

VETAFFAIRS



Australian Government
Department of Veterans' Affairs

DVA'S FREE NEWSPAPER FOR AUSTRALIA'S VETERAN COMMUNITY

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DVA welcomes two new ministers

On 1 June, the Hon Matt Keogh MP was sworn in as Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Minister for Defence Personnel and the Hon Matt Thistlethwaite MP was sworn in as Assistant Minister for Defence, Assistant Minister for Veterans' Affairs, and Assistant Minister for the Republic.



From left: Assistant Minister Thistlethwaite, Vice Admiral David Johnston AC RAN (Vice Chief of the Defence Force) and Minister Keogh at a Last Post Ceremony at the Australian War Memorial, 1 June 2022

Minister Matt Keogh

Minister Keogh was first elected to the House of Representatives in the seat of Burt, Western Australia in 2016.

In Opposition, he served as Shadow Minister for Defence Industry, WA Resources and for Assisting Small Business.

Prior to taking on his portfolio responsibilities, Mr Keogh served on a wide range of committees including the House of Representatives standing committees on Economics, Agriculture and Water Resources, and the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Corporations and Financial Services.

Born and raised in Kelmscott, he attended school in Armadale and went on to study law at the University of Notre Dame Australia in Fremantle and London.

Before entering Parliament, Mr Keogh's legal career started in a local Kelmscott firm before working as a Federal Prosecutor focusing on corporate crime.

He then joined the litigation practice of a leading international law firm in Perth, specialising

in financial services regulatory, anti-bribery and corruption work.

Throughout his legal career, Mr Keogh worked alongside various organisations to benefit the community including as chairperson of local family and domestic violence service, Starick, President of the Law Society of Western Australia, a Director of the Law Council of Australia and Chairperson of Law Access WA.

Assistant Minister Matt Thistlethwaite

Assistant Minister Thistlethwaite is the Member for Kingsford Smith. He was a Senator for New South Wales from 2011 to 2013 during which time he served as Parliamentary Secretary for Pacific Island Affairs, Parliamentary Secretary for Multicultural Affairs and Parliamentary Secretary for Infrastructure and Transport.

Assistant Minister Thistlethwaite grew up in the Sydney suburb of Maroubra and completed high school at Marist Brothers Pagewood.

He is an active community volunteer and passionate advocate for

advancing the interests of vulnerable and disadvantaged people.

Assistant Minister Thistlethwaite has extensive experience representing workers as a lawyer and trade union official in a range of industries. He is a former General Secretary of NSW Labor and was an Assistant Secretary at Unions NSW, as well as a former Vice President of the Australian Workers Union. Assistant Minister Thistlethwaite has worked as a senior consultant with law firm King and Wood Mallesons.

He is a former director of the State Transit Authority of NSW. Assistant Minister Thistlethwaite has been an active surf lifesaver for nearly 40 years and served four years as President of Maroubra Surf Life Saving Club. He was also the President of Maroubra PCYC and received a distinguished service award from PCYC NSW.

Assistant Minister Thistlethwaite holds a Bachelor of Economics from UNSW, a Diploma of Law, and a Diploma of Modern Languages in Chinese. He has a HSK 3 Chinese (Mandarin) language qualification.



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For more information, visit minister.dva.gov.au. See page 3 for Minister Keogh's column in which he outlines the Government's priorities for the Veterans' Affairs portfolio. Assistant Minister Thistlethwaite's column is on page 4.



FROM THE DEPARTMENT

Liz Cosson AM CSC
Secretary, Department of Veterans' Affairs

The past few months have been particularly busy for the department, and a time of change.

Following the 2022 federal election and the change in government, the department has welcomed two new ministers to the Veterans' Affairs portfolio: Minister for Veterans' Affairs, the Hon. Matt Keogh MP, and Assistant Minister for Veterans' Affairs, the Hon. Matt Thistlethwaite MP. The Government has committed to implementing a number of new measures to support the veteran community, and the department looks forward to delivering them to continue the important work of reducing the claims backlog and providing support and services to veterans and families.

Eliminating the current backlog of claims is a high priority for the Government and the department, as we know some veterans and family members have been waiting too long for claims to be processed.

A major factor identified as contributing to the backlog is that demand for support through the compensation system for veterans and families has increased dramatically – 48 per cent per annum since 2019. This increase has come about due to several factors, including: the improvement of our connection with Defence through our early engagement model, which has encouraged serving personnel to lodge claims during service; an increase in veterans who have served in recent conflicts; the expansion of non-liability healthcare for mental health conditions; the Veterans' Recognition Package; and a greater awareness of the services and support available from DVA. The surge in demand was unprecedented, and we were not adequately resourced to respond to the significantly higher volume of claims that were coming through.

Importantly, to tackle the current backlog of claims, we are implementing the recommendations of the McKinsey & Co project by building the capability of some delegates to assess claims where the veteran has eligibility under two or more Acts. We are expanding Combined Benefits Processing and have established a 'tiger team' to complete decision-ready MRCA Initial Liability claims that have been held up. I can't stress enough to our veteran community how important it is to all of us at the department, and to the Government, to remediate this as quickly as we can. With the additional allocation of staff to the department, we are making every effort to recruit and train staff to ensure we are meeting this commitment and will be particularly concentrating on progressing the oldest claims with these new staff members.

We are screening all claims to ensure that anyone needing urgent support is prioritised, that we can connect veterans to treatment through the Provisional Access to Medical Treatment (PAMT) while waiting for their claims to be processed, and that anyone with the Veteran White Card can access mental health support. I also want veterans and families to know that Open Arms – Veterans & Families Counselling is available 24/7 on 1800 011 046 and that they can call the department on 1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372) to be connected to support or services.

The department's claims backlog has also been a focus of the important work of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide. I, and a number of our senior executives, have provided evidence on this issue and on a number of other topics, including the work we are doing to improve wellbeing, reduce the complexity of our governing legislation, and uphold the quality of the transition process to ensure the success of our veterans post service.

Although the Royal Commission will now deliver its final report on 17 June 2024, its Interim Report will be handed down on 11 August this year and will provide some early recommendations for Government consideration. The Royal Commission has been extended by an additional 12 months in recognition of the broad scope of the inquiry and to allow more time for veterans and families to come forward and share their experiences. As always, I remind you of the significance of the Royal Commission and its value in assisting us to find solutions to avoid further suicide tragedies in our Defence and veteran communities.

As the Royal Commission continues, the work of the department continues to improve the support and services available to veterans and their families. In June, I was pleased to attend the Female Veterans and Veterans' Families Policy Forum, which was the first in-person meeting of Forum members since 2019. Forty-five Forum members travelled from across Australia to join us for the two-day event, which facilitated discussion on a range of important topics including female veterans' future health needs, a veteran family strategy, the future of mental health service delivery, research in the veteran and family landscape, and service after service. I thank everyone who attended and contributed their thoughts, unique perspectives and solutions. I also convened and chaired the Ex-Service Organisation Roundtable after the federal election. These important forums were attended by both the Minister and Assistant Minister for Veterans' Affairs.

Informing our work to improve services and support is this year's Australian Census data, which for the first time included statistics on service in the Australian Defence Force (ADF).



Attending the 40th anniversary of Open Arms – Veterans & Families Counselling in Melbourne

The data, released in June, will assist us to shape the future veteran and family support system across the nation. The data showed that there are 84,865 current serving members and 496,276 former serving members. This is the best snapshot of the veteran population we have ever had access to. As we analyse the data, there will be many opportunities for us as a department to better anticipate and target future demand for services.

On a final note, I'd like to express my gratitude to all DVA staff for their continuing commitment to serving those who serve or have served in the ADF and families. I am consistently impressed with their professionalism and dedication to assisting those veterans and families seeking our support. I also extend my appreciation to the ex-service organisations, veteran support organisations, and advocates for the invaluable work they do and their ongoing commitment to supporting veterans and their families. I know many of you contribute your valuable insights, time and efforts to support the veteran community through these organisations. Many of you also contribute, whether that be through donating to your local ex-service organisation, sharing your story with the Royal Commission, signing up to volunteer, or even just thanking a veteran for their service.

It is evident everywhere I go across our country that every little act is making a big difference.

So thank you all, and please stay safe.

Liz



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Editor: Conan Elphicke
email: vetaffairs@dva.gov.au
mail: GPO Box 9998 Brisbane, QLD 4001

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FROM THE MINISTER

The Hon Matt Keogh MP

Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Minister for Defence Personnel

A better future for veterans and families

It is a huge honour to be appointed Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Defence Personnel. As it is for my colleague, Assistant Minister for Veterans' Affairs Matt Thistlethwaite.

Australians owe a debt of gratitude to our Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel, veterans and families. Thanks to the recent Census, we now know there are more than 581,000 people right now that have or are serving our nation.

As a nation, Australia values their ongoing commitment to service and it is our duty to support veterans and families as they transition from the ADF, to enable them to continue their commitment to service in civilian life, in different ways.

Our objective quite simply is to deliver a better future for everyone in the veteran community.

However, I am under no illusions. I know the task ahead is a large one but I'm determined to make sure we deliver the services and supports that our veterans and families not only need, but deserve.

I will strive to be as accessible as possible, making sure I'm hearing directly from the front lines, and Assistant Minister Thistlethwaite and I have already met with many stakeholders across the country.

Members of the veteran community have had very different experiences of service and post-service life. Not everyone requires support, but those who do often have specific, individual requirements. That means the kind of support they receive has to be tailored accordingly, without leaving anyone behind.

As a Government, we are committed to delivering a package of practical support measures that will improve the welfare and wellbeing of all veterans and families, now and into the future, building on the range of services currently available.

For instance, I am very conscious of the compensation claims backlog, with some veterans waiting much too long for their claims to be processed. This is unacceptable, and DVA has been under-resourced for too long. As a Government, our goal

is to cut the backlog and waiting times by rebuilding DVA, investing an additional \$226.3 million to employ 500 new staff.

We will also abolish the Public Service staffing cap, which has prevented DVA from hiring and retaining more well-trained permanent staff to process claims faster.

On the services front, we know that many veterans want to access services close to home, while ex-service organisations (ESOs) want to deliver co-ordinated support and services to fellow veterans and loved ones locally.

That's why we will develop 10 new Veteran and Family Hubs across Australia, in Rockingham, Northern Adelaide, the North Brisbane-Moreton Bay region, Ipswich, Queanbeyan, the Hawkesbury region, the Hunter, the Tweed and North Coast region, Surf Coast and Geelong region, and Tasmania.

Our objective quite simply is to deliver a better future for everyone in the veteran community.

The Government will deliver these hubs in consultation with local veteran communities and in partnership with state governments and community and ex-service organisations.

Veteran homelessness is another key issue. Studies have found chronically homeless veterans need tailored services to help get them into permanent and supported accommodation. The Government will invest \$30 million over five years to support housing and specialist services for veterans who are experiencing homelessness or are at risk of homelessness.

Another priority of this Government will be to deliver a comprehensive veteran employment program to provide greater



The Governor-General, His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd), swearing me in as Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Minister for Defence Personnel.

support to Defence personnel as they transition to civilian life. We will inject \$24 million over four years to ensure veterans' skills and experience are valued and appreciated by the wider community. This will be achieved through initiatives to raise awareness of the benefits of employing veterans, helping businesses to train veterans, supporting veterans' education and training, translating the experience of veterans, and promoting veteran businesses.

Meanwhile, this Government is acutely aware of the national tragedy that is Defence and veteran suicide.

We have listened to the families of veterans and supported their calls for the Royal Commission for quite some time. We have an obligation to ensure that all of our personnel are kept safe, here and abroad, both mentally and physically. The same goes for when they come home.

When a person enlists in the ADF, they undertake a commitment to our country and, necessarily, may be placing their health and wellbeing on the line in service to our nation. Families join them on this journey too. In return, we are compelled to look after them and their families, both during and after their time in the ADF. This commitment is more than just about their physical health. It is about taking a holistic view of the member and their loved ones.

The Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide is an important opportunity to learn

from the past to strengthen our approach to the mental health and welfare of ADF personnel and veterans into the future.

I look forward to the Royal Commission's interim report, which will be delivered by 11 August. Submissions can be made up until October 2023, and I encourage people to do so.

