Beach Sub Branch
Lewis	Barry	1733074	Emu Park Sub Branch
Lodge*	William	54434	Beenleigh & District Sub Branch
Lohmann	Waverley	A19245	Hervey Bay Sub Branch
Mackay	Kenneth	B3854	Gaythorne Sub Branch
Malezer	Alfred	R52784	Tewantin/Noosa Sub Branch
Manuel	Eric	LFX87575	Isis Sub Branch
Marny*	John	RZ444/1	Surfers Paradise Sub Branch
Marriott	Douglas	3721347	Maryborough Sub Branch
Mazengarb	Michael	218863	Caloundra Sub Branch
McCaffrey	Kevin	A123788	Clifton Sub Branch
McCarthy	William	235986/444421	Stanthorpe Sub Branch
McCosh	Rodney	1410234	Geebung Zillmere Bald Hills Aspley Sub Branch
McDonald	Lindsay	R50547	Caloundra Sub Branch
McDonough	Robert	38862	Townsville Sub Branch
McKenzie (nee Robertson)	Jeannie	832	Burleigh Heads Sub Branch



# LAST POST

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	SERVICE NUMBER	SUB BRANCH
McKenzie*	Darcy	2794322	Beenleigh & District Sub Branch
McMahon	William	2789159	Hervey Bay Sub Branch
McQueen	Boyd	2716997	Atherton Sub Branch
Meyers	John	138269	Maryborough Sub Branch
Millwood	Blake	5163109	Bundaberg Sub Branch
Milsted	Neville	A28508	Tewantin/Noosa Sub Branch
Mitchell	Raymond	R136359	Caloundra Sub Branch
Moralee	Ronald	R106215	Townsville Sub Branch
Morris	James	3411393	Sandgate Sub Branch
Morris	Thomas	N 546972	Maroochydore Sub Branch
Muller	Wilbur	13959	Pine Rivers District Sub Branch
Musgrave	Allan	A28344	Kenmore/Moggill Sub Branch
Newman	Keith	314885	Logan Village Sub Branch
Nicholson	George	1733118	Surfers Paradise Sub Branch
Olsen	Kevin	R51756	Tewantin/Noosa Sub Branch
Orrell	Ian	18933	Cairns Sub Branch
Otago*	Mervyn	A12722	Redcliffe Sub Branch
Palmer	Cyril	79158	Ipswich Sub Branch
Parcell	Colin	A18822	Ipswich Sub Branch
Parry	Alwyn	24097	Greenbank Sub Branch
Partridge	Clifford	D0578738	Gympie Sub Branch
Perram*	Desmond	128898	Coolum-Peregrine Sub Branch
Peterson	Gary	2201859	Hervey Bay Sub Branch
Pettit	Kenneth	223777	Bribie Island Sub Branch

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	SERVICE NUMBER	SUB BRANCH
Pietzner	Thomas	1734610	Sarina Sub Branch
Pomroy	Grahame	A28364	Hervey Bay Sub Branch
Randles	Leslie	Q89839 / QX 38090	Emerald Sub Branch
Raymond*	Colin	NX176888	Runaway Bay Sub Branch
Regan	Brian	R59000	Currumbin/Palm Beach Sub Branch
Reid*	Jeffrey	3790495	Sarina Sub Branch
Reid*	George	1924905	Bribie Island Sub Branch
Riches	Larry	114488	Coorparoo & Districts Sub Branch
Roberts	William	17787	Woodgate Beach Sub Branch
Robertson	Graham	1/727193	Redlands Sub Branch
Robson	Walter	2/707023	Capricornia & Rockhampton Region Sub Branch
Rofe	Ronald	1731843	Hervey Bay Sub Branch
Rohl	Donald	44985	Maroochydore Sub Branch
Rowe	Neill	3/719459	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Rubie	Darrell	18190	Stanthorpe Sub Branch
Russell	Phillip	4193251	Coorparoo & Districts Sub Branch
Russell	Phillip	57818	Coorparoo & Districts Sub Branch
Saunders	Ian	A17338	Gaythorne Sub Branch
Savage	John	1202727	Charters Towers Sub Branch
Schmidtke	Vincent	77632	Mackay Sub Branch
Scott	Raymond	2/7364	Beenleigh & District Sub Branch
Sertori*	Jason	238474	Ashgrove-Bardon Sub Branch



LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	SERVICE NUMBER	SUB BRANCH
Sester	Joseph	1/702190	Tramways Sub Branch
Shephard	Hurtle	SX32080	Geebung Zillmere Bald Hills Aspley Sub Branch
Shipp*	Kerry	A44980	Townsville Sub Branch
Sinclair	Donald	1/4311	Manly-Lota Sub Branch
Sinclair	Charles	159566	Hervey Bay Sub Branch
Singleton	John	1732632	Bowen Sub Branch
Slocum	Barry	3/747289	Laidley Sub Branch
Smith	Bonnie	NF452330	Beenleigh & District Sub Branch
Snell	Patrick	0786	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Somers	Lillian	QF265125	Townsville Sub Branch
Spies	Peter	214401	Bray Park-Strathpine Sub Branch
Steele	Robert	A43763	Currumbin/Palm Beach Sub Branch
Steensel	Peter	230314002	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Stephenson	John	1/730240	Currumbin/Palm Beach Sub Branch
Stewart	Douglas	1/728666	Seaforth Sub Branch
Stoddart	Andrew	18273	Ipswich Sub Branch
Strong	Mark	3142776	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
Stuurman	Jan	4612453/ 27248	Goodna Sub Branch
Taylor	Ian	365040	Bribie Island Sub Branch
Thomas	Peter	26223	Currumbin/Palm Beach Sub Branch
Thompson*	Ronald	27666	Hervey Bay Sub Branch
Thomson	Jack	QX58359	Kedron-Wavell Sub Branch
Thomson*	Colin	A114913	Unattached List
Thorne	William	NS6726	Ipswich Sub Branch

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	SERVICE NUMBER	SUB BRANCH
Thring	Allan	1731721	Boyne-Tannum Sub Branch
Toner*	Darcy	3162449	Nerang Sub Branch
Turnbull	Alwyn	16174	Sunnybank Sub Branch
Vickers	Ian	408461	Caloundra Sub Branch
Volkmer	Keith	A323044	Maryborough Sub Branch
Ward	Norma	NF481292	Samford Sub Branch
Warriner	John	14144805	Maryborough Sub Branch
Warring	Bruce	A315237	Thuringowa Sub Branch
Watling	Nicholas	015612	Cairns Sub Branch
Watson	Clive	R57365	Laidley Sub Branch
Watterton*	Robert	420951	Runaway Bay Sub Branch
Webster	Roy	Q22880933	Bribie Island Sub Branch
Webster*	J	QX33481	Bribie Island Sub Branch
West	Ian	3411874	Kuttabel Sub Branch
Whelan	Graeme	177660	Biloela Sub Branch
Whiley	Robert	218313	Beenleigh & District Sub Branch
Whitaker*	Peter	2786848	Tweed Heads & Coolangatta Sub Branch
White	Walter	A12934	Bundaberg Sub Branch
Whitehouse	Darrin	6100081 / 8268276	Townsville Sub Branch
Williams	David	R64659	Redlands Sub Branch
Williams	Olive	102466	Toowoomba Sub Branch
Wilson	Paddy	51870	Greenbank Sub Branch
Woods	John	B4634	Ashgrove-Bardon Sub Branch
Yates	John	PJX778132	Redcliffe Sub Branch



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