We are very lucky in this country that Australians are willing to come forward and support others in their community through volunteering. The recent Census tells us that veterans are even more likely to volunteer and often they continue their service by helping other veterans as an advocate.

I'd encourage those of you who would like to continue your service to consider training to become an advocate. Contact your local ESO, which can arrange to have you sponsored to receive that training. I would also encourage anyone in the veteran community who would like the help of an advocate to visit the Advocacy Register website at www.atdp.org.au.

To all of you who have served your country or are still doing so, as well as the families that support you, thank you for your service.

As a Government, we are committed to delivering a package of practical support measures that will improve the welfare and wellbeing of personnel, veterans and families, now and into the future.

I am very much looking forward to working closely with you all to ensure we deliver a better future for the veteran community.



FROM THE ASSISTANT MINISTER

The Hon Matt Thistlethwaite MP
Assistant Minister for Defence and Assistant Minister for Veterans' Affairs

A fresh start and a real commitment

For the first time, the Australian Government has appointed an Assistant Minister to the Veterans' Affairs portfolio and I am privileged to have been given this responsibility. The creation of my role shows the Government's commitment to ensuring that the portfolio is properly served. Minister Keogh and I are already hard at work ensuring we get the best outcomes for veterans and families.

In my view, a central part of that process involves working with people across the veteran community, listening carefully to what their priorities and needs are. This means talking to individuals, and ex-service organisations, large and small. It also involves working with our state and territory counterparts to ensure joined-up service delivery.

Importantly, it's also about making sure the Department of Veterans' Affairs becomes the best it can be at delivering services and support. In this respect, we've already

started work. Happily, I can report that the department is committed to making this happen and I look forward to working closely with DVA's senior executive over the coming years.

It is critical that we place more emphasis on the needs of veteran families – a section of the veteran community who have specific needs and a unique perspective. Our commitment to rolling out more Veteran and Family Hubs demonstrates this.

This is a role I am deeply committed to. The veteran community

has a great deal to be proud of – whether you've served your country directly in the armed forces, or you've provided that indirect service as a family member. Our country owes you a debt of gratitude and I'll be working hard every day to ensure you get the support you need and deserve.

I look forward to meeting with many of you over the coming weeks, months and years and listening to your stories and how we as a Government can better serve you.



Beware of scams

DVA is warning veterans to be cautious of potential scammers operating online.

We would like to remind veterans and families to be vigilant and protect themselves from any incident that may compromise their private or personal information.

If you are a veteran, or know someone who is a veteran, please pass on the following tips:

- If you receive a phone call or letter asking for your DVA client number or banking details, do not provide them. Contact your nearest DVA office (dva.gov.au/location-finder) to confirm the request is legitimate.
- Be cautious if you are contacted out of the blue by someone claiming to be from **any** government department requesting personal information. Always contact the organisation before responding, using contact details from a trusted source.
- Never give personal details to someone you do not know and trust.
- Never provide information such as passwords, tax file numbers or bank account details via email links.
- Do not open suspicious texts or click on links or attachments in emails received from unknown or unexpected sources.
- If you think you have provided your account details to a scammer, contact your bank or financial institution immediately.
- If you think you have provided your DVA number to a scammer, contact the nearest DVA office.


If you, or someone you know, has been approached by someone posing as a DVA representative please contact your nearest DVA office.





If you have shared personal information and believe you may be at risk, you can contact IDCARE, a not-for-profit organisation that provides assistance and support to victims of identity theft and other cybercrime. Visit idcare.org or telephone 1800 595 160.


For additional information about scams, visit scamwatch.gov.au – you can also subscribe to a free alert service to receive updates about the latest scams.





The Australian Cyber Security Centre (cyber.gov.au) also provides advice for individuals, a free alert service to help you understand the latest online threats and the ability to report online crimes via the ReportCyber page.

VETERANS' STORIES
DVA SERVICES
COMMEMORATION





◀ SCAN AND SUBSCRIBE!
▶ YouTube /DVATVAus



Indexation of rates 1 July 2022

From 1 July 2022, the Income Free Areas and Assets Value Limits used to calculate rates of income support pensions rose, under the *Veterans' Entitlement Act 1986* (VEA).

Summary of Income Limits changes effective 1 July 2022

The following table provides an overview of the amount of income (per fortnight) an income support pensioner may receive before their pension is reduced under the income test.

	Single rate (fortnightly)	Couples rate - combined (fortnightly)
Service or Age Pension	\$190.00	\$336.00
Income Support Supplement (War Widow(er)'s Pension is included in these amounts) • Different limits apply if assessed under transitional rules	\$1,541.80	\$2,080.80

Summary Asset Limits for Pensions changes effective 1 July 2022

The table below provides an overview of the maximum value of assets a person can have before their pension is affected.

	Single rate	Couples rate - combined
Service or Age Pension		
Homeowner	\$280,000.00	\$419,000.00
Non-homeowner	\$504,500.00	\$643,500.00
Income Support Supplement • Different limits apply if assessed under transitional rules		
Homeowner	\$505,500.00	\$710,000.00
Non-homeowner	\$730,000.00	\$934,500.00

Summary of Deeming Thresholds effective 1 July 2022

The deeming thresholds increased from 1 July 2022. This means that the value of financial assets deemed to be earning the lower rate of 0.25 per cent has increased. The higher deeming rate of 2.25 per cent is applied to the balance of financial assets over these thresholds.

	Single rate	Couples rate - combined
Deeming threshold	\$56,400.00	\$93,600.00

Summary of Payment Rates changes under the MRCA effective 1 July 2022

Certain payments under the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (MRCA) have increased as a result of the 1 July 2022 Indexation. An overview of these entitlements is provided in the table below.

	New rate (weekly)
Maximum Permanent Impairment amount	\$375.80
Maximum rate of Household Services	\$532.11
Maximum rate of Attendant Care Services	\$532.11
Dependent eligible young person	\$160.91

A full list of the new rates is available from the DVA website in the CLIK tool under the Quick links heading. For further information, contact DVA on 1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372).

Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide update

The Royal Commission continues to conduct its important inquiry into Defence and veteran suicide, including conducting public hearings, holding private sessions, receiving submissions, issuing notices to obtain documents and information, and holding community engagement activities.

The timeframe for the Royal Commission to provide its final report has been extended by 12 months, to 17 June 2024. This was at the request of the Royal Commission, which considers the extension vital to enabling it sufficient time to thoroughly inquire into the complex factors that contribute to deaths by suicide.

Following the extension of the Royal Commission, submissions are now open until 13 October 2023, according to the Royal Commission website (defenceveteransuicide.royalcommission.gov.au).

This is your chance to share your thoughts, and to contribute to the important work of the Royal Commission. Your submission can be made anonymously and you do not need to provide your contact details. You can make a submission online via the 'Make a submission' link on the home page of the Royal Commission's website, or by calling 1800 329 095 to request a mailed submission form.

The department understands this may be a difficult time for many sharing their stories and it is important for all veterans and families to know that if they need support they can contact Open Arms - Veterans & Families Counselling (www.openarms.gov.au) for free support and counselling (available 24/7 on 1800 011 046). Those who wish to remain anonymous, can contact Safe Zone Support on 1800 142 072.

There continues to be widespread media coverage of the Royal Commission, particularly throughout the hearings. Please reach out for help if you or someone you know is feeling distressed.

Counselling support is also available to assist people when they call or engage with the Royal Commission. This support is provided by Royal Commission staff - including before, during and after a person participates in a hearing or private session.

A free national information and legal advice service has been established for people who want to engage with the Royal Commission. It provides independent support to Defence personnel and veterans, as well as families, carers and supporters, to share their experiences with the Royal Commission.

Individuals and entities may be able to access financial assistance to meet the costs of their legal representation.

For more information on these services, visit the Royal Commission support page.

DVA's role during the Royal Commission

DVA is completely independent from the Royal Commission. The Royal Commission operates independently from Government.

The department strongly supports the important work of the Royal Commission and is closely following its progress. We have implemented processes to ensure we respond in a timely and transparent manner to all requests from the Royal Commission.

DVA program gives extra support for those with complex needs

Coordinated Client Support (CCS) Case Managers help veterans with complex and multiple needs and their family members understand their DVA entitlements and access external support services, while supporting them to manage their business with DVA independently.

Veterans or family members referred to CCS are assigned a Case Manager who acts as the primary point of contact within DVA.

How do clients access CCS?

Veterans are referred to CCS via Triage and Connect from DVA support staff, Open Arms – Veterans & Families Counselling and the Australian Defence Force. CCS will then contact the individual to discuss their circumstances and needs.

Referrals to CCS are also sometimes made on behalf of veterans and families by external parties such as representatives of ex-service organisations, doctors and other government agencies. This is usually done by the external party calling DVA on 1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372).

If the client's situation is appropriate for CCS, a referral will be submitted for the CCS team's consideration. It is important that the client's consent has been obtained prior to requesting the referral.

What is excluded?

While CCS provides a range of important support for veterans and family members with complex and multiple needs, it is important to note that CCS does not:

- provide a crisis management service
- provide clinical case management services or counselling
- undertake any processing role or investigate or determine a client's entitlements/claims, nor does participation provide prioritisation of claims
- provide claims advocacy.

For more information, visit the CCS page of the DVA website (dva.gov.au and search for 'CCS').

Annual increase to travel allowances

Travel allowances for transport, meals and accommodation under DVA's Repatriation Transport Scheme will increase from 1 July 2022 in line with the Consumer Price Index.

The increase applies to travel by private vehicle as well as accommodation and meal allowances for all eligible veterans, war widows and widowers (entitled persons) travelling for treatment purposes or disability and income support claims.

The increase also applies to eligible persons under the *Australian Participants in British Nuclear Tests and British Commonwealth Occupation Force (Treatment) Act 2006* and the *Treatment Benefits (Special Access) Act 2019*.

The intention of the Scheme is to assist with travelling expenses for an entitled person and their medically required attendant, not necessarily to reimburse the entire cost incurred. To receive the maximum benefit, entitled persons should travel to their closest practical health provider.

- Veteran Gold Cards and Veteran White Cards (for specific conditions) eligible under the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (VEA) are entitled to assistance with travelling expenses when travelling to receive treatment for an accepted service-related condition or for treatment of a condition covered under Non-liability Health Care (NLHC).

- Veteran Gold Cards under the *Australian Participants in British Nuclear Tests and British Commonwealth Occupation Force (Treatment) Act 2006* and the *Treatment Benefits (Special Access) Act 2019* are entitled to assistance towards travelling expenses when attending approved treatment.

For any queries about travel for treatment allowances, contact DVA on 1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372). Further information is also available on DVA's website (dva.gov.au and search for 'claim travel expenses under the RTS').

New travel allowances from 1 July 2022

Type of allowance	Measure	New allowance from 1 July 2022	Travel with a medically required attendant †
Private vehicle	Per kilometre	39.1 cents	x1
Public, community or air transport	Actual fare	Actual fare	x2
Taxi transport	Actual fare	Actual fare	x1
Commercial accommodation non-capital city – single*	Per night	\$161.40	x2
Commercial accommodation capital city – single*	Per night	\$191.70	x2
Entitled person and medically required attendant – commercial accommodation – shared*	Per night	\$262.50	x1
Subsidised accommodation – single*	Per night	\$100.80	x2
Private accommodation*	Per night	\$50.30	x2
Meal allowance – more than 50 km but less than 200 km from entitled person's home to the treatment location	Per day	\$16.10	x2
Meal allowance – more than 200 km from entitled person's home to the treatment location	Per day	\$32.60	x2

* A meal allowance is not paid on a day where an accommodation allowance is paid, as a meal component is already built into the accommodation allowance.

† This column refers to the number of times an allowance is paid when an entitled person travels with a medically required attendant. For instance, if an entitled person shares a room with an attendant, only the allowance for one room is paid for (x1). If they each have a single room, the allowance for both rooms is paid for (x2).

Face-to-face services for regional and remote veterans



Did you know that veterans and families can get face-to-face help with a range of DVA support services at all Services Australia service centres across the country?

This arrangement has been in place for a year, and is especially useful for members of the veteran community living in regional and remote Australia. The services available from Services Australia centres are in addition to those provided by DVA's Veterans' Access Network (VAN) offices. If you have a VAN office nearby, you can still access all services there.

Services Australia centres offer a range of services, including:

- access to on-site wireless internet for public use, and to self-service facilities including computers, printers and phones
- document lodgement
- certification of documentation
- checking that forms contain the right information
- help with creating a MyService account
- printing documentation from MyService
- guidance on how to make updates to information when circumstances have changed.

To find a centre near you, visit the Services Australia website and search for 'Support for veterans'.

Census reveals nearly 600,000 veterans in Australia

For the first time, it is known that 581,139 Australians have reported they have served or are currently serving in the Australian Defence Force (ADF), as announced in the release of Census 2021 data.

Minister for Veterans' Affairs Matt Keogh said the Census data revealed there are 496,276 veterans and 84,865 current serving ADF members, and understanding these figures along with other demographic and lifestyle data is history-making.

'I am proud to announce that for the first time in Australian history, we know that there are more than half a million veterans in Australia, representing 2.8 per cent of the Australian population aged 15 years and over and equating to one in 20 households with at least one person who has served,' Minister Keogh said.

'Currently around 247,000 veterans receive support from DVA; about half of the veteran population.

'This is a good sign that not all veterans have needed tailored support services, but I encourage those veterans who do need support and

have not yet engaged with DVA or are not sure what help they can access, to reach out.'

The Census 2021 data release also outlined key demographic information among the current and former serving ADF population.

'Knowing how many veterans there are and other key factors such as demographics, employment, education and health status is pivotal for the Australian Government to target services and support to the right areas,' Minister Keogh said.

'We now know that 13.4 per cent of our veteran population are female. The largest age group for veterans is 65-74 years of age, and 90 per cent of these veterans are male.

With the largest Army base in the country, Townsville is home to both the most veterans (8,700) and current serving ADF members (5,500).

'Unsurprisingly, the Census 2021 results show that veterans are more likely to participate in volunteer work compared to the general population, attesting to the incredible contributions our veterans make to the community throughout their lives,' said the Minister.

'Better understanding our veteran population through the Census 2021 will help guide the development and delivery of services and support for Australia's veterans, and will help inform the Government's response to issues veterans are facing, such as health, housing and employment.'

To learn more about the results of the Census 2021, including more detail on Defence service, visit the ABS website: www.abs.gov.au.



Census

Vale Rat of Tobruk, Sydney Kinsman

Rat of Tobruk Sydney Kinsman died recently, aged 100.

Syd joined the Australian Army in July 1940, having just turned 19. He served with the 2/48th Infantry Battalion in Palestine, Libya, Benghazi, Tobruk, Syria and El Alamein.

Syd proudly remembered the 2/48th Battalion, which saw out the full nine months of the siege of Tobruk. It was a highly decorated unit, with four Victoria Cross recipients in its ranks by the time the war ended. Syd was wounded during the siege.

After Tobruk, Syd went to Syria, before the battalion was deployed to El Alamein in Egypt's western desert in July 1941. It was at El Alamein that Syd was taken prisoner of war. He was held in Benghazi, Libya, until he was sent to Italy a year later. In September 1943, he and two others escaped to Switzerland from their work camp near the Vercelli rice fields in Italy's north, hiking at night across the Monte Moro Pass in the Italian Alps.

After the war, Syd picked fruit in the Riverland before returning to Adelaide to qualify to work in the building industry. He then went to

Central Australia shooting kangaroos for RM Williams to make some money. In 1949, he started building houses in Alice Springs where he remained for the rest of his life.

Syd was well known in Alice Springs, where, according to the ABC, he was the town's last living Second World War veteran. Last year the local council erected a monument in his honour, to coincide with his 100th birthday.

An estimated 750 cars and other vehicles took part in an Anzac Day 'drive-past tribute' past the home of Syd on Anzac Day 2020. See 'Drive-past tribute honours Alice's Rat of Tobruk' in the Winter 2020 *Vetaffairs*.

Syd passed away on 15 June 2022, a month shy of his 101st birthday.



Australian PTSD research creates new world-class therapy



A partnership between DVA, the Department of Defence and Phoenix Australia has led to world-first research and implementation of an innovative new treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). This treatment is now available for all Open Arms – Veterans & Families Counselling Service clients with PTSD.

The Rapid Exposure Supporting Trauma Recovery (RESTORE) Trial investigated a new method of delivering PTSD treatment through an intensive form of exposure therapy delivered within a two-week period.

The results show this new method of treatment to be as effective as standard treatment while potentially offering additional lifestyle benefits.

Standard prolonged exposure therapy, usually delivered over 10 to 12 weeks, systematically and safely assists the person with PTSD address their memories of the events that underlie their condition. However, it can be difficult for veterans to commit to treatment over a three-month period, especially when transitioning from the military.

The RESTORE Trial found the new intensive two-week method is equally effective in treating PTSD, but participants are nearly four times less likely to drop out of therapy compared with those who receive the regular treatment.

This world-class, intensive therapy involves treating PTSD with ten sessions over a two-week period. The standard therapy involves one treatment per week over a ten-week period. Both treatments are proven to be effective, so people can work with a clinician to determine the method that is best suited to their needs.

This enables Open Arms to offer flexible and effective therapy options that suit the needs of individual veterans.

PTSD is a serious and often disabling mental disorder, affecting serving and ex-serving personnel at higher rates than the general community.

The long-term impacts of PTSD can be devastating on an individual's overall wellbeing, their family life as well as their ability to maintain social relationships and successful employment.

To find out more, contact Open Arms on 1800 011 046.

Full details about the RESTORE trial, including associated findings, are published in *Psychological Medicine*.

Talk to your GP about a Veteran Health Check

If you have been to your general practitioner (GP)'s office recently you may have seen digital displays and flyers about the Veteran Health Check program. DVA has provided GPs across Australia with information to help promote awareness of this important program to veterans who have recently transitioned from the Australian Defence Force (ADF) to civilian life.

The Veteran Health Check has been specifically designed to help you identify early physical or mental health concerns. The comprehensive health check covers all aspects of health and wellbeing, including physical and mental health. After that, you can get the best help possible through a referral to another service or immediate treatment.

If you transitioned out of the ADF on or after 1 July 2019, you are eligible for the *Annual Veteran Health Check*. This service allows you to build a relationship with your local GP as you will



have an appointment annually every year for the first five years after you leave the ADF. You can access this service through your DVA Veteran Card and it is at no cost to the veteran.

If you have transitioned on or before 30 June 2019, you can access the *One-off Veteran Health Check*. This type of

health check is eligible for a benefit through Medicare, so you do not need to be a DVA Veteran Card holder to access the *One-off Veteran Health Check*.

Keep on top of your health and book in for your Veteran Health Check. When you call your GP practice, let them know you are booking in for a Veteran Health Check and would like a 45 minute appointment. Just make sure your GP accepts the DVA Veteran Card. To learn more, visit the DVA website (dva.gov.au/veteranhealthcheck).

If you have not received a DVA White Card and you think that you are eligible, please call 1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372) or visit MyService to apply online.

Anti-malarial medication support available for veterans

DVA is working with private health insurer Bupa to deliver a national health assessment program for veterans concerned about having taken the anti-malarial medications mefloquine and tafenoquine during service in the Australian Defence Force (ADF).

The program enables veterans to receive a comprehensive health assessment free of charge from a Bupa-contracted general practitioner (GP). The GPs delivering the health assessment have been selected based on their unique experience in providing medical care to veterans.

Veterans will receive a health support recommendations report at the end of the assessment, which forms the basis for clinical and diagnostic testing and appropriate pathways for ongoing treatment by the veteran's regular GP.

Bupa has recruited 15 GPs across the country to provide free health assessments. A list of GP locations is available on the DVA website. If a GP is not available in your location, telehealth appointments are available by phone or videoconference.

DVA encourages any veterans, including current serving members of the ADF, who may be interested in receiving a health assessment to call DVA's 1800 MEFLOQUINE hotline (1800 633 567) or Bupa directly on 1800 612 798 to schedule an appointment.

Further information about the program is available on the DVA website (dva.gov.au and search for 'mefloquine').

Support

Help is available, including:

- free, lifetime mental health care for anyone with even a single day of continuous full-time service in the ADF
- immediate financial assistance for those submitting mental health claims
- case management for those with complex needs.

Counselling services whose staff understand the military experience are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. They include:

- Open Arms – Veterans & Families Counselling, which offers free and confidential counselling to the veteran community on 1800 011 046
- Safe Zone, which is available for current and former ADF personnel on 1800 142 072. Calls to Safe Zone are confidential and not recorded.

Register for information on DVA mental health and wellbeing support consultation

The department is undertaking a Mental Health and Wellbeing Service Review and Transformation Program. The program will include consultation and co-design activities focusing specifically on mental health and wellbeing support needs and services for veterans and families.

Current and ex-serving Australian Defence Force members, veteran family members, carers and ex-service organisations are invited to register their interest to receive further information about contributing to the program at this website, which is accessible from the digital version of this article (dva.gov.au/MHreview).

Action plans for treating COVID, and improving your heart health



DR TRISH BATCHELOR

Deputy Chief Health Officer

Department of Veterans' Affairs



COVID medications: Paxlovid and Lagevrio

I was hoping by the time I sat down to write this column that the impacts of COVID might be behind us. And while life is returning to some degree of normality and high rates of vaccination have had a huge impact on the rates of severe disease and hospitalisation, we are certainly not out of the woods yet. With the more transmissible Omicron variant dominant, we are now in a phase of continued transmission in Australia, with case numbers increasing as winter sets in. A fourth vaccine dose is now available via general practitioners (GPs). If you think you may be eligible, please have a chat with your GP. As at 7 July, it is recommended that anyone over the age of 50 receive a fourth dose.

You are probably aware that two antiviral medications to treat mild to moderate COVID are now available. They are Paxlovid and Lagevrio. Both can be prescribed by your GP on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme if you are eligible.

The initial trials of these medications were undertaken against the Delta variant in an unvaccinated population. They demonstrated that Paxlovid was around 80% and Lagevrio around 40% effective in reducing hospitalisations in higher risk individuals. Real world data in vaccinated people during the time of Omicron is just starting to be released. Studies from Israel and Hong Kong have showed very

similar levels of protection against severe disease. This is exciting news and adds to our arsenal of treatments for COVID for people at higher risk of severe disease.

However, critical to the success of these medications is that they be taken within the first five days of symptoms, and the earlier the better. I would urge any of you who meet the eligible criteria (health.gov.au) to proactively meet with your GP and develop an action plan. This way you can quickly access treatment should you test positive. There is currently no shortage of either medication in Australia.

"I would urge any of you who meet the eligible criteria [for Paxlovid or Lagevrio] to proactively meet with your GP and develop an action plan."

This is particularly important as Paxlovid, while more effective and our preferred choice, has many drug interactions. In other words, it is more likely to cause side effects by interacting with other drugs you may be taking. Your GP will need to check that it is safe for you to take, or give guidance on any changes in your regular medications that may be needed if there are interactions with Paxlovid.

Please monitor the Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care website (health.gov.au) for updates.

Heart health checks

Like many of you, I was shocked to hear of the untimely death of Shane Warne from heart disease. This sad event has raised awareness of the importance of proactive heart health checks. Since 2019 there has been a Medicare item number for a heart health check, meaning it can be bulk-billed. Anyone over the age of 45, or over the age of 30 if you are of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage, can access this.

Heart disease still causes one in four deaths in Australia and more than 1,600 hospitalisations daily. Risk factors that we can personally modify account for 90% of the risk for a heart attack, meaning that we can each do a lot to reduce our own risk.

The Australian Heart Foundation notes that two out of every three Australians have at least three risk factors for heart disease. However, one in three people who are eligible for a heart health check have not had their cholesterol or blood pressure measured within the recommended time frames.

The main lifestyle behaviours you can modify to reduce your risk of heart disease include quitting smoking, eating a heart-healthy diet, getting enough physical activity, keeping your weight in a healthy range and avoiding binge or consistently heavy drinking of alcohol. There are some medical conditions that if not well managed can also increase your risk, including high cholesterol, high blood pressure, diabetes and some mental health

conditions, such as depression. As part of a heart health check, your GP should check all of these risk factors (which may require you to have a blood test) before using a risk calculator to assess your personal risk. Then, together you can develop an action plan to address those risk factors that are most relevant to you.

There is a tendency to think of heart disease as more of a male problem, yet heart disease is the second most common cause of death in Australian women, after dementia. There are some specifically female risk factors including polycystic ovarian syndrome, premature menopause, some autoimmune diseases (while not specific to women they are much more common in women) and breast cancer treatments including radiotherapy and chemotherapy. Additionally younger women tend to be more likely to present with 'atypical' symptoms of heart disease such as indigestion, jaw, shoulder or back pain, shortness of breath, or dizziness.

If, after having a heart health check, you find you need to address some personal risk factors, the Heart Foundation website (heart-foundation.org.au) has some fantastic resources. DVA runs a 12-month heart health program that you may be eligible for depending on your service history. The eligibility checker can be found on the DVA website (dva.gov.au and search for 'Heart Health Program').

Until next time stay well.

Open Arms Tasmania and Victoria 40th anniversaries

Throughout May and June 2022, Open Arms Tasmania and Victoria (formerly the Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service) hosted events to celebrate the 40th anniversary of providing services to veterans and families in their states.

The celebrations provided an opportunity to acknowledge the leadership and legacy of Vietnam veterans in ensuring future generations of serving men and women continue to have access to the specialised mental health and wellbeing support they first pioneered in 1982.

Since the first centre opened in Adelaide on 29 January 1982, the then Vietnam Veterans Counselling Service has had several iterations, evolving to meet the needs of emerging cohorts within the Defence and ex-serving communities. In 2007, the service was rebranded the VVCS – Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service to reflect an expansion of eligibility.

In 2018, VVCS became Open Arms – Veterans and Families Counselling.

Open Arms has been the cornerstone of the Australian Government's veteran mental health support for 40 years. Open Arms is a nationally accredited mental health service, which provides 24-hour free and confidential counselling to support the mental health and wellbeing of former and current Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel and families.



The anniversaries also provided an opportunity to celebrate the ongoing commitment of Open Arms clinicians and staff in delivering premier mental health support to veterans and families in Tasmania and Victoria. The event

was attended by members of the ex-service community, local ADF representatives as well as former and current Open Arms employees from across the states.

Future events will be held around the country in the coming months.



The 40th anniversary celebration at the Open Arms Tasmania office

Free mental health care through DVA

The past two years have been challenging for all Australians, including our Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel, veterans and families; and now is the time to make mental health a priority.

All current and former full-time members of the ADF can get free mental health treatment. So can reservists who have completed disaster relief service, border protection service or who were involved in a serious training accident.

This is called non-liability mental health care. It means there is no need to prove your condition is related to military service and no need to submit a claim for compensation.

It covers treatment for any mental health condition.

A Veteran White Card is used to pay for treatment under non-liability mental health care arrangements. Many veterans have White Cards that already cover non-liability mental health treatment. To check if your White Card covers mental health treatment, or to apply for a non-liability mental health White Card if you don't already have one, you can use

DVA's MyService app, email nlhc@dva.gov.au, or call DVA on 1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372).

If you have mental health concerns, talk to your General Practitioner in the first instance. Your GP may refer you to a mental health practitioner, such as a psychologist or psychiatrist. Before your appointment, make sure the practitioner will accept the DVA Veteran White Card for payment.

Further information is available on the Free mental health care for veterans page of the DVA website. (dva.gov.au and search for 'free mental health care').

All current and former ADF personnel and families also have access to free and confidential counselling and support through Open Arms – Veterans & Families Counselling. This life-saving support is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week by calling 1800 011 046.



Only the lonely



DR LORETTA POERIO

Senior Mental Health Adviser

Department of Veterans' Affairs

The words of Roy Orbison's 1960 timeless classic, 'Only the lonely ... know the heartaches I've been through' are as relevant now as they were then. Loneliness is described as distress resulting from there being a gap between your desired social network and the one you actually have. While we can all experience a sense of loneliness from time to time, some experience the distress of isolation more than others.

COVID-19 created the perfect storm for disconnection from others, which if unchecked, can literally make us sick and lead to poor mental and physical wellbeing. Loneliness has been linked to depression, anxiety and suicide risk as well as stroke and heart attacks. The negative feeling that loneliness engenders is estimated to impact one in three adults, with a recent

Australian study by the Black Dog Institute finding up to 50% of people experienced loneliness during the pandemic lockdowns. Interestingly, loneliness seems to be manifested in younger (18–29 years) and older adults (65–79).

In a study of US veterans during COVID-19, having a partner and a purpose in life were found to be protective factors. Whereas not being in a relationship, pre-existing depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder, increased social restrictions and financial stress all contributed to a greater sense of loneliness.

These results are consistent with what we know more broadly, though we are still in the early days of developing ways to reduce social disconnection.

So, what can we do to build meaningful connections with others?

Our brains are programmed to live in close proximity to others, to share food and resources and to exchange ideas. This is how we flourish. Social needs have been likened to our need for food and water – not just a nice-to-have, but essential for our survival. Loneliness is a consequence of not having our social needs met, when we perceive the quality of our current social relationships to be poor. The interesting thing about loneliness is that it is a subjective state that can mean someone living a relatively solitary life can feel quite connected while another person living a highly socialised life can feel quite disconnected.

Even though we are wired to build social relationships and have evolved interesting and complex behaviours to facilitate this, some people are better at it than others. And many of us successfully form

meaningful relationships and then lose them through separation, widowhood, and the ups and downs of life.

Loneliness is not a sign of vulnerability or weakness. It can happen to anyone. There is some evidence that a sensitivity to social disconnection is inherited, though a greater part is played by our environment. Social isolation, living alone, the recent death of a loved one and health issues can increase vulnerability to loneliness.

Social connection, at its core, is about those deeper connections we cultivate with people. They provide reassurance that our lives matter; that we matter. We build these connections over time through the sharing of our history; those people who were there when you played your first game of footy, bought your first car, went through enlistment training, or who provided a shoulder to cry on after a relationship breakup. These are the life experiences that build a sense of belonging and provide a belief that our life has meaning and purpose. That is the role family can play, and also close friends, and to some, it is the role the Defence Force plays or played.

Even though there is a lot to learn about what is effective in reducing loneliness, a review of interventions that aim to reduce loneliness suggested four that are of interest:

- improving social skills
- building social support networks
- increasing opportunities for connecting with others
- targeting unhelpful beliefs about social situations.

The last of these is worth a closer look. It appears that lonely people have a particular thinking style that can create a self-perpetuating

"Loneliness is not a sign of vulnerability or weakness. It can happen to anyone."

negative feedback loop. Within such a loop, social situations are perceived as a potential threat. We become attuned to remembering negative characteristics of a social situation, and expecting negative outcomes in social situations. These beliefs lead to individuals being more likely to behave in ways that confirm these beliefs, which thereby perpetuates the process. Further, let's not forget that because we all have social brains, our negative mindset impacts others, and actually has the opposite effect to the one desired – meaningful connection with others!

If this sounds like you, then congratulations, as awareness is the first step. Interventions that help build awareness of our thinking patterns, and provide ways to challenge automatic thinking, could be helpful. Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) strategies target unhelpful beliefs and teach us to view automatic thoughts as hypotheses to be tested, rather than facts. Open Arms – Veterans & Families Counselling (openarms.gov.au) and Head to Health (headtohealth.gov.au) websites have a range of apps and programs that may be helpful.

If you are concerned about your experience of loneliness, and want to talk to someone, you can seek professional assistance through Open Arms on 1800 011 046 or Lifeline on 13 11 14.

WIDOWS' NEWS

Please be aware that articles in Widows' News have been submitted and written by war widows' organisations. The articles do not necessarily represent the views of DVA. Such organisations are encouraged to submit stories for publication by emailing vetaffairs@dva.gov.au.



"The Field of Remembrance is not meant to supplant any of the traditional observances associated with Anzac Day. It is hoped that the intimate and personal act of planting a cross will make a great appeal."

Dean of Sydney Dr Babbage at St Andrew's Cathedral, 20 April 1952

70th anniversary of the ANZAC Field of Remembrance

A message from Australian War Widows NSW

'We must demonstrate publicly that we have not forgotten them – because if we, the chief mourners, forget – who else will remember?'

War Widows NSW Annual Report 1986

Since 1952, war widows in NSW have gathered at St Andrew's Cathedral to commemorate their very personal sacrifices. The ANZAC Field of Remembrance is not just an event, it is a significant legacy established in Sydney 70 years ago – a commemorative service that honours and pays tribute to those who have given their lives in the service of Australia by the chief mourners of that sacrifice.

On 20 April 2022, NSW War Widows gathered for the 70th time, paying tribute to their loved ones who have died during, or as a result of, their

service. Crosses were planted, wreaths were laid, and roses were placed for those who have served and made the ultimate sacrifice. Over its 70-year history, the ANZAC Field of Remembrance was cancelled only once and that was in 2020 due to the pandemic.

Last year saw the first live stream of the service take place and the delivery of crosses to widows around the state, enabling them and their families to participate at home.

This year, the service was once again live streamed, enabling those widows from around

the state to be part of the event. Around 3,000 crosses were hand made by the Haberfield Men's Shed and sent to war widows around NSW so that they could participate at home, in small groups and with their families.

A regional live stream site was also set up in Coffs Harbour. This live stream hub brought together the ladies from three Northern NSW social clubs to watch and participate in the service together. The live stream hub proved to be successful, and we look forward to expanding the live stream hubs to other regional areas across NSW next year.

Australian War Widows NSW is proud to carry forward such a meaningful legacy and will ensure the history of war widows isn't lost. Visit warwidowsnsw.com.au for more information.

You can watch the live stream on YouTube (search for 'Anzac Field of Remembrance'). If you would like to be part of next year's event, please let us know at guild@warwidowsnsw.com.au.



Preparations underway for Queensland's first War Widows Day

A message from Australian War Widows Queensland

There was great excitement among war widows in Queensland when the Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk announced that from 2022 the date of 19 October will be known as War Widows Day in the state. It is a first for Australia and a means to acknowledge the sacrifice of widows from all conflicts.

Seventy-five years ago in 1947, Mrs Jessie Vasey founded the War Widows Guild in Queensland. She was born on 19 October in Roma and it is only fitting that each year war widows throughout Australia celebrate her, and the organisation she founded, on that day.

The first Queensland branch of the Guild was formed in Toowoomba on 8 August 1947. The Guild is now known as Australian War Widows Queensland (AWWQ) and there are 27 Sub-branches in Queensland.

On 19 October this year, there will be a special celebration attended by the Premier in Brisbane as well as the lighting up of the Story Bridge, Parliament House and City Hall as a tribute to Jessie Vasey and to AWWQ.

At present, there are more than 10,000 war widows in Queensland who benefit from the work that Jessie Vasey began all those years ago. Her tenacity and hard work resulted in improvements to their pensions, health entitlements and also the great services and support provided by AWWQ. In her honour AWWQ, has commissioned sculptor Wayne Strickland to create a sculpture of Jessie Vasey (see artist's impression).

Celebrations for War Widows Day and the 75th anniversary of AWWQ are being planned throughout the state by way of luncheons and other activities to bring Queensland's war widows together in their local areas. A commemorative 75th Anniversary pin will also be extended to all AWWQ members (see picture) through an event that each AWWQ sub-branch is planning.

For further information, contact the AWWQ head office on 07 3846 7706. Or visit: warwidowsqld.org.au

Please be aware that articles in ESO News have been submitted and written by ex-service and related organisations. The articles do not necessarily represent the views of DVA. ESOs are welcome to submit stories for publication by emailing vetaffairs@dva.gov.au.

RSL and Servulink pilot tech solution to improve access to veteran support

A message from the RSL

The Returned & Services League of Australia (RSL) in partnership with Servulink, an Australian veteran-owned technology provider, have announced a pilot program that will use technology to better connect veterans and their families to vital services and support in their area.

The initiative involves a commitment from RSL Australia to further develop and deploy Servulink's web and app-based 'Catalogue of Services', which has yet to be released. The agile tool will simplify the process of navigating the wide range of fragmented support services available to veterans in Australia. Users will be able to easily find relevant services in their area through a geo-location feature and further filter their search based on the specific type of support they need.

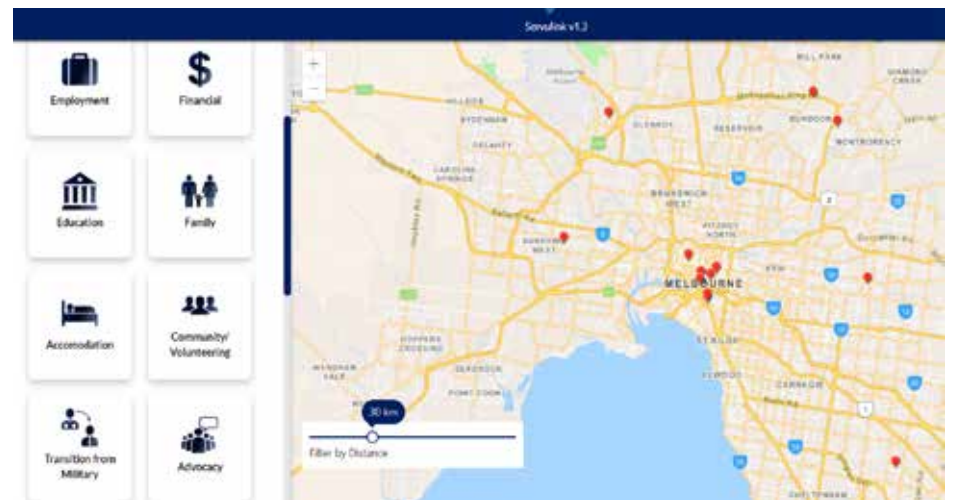
Not only will the Catalogue of Services be valuable to veterans and their families, it will also greatly assist veteran advocates, caseworkers and peer supporters in finding complementary services to best meet their clients' needs.

The Australian veteran service and support environment is large and complex, comprising some 2,800 ex-service organisations (ESOs), 4,000 registered charities and a growing number of government and corporate entities focused on supporting and employing veterans.

Identifying the relevant local support and services suited to individual needs can be challenging, often resulting in service delivery failure, confusion, frustration, and negative mental health impacts – ironically among the very people that these services are designed to assist.

'The current Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide provides a strong focus on the need to deliver clear and easy access to mental health, general health and other support services,' says RSL Australia's President Greg Melick. 'This is an important need for all veterans and is particularly urgent for our younger veteran community.'

Veteran and Servulink Co-Founder, Matt Brennan, says, 'the catalogue will empower veterans and their families to successfully navigate support across a range of holistic wellbeing, personal, professional, community network and family needs.'



Servulink's web and app-based 'Catalogue of Services' tool

The pilot project will integrate more than 1,000 RSL sub-branches, alongside the hundreds of other valued Australian organisations already part of Servulink's Catalogue.

The Catalogue of Services is also supported by other national veteran organisations including Legacy, Bravery Trust, Soldier On and War Widows, who recognise the need for a 'one stop shop' resource.

Mr Melick welcomed the collaboration as a great example of ESOs working together to support veterans and their families.

The program is currently open and actively seeking registrations from all established and reputable ESOs across Australia.

If you're a service provider and want to be part of the Catalogue of Services, please register at servulink.com.au/registration-welcome-2021

The Catalogue of Services is expected to launch later this year.

BECOME A LEGATEE – Scott Biddell's story

A message from Legacy Australia

Warrant Officer Scott Biddell had been looking for a volunteer opportunity that aligned with his Air Force values, so it was timely when a military mate introduced him to Legacy.



As a second-generation serviceman with over three decades of dedication to the Australian Defence Force (ADF), Scott strongly identified with the military values, culture and commitment of Legacy to serving our veterans' families.

'For me, I saw becoming a Legatee as an extension of my ADF service,' he said. 'We as Defence members become almost like a family unit; it's the concept of leaving no man behind. You're there to support those people no matter what.'

Scott knew the founding philosophy of Legacy was 'look after the missus and kids for me' so he

felt becoming a Legatee would fulfil his personal intent to assist the families of those who gave their life, or health, in service to our country.

'I see it as an extension of my ADF service,' he said. 'Legacy keeps people together and supports those who have, in their own way, also made sacrifices for the Defence Force.'

Scott was inducted as a Legatee at Sydney Legacy's Hawkesbury Sub-Division and gives what time he can to supporting widows and families in his local community. Besides his routine of checking in with widows and making sure they

aren't feeling isolated or experiencing any difficulties living independently, one of Scott's most rewarding efforts has been in supporting a young 13-year-old boy whose father (a veteran) tragically passed away from a heart attack.

'This boy was at a juncture in his education where reassurance and confidence to go forward was hugely important,' said Scott.

With his Dad gone, Scott could see the teenager was looking for a senior male he could talk to about how to navigate his way through high school.

'I spoke to him on the phone a week before he started high school, and he had a lot of trepidation. Then I contacted him a week later, and he had made a couple of friends, and things were looking pretty good.'

'Sometimes just being a good listener can make a difference to families who are missing a partner or parent, and as a Legatee it's so gratifying to be that sounding board.'

While Scott has a service background, it's not a prerequisite to becoming a Legatee.

Legacy welcomes mature volunteers from all walks of life who can bring broad-based life skills and empathy in caring for Legacy families.

If you're interested in knowing more about becoming a Legatee, simply contact your nearest Legacy Club (there are 44 clubs around Australia) or go to legacy.com.au/legatee.

Former major finds her direction with help from Prince's Trust Australia

by Courtney Snowden,
ADF partner and Enterprise program
alumna of Prince's Trust Australia



This Anzac Day, veteran Nicole Bradley commemorated the sacrifices of her fellow servicemen and women while also marking two years since starting her own business with the help of Prince's Trust Australia.

On 25 April 2020 the former logistics officer registered Nicole Bradley Counselling – something she couldn't have imagined when she discharged from the Army in 2015.

Nicole joined the Australian Defence Force (ADF) in 1993 and during her 22-year career deployed to East Timor and the Middle East, was posted to seven different locations and spent six months on Palm Island as part of the Army Aboriginal Community Assistance Programme (AACAP).

But despite the skills and experience gained through two decades of service, being a mum of two and supporting her husband in his Army career, Nicole doubted her ability to find professional success outside of the ADF.

'I didn't know I actually had anything to offer,' she says.

The former major gravitated towards counselling, as she found her best results while in the ADF came from her work with people.

One career highlight was as a troop commander on AACAP in 2003 where she was able to help her soldiers through their personal struggles.

'I felt I was really able to help them bridge some of their challenges and I ended up having a big welfare role in amongst those people,' she says. 'Even in the later parts of my career, as a 2IC of the Army School of Health, my office was like a revolving door where I'd have people just coming in to tell me their problems. [So becoming a counsellor] just seemed to be a natural fit.'

Nicole completed a graduate diploma in counselling and was undertaking a placement at a community service organisation when COVID hit. Because of the pandemic, she couldn't return to her placement and the thought of applying for jobs was overwhelming.

'I was searching for something else where I could forge my own path in a sense, but I didn't have any plans for a business. There are very few people I know that have a business of their own and the concept of it was incredibly daunting.'

A friend told Nicole about Prince's Trust Australia's free Enterprise program, designed to help

veterans and military spouses start and grow small businesses, and she decided to check it out.

Nicole went into the program with a 'vague idea' of what she could do, and a hope Prince's Trust could prove her self-doubt wrong.

'I found there was a real encouragement in that group,' she says. 'I got to thinking about things I hadn't really considered, and I felt like (starting a business) wasn't that complicated in the end.'

'What I found in Prince's Trust is they draw this thread around all these skills you have in Defence that are usable outside. Skills I hadn't thought of because you just live it, you don't see it. And that woke me up to what I could offer others.'

Today Nicole Bradley Counselling provides one-on-one counselling to clients throughout Australia and New Zealand.

'The thing Prince's Trust does, once you leave the Defence Force, is give you this sense that you can still be important when you're not in the service,' she says.

'Very often the sense of who you are is so tied to the uniform that being reminded you're still important and you're still a value to the community outside of uniform is really comforting.'

Read the full article on the Prince's Trust website (princes-trust.org.au) and watch a YouTube video about Nicole's journey ([youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com) and search for 'Our Stories - Nicole Bradley').



At 42, Nicole was introduced to powerlifting, which led to three masters bench-press records, a gold medal in the US Department of Defense Warrior Games, and a silver medal in the Invictus Games 2018. She also served as Co-Captain of the Australian team at the Invictus Games 2022.

Get involved with the ADF ARRTS Program



The ADF ARRTS Program is an engaging four-week residential program that helps to build confidence and resilience in people who are experiencing health and wellbeing challenges related to service in the Australian Defence Force (ADF), ACT Emergency Services, and the Australian Federal Police.

It is open to currently serving and transitioning personnel, as well as to reservists and veterans who are clients of DVA who have transitioned within two years of the closing date for applications – in this case, 26 September.

The ADF Arts for Recovery, Resilience, Teamwork and Skills (ARRTS) Program is a uniform-free,

rank-free and COVID-safe environment conducted at the University of Canberra.

Training and mentoring will be provided by supportive arts practitioners in three streams: visual arts, music/rhythm and creative writing.

No previous experience in the arts is needed, and the cost of travel, accommodation, and allowances, as well as program-associated costs, will be covered by ARRTS for all eligible applicants.

Application forms and full details are available on the Department of Defence website (defence.gov.au/JCG/ARRTS). You can also email ARRTS@defence.gov.au or ring: (02) 6127 6505.

The 2nd 2022 ARRTS Program is scheduled for 30 October – 25 November 2022.

Applications open on Monday 1 August and close Monday 26 September 2022.

Please note that all ADF ARRTS programs will follow CDF/SEC COVID-19 Directives and be conducted in accordance with federal, state, and territory health advice.

Advocacy in the pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced many of us to look at how we can conduct business in different ways to support our veterans and families. Ex-service organisations (ESOs) have continued to provide advocacy services during times of restrictions and lockdowns in all states and territories.

Veteran Laurence 'Laurie' Mann is one advocate who has used technology to bridge the gap. Laurie's advocacy journey began in 1998 when the original Plympton Veterans Centre in Adelaide helped him to submit his first claim to DVA. Laurie became a qualified advocate through DVA's Training and Information Program (TIP), now the Advocacy Training and Development Program (ATDP), and says from that point on he never looked back. Laurie is an ATDP-qualified advocate through recognition of his prior learning.

Laurie provides advocacy services from the Limestone Coast Veteran Services Hub, which he set up after moving to Mt Gambier in 2019. He also operates from the Plympton Veterans Centre. Both service many clients and families.



Laurie Mann with his wife, Barbara.

A day in Laurie's life as an advocate is never the same. It often consists of mentoring advocate trainees, working with veterans and families as well as community leaders and local politicians. He not only helps veterans make claims, but assists people with disabilities all across South Australia's Limestone Coast.

Laurie says that the uptake of technology in providing advocacy services has also provided a way for him and other advocates in South Australia to reach clients in Perth, Cairns and Victoria.

'Social media platforms have been a great form of communicating with veterans and their families throughout the pandemic,' he said. Zoom and Microsoft Teams have also been helpful connecting people together.

Laurie and his ESO are exploring new ways of reaching veterans and families. Podcasts hosted by the ABC South East SA network are one way that they can provide useful information that is

readily accessible. He has also initiated a regional veteran support reach-out process.

However, Laurie says that the work done by advocates will never be replaced by technology.

'Technology has been a really useful tool for advocates during this pandemic, but it cannot replace the physical interaction and personal connection that face-to-face meetings with clients provide.'

Thank you for your service, Laurie.

If you are interested in becoming an advocate, please contact an ex-service organisation (ESO) in your area. You can also find information relating to the Advocacy Training and Development Program at www.atdp.org.au.

If you are looking for an advocate in your area, you can find an ESO that provides advocacy services through the Advocate Register at www.advocateregister.org.au.

180 veterans already navigating life after service with Go Beyond

A message from the Gallipoli Medical Research Foundation (GMRF)

More than 180 veterans have now received support with their transition into civilian life through Go Beyond, the self-directed training program created by the GMRF and RSL Queensland in May last year.

Leaving Defence can be tricky for some people. GMRF research shows that almost 50% of veterans find adjusting to civilian life difficult. Now the free, online program, Go Beyond, is available to help veterans get the most out of life after service.

After a brief survey, Go Beyond gives you a tailored learning program based on your individual adjustment needs. Programs focus on five key areas to help guide you through adjustment to civilian life.

Go Beyond can:

- help you to find purpose and connection in life after Defence
- share some new and different ways you can ask for help
- give you the tools to have positive conversations with civilians about Defence
- show you how the skills you learned in Defence can be used in the civilian world
- guide you through the positive parts of reintegration if you're feeling lost or have regrets.

Many people have already experienced the benefit of Go Beyond. The program is free to use for all veterans, and the content can be revisited at any time.

'I wish I had [the Resentment and Regret] module earlier,' says Laura, a veteran. 'I went through a lot of the situations the module discusses and the program has helped me to put a lot of past experiences into perspective.'

Wherever you are, whenever you want, visit Go Beyond (gobeyond.org.au).

Getting the right financial support

Eligible veterans and families can access a range of financial support from DVA to support their wellbeing and livelihoods. This is one of the key components of the support system the department provides to help veterans in their civilian lives after service in the Australian Defence Force.

DVA provides a range of income support, compensation and other payments including for:

- impairment
- inability or reduced ability to work
- means-tested income support payments
- support for families
- financial assistance during natural disasters.

Veterans in need of financial support can apply for assistance online through MyService (dva.gov.au/myservice) or by calling DVA on 1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372). Alternatively, the DVA website provides a comprehensive guide on the types of financial support available and is a great guide to help you get started. Visit dva.gov.au/financial-support.



OUR VETERANS -

Suzanne Shipp

After 14 years serving with the Australian Army, Suzanne Shipp made the transition out of active service and into civilian life in 2005.

Suzanne joined the Army as an apprentice at the age of 16 and after completing initial training, moved into a technician role. She then completed Year 12 and went on to earn a Bachelor of Engineering while studying at night part-time. After being commissioned, she was appointed as an Engineering Officer, where she led a team that conducted flight line operations and maintenance of a squadron of military helicopters.

When asked why she left the Australian Defence Force (ADF), Suzanne said, 'I left because I had a small child at the time. Both my husband and I were serving and found our priorities had changed. It was difficult for both of us to offer the military the same amount of commitment we had prior to having our child.'

Since leaving the ADF, Suzanne has been lucky enough to have been employed in both Defence and non-Defence-related industries.

'I have been responsible for the operations of power generation and gas assets as well as a variety of facilities. I've been the executive for digital and manufacturing businesses, which enabled me to use my capabilities in vastly different fields than what I was used to in the ADF.'

'I'm currently the Queensland Operations and Maintenance Manager for APA Group, Australia's largest gas infrastructure business. I am responsible for ensuring all of the gas transmission and power assets in Queensland and South Australia are reliable and available and are maintained effectively and efficiently to meet our customers' needs. I have six people who directly report to me and an extended team of 100 technical people, spread geographically across Queensland and South Australia. I also have a diverse set of assets including renewable energy, gas-fired power stations, high-voltage



"I enjoy watching my people develop into high-performing teams and taking them on a journey to be the best they can be."

electrical interconnectors and gas transmission pipelines worth almost \$1 billion.'

In addition to her paid work, Suzanne volunteers as a director and treasurer of the Currumbin Palm Beach RSL Sub Branch.

'This gives me a lot of opportunities to give back to my veteran community. I am working with other board members to create a sustainable future for our future veteran community.'

One of Suzanne's favourite aspects of her job is working with people.

'I enjoy getting out on site and interacting with my teams, getting to know them and connecting them to the bigger picture and vision of the organisation. I enjoy watching my people develop into high-performing teams and taking them on a journey to be the best they can be.'

Every day, Suzanne uses the skills and experience she gained while serving in the ADF.

'It's simple things like change management, taking people along the journey, leadership, such as motivating my team to achieve great things, communicating effectively, the importance of good process and people management.'

Other knowledge and capabilities that she learnt while serving that have been invaluable are logistics, organisational and coordination, resource management, training others, facilitation and stakeholder management.

'I've also used my technical skills such as project management, engineering design and fault-finding to support my career path. The military is one of the best training grounds and civilian industry values that depth of training.'

For anyone transitioning, Suzanne advises being flexible and open to opportunities.

'One of the biggest challenges I faced was being able to translate military speak into common language. Each industry has its own culture and way of doing things and their own lingo, so you do have to be able to learn fast, be flexible and open to change. Invest in yourself and others and be ready to grab the opportunities with both hands. Then hang on for the ride of a lifetime.'

Thank you for your service, Suzanne.



TRANSITIONING WELL

OUR VETERANS - Adam Barnard



Corporal Adam Barnard (left) and his driver Luke Woolfe next to the M113A1 armoured personnel carrier (22 Charlie) he commanded in East Timor, 2000 with 6RAR Bn Gp.

Adam Barnard joined the Army in 1992 aged 17, and served with the 10th Light Horse and the 2/14th Light Horse (Queensland Mounted Infantry). He was deployed to East Timor in 2000 with 6RAR Battalion Group as a Crew Commander of an M113A1 armoured personnel carrier. Unfortunately, he injured his back in Timor and, on his return to Australia, was medically discharged after almost 10 years in the Army.

Adam got a job as the operations manager for a bus company before founding his own coach company in 2006. The business thrived and became the Telstra WA Business of the Year in 2013. Adam puts his success down to sheer hard work, and a need to be constantly mentally active – something he believes is common to many people who join the services.

‘But I was also capitalising on a skill set and discipline I’d acquired in the Army,’ he says. ‘The military was definitely part of the secret, and that’s true of a lot of veteran-owned businesses

“What I have accomplished is an example of what a veteran can achieve when they apply the skills and qualities they acquired in the military.”

out there. Translating those military skills into business life isn’t always easy but it can be done.

‘And there’s plenty of help out there that wasn’t available to me back in the early days. The Veterans Community Business Chamber for instance. I would encourage all veterans – regular and reserve – to be proud of your service and utilise those skill sets, which the business community is becoming more attuned to.’

In mid-2019, Adam was invited to join the team at Perth-based Spinifex Brewing Company as chief executive officer, and provide the seed capital required to get the business off the ground. It was the right choice. The company was founded by Mick Little, John Gibbs and Steve Jansen. Mick is an Indigenous Australian and has used his knowledge to infuse Spinifex’s beers with native Australian botanicals, all

provided by Indigenous sources – either farmed or wild harvested.

During the COVID pandemic, they pivoted towards hand sanitiser production.

A number of its volunteers are ex-serving as well as many of its minor shareholders. Adam was originally the only full-time veteran at Spinifex but that changed recently when Spinifex hired Army Reservist Jason Connor to be the new face of F88 premium lager post-COVID, particularly as the company seeks to expand to the east coast.

Spinifex has a range of six beers, of which the most successful is F88 – named after the Austeyr rifle that has been in service with the Australian Defence Force since 1989. Half of the profits Spinifex makes from sales of F88 go towards veteran mental health charities in each state, chief among them Connected By in Western Australia. The beer is dedicated to the memory of Signaller Geoffrey Gregg who served in Afghanistan and sadly died by suicide in 2006. Signaller Gregg was the partner of Adam’s sister.

The principle behind the F88 campaign was that sitting down with a beer is a great way to start important conversations with a mate.

‘Blokes don’t generally talk about things as much as we probably should,’ says Adam. ‘But it’s important to check in on each other.’

Adam says that support for F88 among pubs and RSL clubs has been overwhelming. However, the continuous disruptions related to the COVID lockdowns have hampered the company’s rollout on the Eastern seaboard.

On 16 September 2021, Spinifex launched its low-alcohol Australian Light Horse Lager to honour the re-raising to full regiment status of the 10th Light Horse, Adam’s former unit. It also recently launched a non-alcoholic Gubinge (aka Kakadu Plum) ginger beer.

Adam is very proud of Spinifex and its beers – especially because the company supports Indigenous people and veteran mental health.

‘I wanted to do something really meaningful to assist my fellow veterans,’ he says.

‘We know veteran mental health and veteran suicide is a big problem not only in Australia but globally and that’s something we have to change.’

Below from left: CEO Adam Barnard, Founder Mick Little, Communications Manager Steve Jansen, Robert Dann (Aboriginal Native Botanical Provider to Spinifex) and Head Brewer John Gibbs.



Melbourne Legacy's Case Management Model for families in need

A message from Melbourne Legacy



We provide comprehensive case management services to almost 300 families of post-1991 veterans, and this number is growing daily. Our case management model is all-encompassing and applies for life. So, when the veteran family needs support, Melbourne Legacy is here to provide it.

The model ensures these families are supported emotionally and financially by a team of qualified social workers and counsellors with a diverse range of professional knowledge and lived experience. By commissioning extensive research into the ex-service organisation (ESO) sector and veteran community in Victoria, we have been able to identify and close service delivery gaps through:

- employment of a team of professional case managers providing welfare, well-being and referral services
- employment of Veteran Liaison Officers providing outreach support, advocacy and referral services
- providing case management services that are strengths-based and applied through a psychosocial model of assessment
- applying a service model that supports 'a hand-up not a hand-out' and is focused on building resilience and self-reliance
- the establishment of the Vivian Bullwinkel Veterans and Families Wellbeing Centre to provide a safe haven for veterans and their

families to access support services in the Melbourne CBD

- promoting collaboration in the ESO sector, with RSL Victoria and Soldier On re-locating their welfare teams to Legacy House Melbourne
- creating an integrated service with:
 - equine therapy provider Path of the Horse to provide trauma relief and counselling services in a supported and calm environment
 - Australian Money Mentors to provide money mentoring, education and literacy services
- partnering with Geelong Adventure Specialists to provide social connection and community support for children of veterans.

The basis for our case management model is listening to people and being able to provide understanding and a helping hand. Melbourne Legacy's case managers are patient and supportive as they work to assess each family's needs depending on their unique circumstances and then develop a plan to best support the family. The plan may include help with education costs, emergency financial assistance, counselling services or support and guidance for alternative housing, but is not limited to these outcomes.

Uncertainty is a common issue for many of the families Melbourne Legacy supports, giving rise to anxiety and stress levels. Many of the veteran families we support have reported relationship issues and some, sadly, are dealing with domestic violence.

The struggles that some veteran families are facing is hard. However, the case management model helps lessen those struggles as the families move to greater self-reliance and the ability to build their best future.

If you live in the Melbourne area and the immediate family of a post-1991 veteran, get in touch with us on (03) 8626 0500.

Technology-facilitated abuse – what you need to know

Technology-facilitated abuse, also known as tech abuse, is an extension of coercion and harassment in situations of domestic and family violence. Tech abuse is sadly becoming a common form of abuse throughout the world.

Tech abuse can include:

- abusive messages
 - threats made over the phone
 - creating fake social media accounts to harass you or post negative comments about you online
 - sharing or threatening to share intimate images of you
 - even the taking over of your account and the tracking of you via a mobile phone or device.
- These behaviours are a crime under Australian law and should be reported to the police. No one deserves to be abused, threatened or stalked via technology or by any other means.

If anyone in the veteran community or someone you know is experiencing tech abuse, please contact the helplines below. Call triple zero (000) in an emergency.

- **Open Arms – Veteran & Families Counselling:** 1800 011 046
- **1800 RESPECT:** 1800 737 732
- **Mensline Aust:** 1300 789 978
- **Kids Help Line:** 1800 55 1800
- **Lifeline:** 13 11 14

If you want to know more about tech abuse, or to clarify whether you're experiencing it, the eSafety Commissioner website (esafety.gov.au) and select 'Domestic and family violence' from 'Key issues' has lots of helpful details.

Helping children and young people with education and career training



DVA's Education Schemes provide financial assistance and other support services to eligible children and dependants of current and former Australian Defence Force personnel who have either died or been severely wounded or injured as a result of their service.

We provide this assistance through the Veterans' Children Education Scheme (VCES) established under the VEA legislation, or the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act Education and Training Scheme (MRCAETS) established under the MRCA legislation.

Under the Schemes, an Education Allowance provides financial assistance to support eligible students undertaking full-time study. Full-time study includes primary, secondary and tertiary education, as well as apprenticeships and traineeships, generally up until age 25. The rate

of Education Allowance paid is dependent on the student's circumstances, including shared parental custody arrangements.

Other support and services under the Schemes (in addition to the Education Allowance) are available anytime throughout the year to support eligible students if a need arises. This includes financial support towards additional tuition, special assistance, counselling and education guidance.

A student who is eligible for the Education Schemes but is instead receiving another Commonwealth payment, may still receive the other support and services listed above.

Further information, including eligibility and other Education Schemes benefits, can be found on the Education Schemes page of DVA's website at www.dva.gov.au/education-schemes.

Long Tan Bursary applications open 18 August

Applications for next year's Long Tan Bursaries open on 18 August 2022, Vietnam Veterans' Day.

The Long Tan Bursary pays for the tertiary education of children and grandchildren of Vietnam veterans.

Each year 37 bursaries are awarded to successful applicants across Australia. Each bursary is worth up to \$12,000 and provided over three years for continuous full-time study.

The Long Tan Bursary scheme is named after the Battle of Long Tan, the widely-known battle fought by Australians during the Vietnam War. It saw 18 Australians killed and 25 wounded.

Vietnam veterans were instrumental in setting up the Long Tan Bursary, which is funded by DVA and administered by the Australian Veterans' Children Assistance Trust (AVCAT). It offers various scholarships to children and grandchildren of Vietnam veterans.

To find out if you are eligible and how to apply, please visit the 'Long Tan Bursary' page of the DVA website (dva.gov.au) and search for 'Long Tan Bursary'.

Applications close at midnight AEDT on 31 October 2022.

My experience giving evidence to the Royal Commission

COMMISSIONER GWEN CHERNE

Veteran Family Advocate



In February, I was a witness at the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide (RC). The RC is giving many in our community a national platform and allowing veterans and the families of veterans to have our voices heard – some for the first time.

My appearance was ultimately a healing process, but it was also an extremely painful one. While I knew it would be hard, I had no idea just how hard.

Being a lived-experience witness means I spent weeks writing about, and re-living, all the negative parts of my life with my late husband Pete. All the pain, suffering, violence and abuse. Laying out in 18 pages, every significant moment that we failed him, the system failed us or where interventions never came. I had to re-live and sift through it all to write about those moments that were significant enough to say here is where help would have made a difference.

For me, the process *only* brought up the bad and took me back to a very dark hole. I asked my family, friends and my work for help so that I could stay in that hole for as long as it took.

This time instead of fighting it, I let it all wash over me. I wasn't afraid and just leant in to it. It doesn't sound so bad the way I just put it, but it hurt so, so much.

I sat on my lawn and watched the clouds. I saw my therapist and began working through the book *Reinventing Your Life*. I learned about myself. I wrote letters to my younger self and then back again. I hid under a blanket and cried. I walked and rested. I meditated and wrote consistently in my gratitude journal. Every time I got angry – mostly with my children – I visualised the anger as an ice cube melting instead of feeling like it had to go somewhere or explode. I put on jammies that felt like a warm hug. I moved my home office so I don't have to re-live the process every time I go to work. I hugged my kids and cried some more.

“For those who have or will share your own stories with the Royal Commission, you have my respect and love.”



Gwen and her son Tom at the Royal Commission where she was a witness

Some of that may sound silly to you. But all of it was me employing the tools that I have learned in and out of therapy over the last two decades. These tools meant that if I was patient with myself, let myself feel it all, *and* did the hard work, then I could stand up and climb out of that hole.

One day, after several weeks, my eldest son Tom and I for some unknown reason started telling stories about the good times with Pete, and the wound that had been ripped back open started to close. From there, I was able to climb out of that hole.

What I learned long ago – and it is evidence-based – is that emotions are like a tunnel and we are the train. We have to go through the tunnel from start to finish. If we break out of that tunnel too early before the body is fully done with that emotion, then – at some point – we have to go back into the tunnel and experience the rest of it, anything from tomorrow to ten years down the track.

Just what you wanted to read, right? I know this may sound crazy or too hard, but the next time you feel angry or sad, just sit in it. Don't judge it or push it away. Be present, and wait and see what happens.

This is the stuff that saves me every day and makes sure I don't continue the cycle of violence that I learned from my dad – who I loved so very much – with my own children. Intergenerational trauma is real, and we each have a role to play in showing our children there is another way.

For those who have or will share your own stories with the RC, you have my respect and love. You are brave. This goes for both lived-experience and professional witnesses.

Please take the time you need to process all that comes up and know your voice needs to be heard.

For those of you supporting others going through it – thank you and, please make sure that they have space, time, support and love around them. And make sure you do too; you will need it.

I see every day the incredible value of having lived-experience in our organisations and in leadership roles, but we also need to make sure there is space and support when it gets on top of us.

If this article raises issues for you, please contact:

Open Arms – Veterans & Families Counselling, which offers free and confidential counselling to the veteran community on 1800 011 046.

Safe Zone is available for current and former ADF personnel on 1800 142 072. Calls to Safe Zone are confidential and not recorded.

Improving how we meet the needs of veterans

DON SPINKS AM

Repatriation Commissioner



Compensation claims

As Repatriation Commissioner, I am often asked by veterans and families how they can best navigate the claims process. In this edition of *Vetaffairs*, we share with you a feature on how you can make the process as smooth as possible (see page 23). I encourage you to read it.

For those of you who have lodged a claim with the department, please know that DVA is working hard to process your claim as quickly as possible.

The department has seen a doubling of claims lodged over the past three years – including a three-fold increase in *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (MRCA) liability claims. This has meant that some veterans are waiting longer for their claim to be allocated to a delegate and decided.

When lodging your claim, you can assist by providing all the required information at that time or as soon as possible afterwards. If you are unsure of what information is required you should contact DVA for advice. If your circumstances change while you are waiting, it is vital that you contact DVA and let them know.

It's also important to note that there is support available to you while you wait for your claim/s to be finalised. This includes the Veteran Payment and the Provisional Access to Medical Treatment program (PAMT).

The Veteran Payment is an interim means-tested payment veterans may receive while DVA assesses their mental health claim. Veterans may be eligible for the Veteran Payment once they have lodged a claim for a mental health condition under the *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation (Defence-related Claims) Act 1988* (DRCA) or MRCA.

The PAMT enables veterans to access treatment for the 20 most commonly accepted conditions while DVA assesses their claim under the DRCA or MRCA.

More information on the Veteran Payment and the PAMT can be found on the DVA website (dva.gov.au).

Further, on leaving the military all veterans with at least one day of full-time service, and some categories of part-time reservists, have access to a Veteran White Card, which provides access to free mental health care for life, without the need to link the condition to their service. This is known as Non-Liability Health Care.

Open Arms – Veterans & Families Counselling also provides free and confidential counselling and support for current and former serving ADF members and families. Open Arms can be reached on 1800 011 046, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

If needed, I urge anyone waiting for a claim to be finalised to access the additional services and supports available to you.

Return of face-to-face commemorative services

Now that COVID-19 restrictions have eased, it is fantastic that we once again have the opportunity to attend commemorative ceremonies in person on days of special significance.

It was great to see the return of full public commemorative services overseas on Anzac Day this year, including in Turkey and France for the first time since 2019 (see page 27). Thousands gathered in Australia and around the world to commemorate Anzac Day and pay tribute to those who have served our nation in wars, conflicts, and peacekeeping operations. I was privileged to be able to participate in the solemn and dignified ceremonies delivered by the Australian and New Zealand Governments at Gallipoli, including as Master of Ceremonies of the Lone Pine service.

In May, I had the honour of attending the Shrine of Remembrance in Melbourne for the ceremony to commemorate the 81st anniversary

of the Battles for Greece and Crete. I was also privileged to attend the unveiling of a memorial to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander service men and women in Brisbane's Anzac Square (see page 28).

These activities help to raise community awareness and understanding of the service and sacrifice of our military personnel and families. They are also important in improving the wellbeing of our veterans and I am very glad that in recent times we've had the chance to start reconnecting face-to-face.

2022 Napier Waller Art Prize

In June, I attended the launch of the 2022 Napier Waller Art Prize.

DVA is a proud sponsor of the Art Prize and it was wonderful to see the entries that were selected as the highly commended works for this

year's Prize on exhibition at Parliament House. The exhibition runs until 20 November (see page 30).

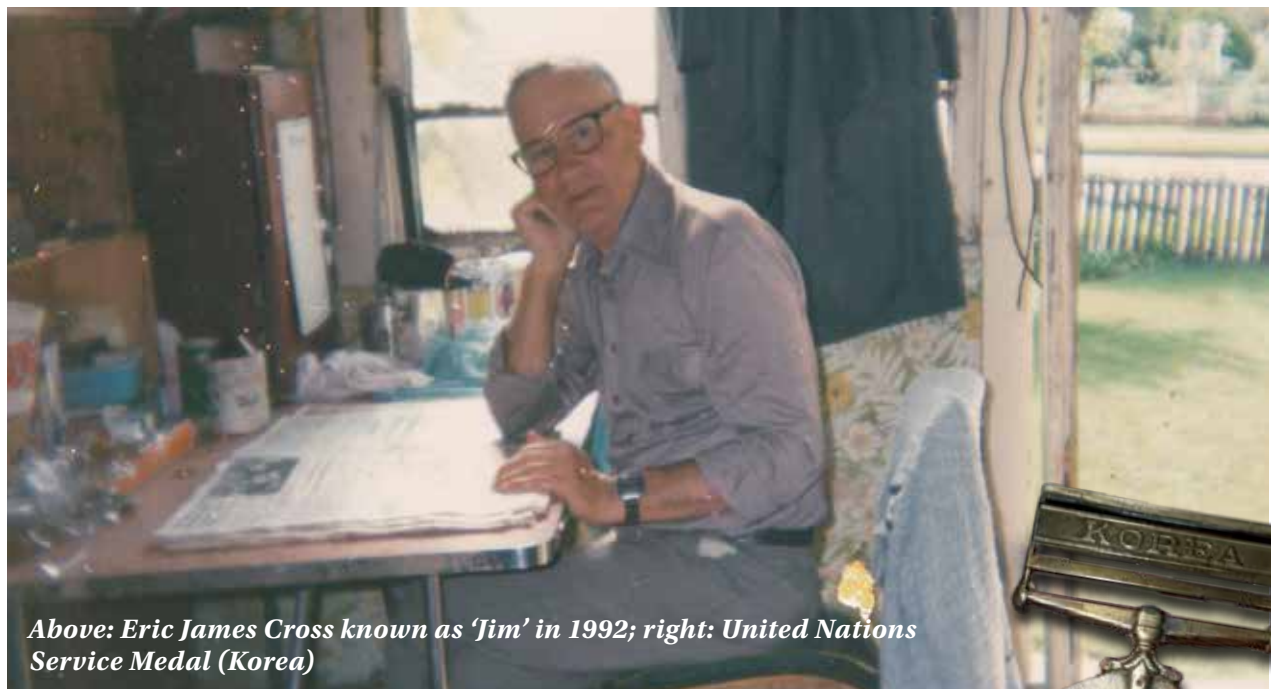
There are many inspiring stories about the benefits art can have on veterans' wellbeing and mental health.

I congratulate all the artists who entered this year's Prize and whose amazing work appears in the physical exhibition and the accompanying one online. I also congratulate this year's winner: retired Major, Mrs Anneke Jamieson, for her portrait titled *The Promotion*.

Not only does this Prize and exhibition showcase the artistic talent of our current and former serving personnel, it also helps the Australian public better understand the unique experiences of veterans and families.

Repatriation Commissioner, Don Spinks (right), and Deputy Commissioner – Victoria, Michael Harper, at the 81st Anniversary Commemorative Service for the Battles for Greece and Crete held at the Shrine of Remembrance, Melbourne.





Above: Eric James Cross known as 'Jim' in 1992; right: United Nations Service Medal (Korea)

Korean War medal finds its way home



In the early 1990s, Andrew Gorry bought a 1964 Holden EH sedan, which spent the next thirty years sitting in a shed. Recently, Andrew sold the car to a friend of his, Craig Mclean, who started stripping the car back with a view to restoring it. When Craig pulled out the back seat, he came across a large, thankfully derelict, wasps' nest. Just before throwing it in the bin, he noticed something stuck in it. Breaking the nest apart, he found a Korean War medal, specifically the United Nations Service Medal (Korea). The medal was inscribed with 'E J Cross' and a service number.

Craig returned the medal to Andrew who in turn gave it to his sister-in-law, Sandra Gorry, whose father was Eric Cross.

Sandra was thrilled. 'This means more to my brothers and sisters than you could ever know,' she said.

Eric James Cross, known as Jim, was born in Newcastle NSW on 2 November 1926 and grew up in Bulahdelah, NSW. He was the seventh child of John H Cross and Clara Mayers, a Worimi woman. Clara passed away in 1928 at age 37, leaving behind her seven children who were aged between 18 months and 17 years. The four youngest children, which included Jim, were fostered to a local family.

During the Second World War, Jim volunteered for the Australian Military Forces (the militia). He also served in the Korean War with the 3rd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment.

Jim went on to marry and have seven children, including Sandra. However, he left his

family when Sandra was three and she did not meet him again until she was 12. She never knew about her father's parents or siblings before he passed away in 1992.

Sandra's sister Wendy Moore has spent a lot of time researching her father and his family and was surprised to learn about her extended family. Clara, Jim's mother, was buried in the same plot as her brother George, but there was no mention of Clara on the headstone. Last year, Wendy had a plaque made for Clara with the words, 'Your grandchildren came to find you'.

How Jim's Korean War medal found its way into the Holden may never be known. Sandra believes Jim may have travelled in the car to an Anzac Day march with the original owner, Fritz Kruger, and that the medal simply fell off.

Wendy spent this Anzac Day at Bulahdelah, NSW proudly wearing the precious medal and commemorating the service of her father and the sacrifice of our Anzacs.



Fifty fulfilling years in the RAAF

On 26 June 2022, Squadron Leader Alan Croft celebrated 50 years in the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF).

He joined in 1972, three years after emigrating with his parents from Manchester in England. Alan had family who had served in the Royal Navy and Royal Air Force and felt a strong desire to follow in that tradition. The decision over which service to join was made for him. Being only 17, he needed his parents' formal permission and they considered the Navy to be 'too traditional'. The Army didn't appeal. So the RAAF it was.

He enlisted as an adult trainee and was posted to RAAF Base Edinburgh for training.

'It took me two hours to realise joining the RAAF was the right choice,' he says. 'There was this freedom I didn't have at home, you were treated like an adult and we were all in the same boat.'

Having trained as an electrical fitter he later became an avionics technician. Over the next few years, he enjoyed having responsibilities not usually accorded to a civilian that young. There was also the satisfaction that comes with overcoming technical challenges and improving the performance of aircraft.

'At one point, we were working on an old Dakota that had lasers fitted for depth-sounding to chart the Great Barrier Reef. Its power system wasn't sufficient so we needed to remedy that.'

Most of his service has taken place in Australia along with a posting to New Zealand and another to the Philippines.

After 29 years on the tools, he was commissioned as an Education Officer, having completed two education degrees. He retired from the full-time Air Force in 2015 but remains a reservist working 90 days a year. He is currently based, once again, at East Sale. There he works for the Air Academy, helping subject-matter experts redevelop the curriculum.

He plans to leave the RAAF at the end of the year.

Fifty years is a long time to spend in any job.

'It was a case of re-inventing myself every so often,' says Alan. 'In the RAAF, you're posted on a fairly frequent basis. I was fortunate in that my postings have always been quite long. I could progress on a given airplane and achieve a certain mastery.'

There have been several moments that linger in Alan's memory, but the real highlights have been the camaraderie and the people.

'I see a lot of the people I taught in the 80s and 90s getting higher positions, making wing commander and so on. To have had some influence on their development, I look on with pride.'



The United Nations Service Medal (Korea) is awarded to those members who were posted for any period with the United Nations (UN) forces in Korea between 27 June 1950 and 27 July 1954.

The medal is a circular medal of bronze alloy. The obverse depicts the 'World-in-a-Wreath' emblem of the UN and the reverse has the inscription: 'FOR SERVICE IN DEFENCE OF THE PRINCIPLES OF THE CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS'.

More information is available on the Department of Defence website (defence.gov.au).

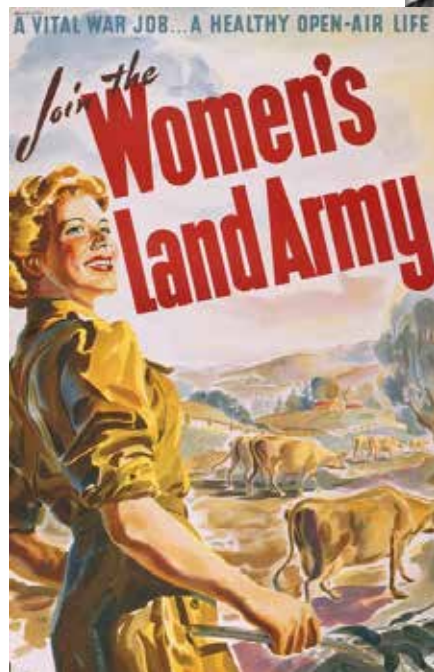
80th anniversary of Australian Women's Land Army

The Australian Women's Land Army (AWLA) was formed during the Second World War to combat rising labour shortages in the farming sector. From December 1941, when Japan entered the war, the nation's need to build up its armed forces was placed above the needs of other industries, which resulted in agricultural labour being steadily diverted to the armed services and to vital war industries.

To meet the shortfall in rural labour, state governments and private women's land organisations were organised, modelled on those established in Great Britain. A national body was formed on 27 July 1942. While policy was devised by the federal government, the organisation of the AWLA remained state-based. An extensive recruiting campaign was undertaken for new members. Most members of the existing land armies were later incorporated into the AWLA as well.

The AWLA functioned in two divisions:

- Full-time members: These women enrolled for continuous



service for 12 months (with the option of renewal). They received badges, distinctive dress uniform, working clothes, and equipment.

- Auxiliary members: These women were available for periods of at least four weeks at nominated times of the year. They worked on seasonal rural operations, and received a badge, working clothes, and essential equipment on loan for these times.

Recruits had to be between 18 and 50 years of age and be British subjects or immigrants from Allied nations. Women on the land who were already farmers, employees or relatives of landholders were not eligible to enlist. AWLA women were generally drawn from city areas and were often unskilled in rural work. This new form of labour had to be heavily promoted to rural employers, who were initially

resistant to using female labour. But such attitudes generally changed over time, and farmers came to praise and respect the women and the work they did.

Enrolment numbers peaked in December 1943, with 2,382 permanent members, and 1,039 auxiliary members. The average working week for an AWLA member was 48 hours, with pay starting at the AWLA minimum wage of 30 shillings a week. Permanent members were also entitled to sick pay. Women were paid much less than their male counterparts for the same work, which covered diverse roles such as vegetable and fruit growing, pig and poultry raising, and sheep and wool work.

They were also involved in the production of flax, which was one of the most important products during

"Farmers came to praise and respect the women and the work they did."

the war. It was used for all sorts of clothing and equipment from coats to parachute harnesses, ropes to tarpaulins and even to cover gliders used to transport troops.

In January 1943, Cabinet endorsed the status of both divisions of the AWLA as an official 'fourth service', after the Women's Royal Australian Naval Service, the Australian Women's Army Service and the Women's Auxiliary Australian Air Force. The organisation was to be formally constituted under the National Security Regulations, however, a final draft of these regulations was not completed until 1945, and was not acted upon before the end of the war and the demobilisation of the AWLA. As a result, members of the AWLA were not accorded the same benefits as members of the other women's services.

The AWLA was disbanded on 31 December 1945. In 1997, many former members of the AWLA became eligible for the Civilian Service Medal, following on from a 1994 Committee of Enquiry recommendation.

Chris Boron's mother Olga served with the AWLA from 1942 when she turned 16. Olga passed away in 2012, but Chris is keen to see the service of AWLA women better known and fully recognised. He points out that it was not always an easy life.

'Living in rural huts and tents (no facilities) in all weather conditions, and eating whatever vegetables and fruits that were being harvested, would have been a challenge then and now, for city girls!' he says.

Based on an article prepared by the Australian War Memorial

For further information, visit the:

- DVA's Anzac Portal (anzacportal.dva.gov.au) and search for 'Women's land army'
- National Library of Australia website (nla.gov.au) and search for 'Australian Women's Land Army records'



Making a claim for a service-related condition

DVA is working hard to make submitting claims as easy as possible. Below, we look at what's involved and the support you can get while your claim is being processed.

The first step in the claims process is 'Initial Liability'. This is a claim for acceptance of an injury or illness due to your Australian Defence Force (ADF) service and is the gateway to accessing other services, support and compensation.

Step 1: Get your treating medical professional to provide a diagnosis

A medical practitioner must provide a diagnosis for each of the conditions you are claiming. This could be your treating medical professional, or a psychiatrist if you are claiming for a mental health condition.

A diagnosis may include information on what caused the injury or illness.

DVA cannot accept liability for injuries or illness that were not related to your service, such as a private motor vehicle accident.

Claiming via MyService

The easiest way to make a claim is via our online claims portal, MyService. If you haven't already, sign up via our website (dva.gov.au/myservice).

When you claim using MyService, you can upload diagnoses there. A diagnosis for each condition being claimed is required to make a decision on your claim. Providing a diagnosis when you lodge your claim will help us decide your claim more quickly. You can also upload any additional documents at any time before your claim is finalised.

Submitting a paper claim

If you are not online, you can still make a paper claim, either by mail or face to face at one of our Veterans Access Network offices or a Services Australia service centre. Visit dva.gov.au/location-finder to find one near you.

If you are making a claim for more than one condition, you should:

- fill out an Injury or disease details sheet for each condition (search for this on our website - dva.gov.au)
- check that a treating medical professional has provided a separate diagnosis for each condition and signed each separate sheet.

If you need to provide additional information that you didn't include when you sent us your

claim, you can email us at primary.claims@dva.gov.au.

Step 2: Supply the necessary documents

When you make your claim, you need to ensure that you provide all of the necessary documents and sign the claim form.

If you've already submitted your claim, don't worry. You can still provide additional documents. The sooner you provide them, the sooner we'll be able to finalise your claim.

You must provide proof of identity documents

You can complete the proof of identity process online at MyService. You will not need to provide proof of identity documents if you are already a registered user in MyService. By having a secure MyService login, you are known to us.

If you are submitting a paper claim and you haven't already, you must provide us with proof of identity documents. For information on requirements, read more on our proof of identity page (dva.gov.au and search for 'proof of identity').

You must provide supporting documents

To help us decide your claim more quickly, you should provide medical reports providing a diagnosis for your injury or illness from your treating medical professional.

You should also supply any medical records you have from the ADF or other records, including:

- Entry Medical Board Questionnaire
- clinical notes
- specialists' reports
- scans, MRIs or X-ray reports
- discharge medical information.

There are other documents you may wish to provide based on your circumstances, such as:

- a copy of your service history (PMKeyS ADO Full Service Record)
- Defence incident report - AC563
- witness statement(s)
- Authority to Participate in Civilian Sport
- Hazardous Material Exposure Report.

Providing these documents up-front can help to save time later.



Step 3: A delegate will contact you about your claim

A DVA staff member, known as a delegate, will contact you to discuss your claim. This could include requesting any further information that may be required, or to advise of the outcome of your claim. We may also contact you to request information before a claim is provided to a delegate to decide.

If an injury or illness is accepted as service-related, the delegate will discuss with you the treatment and supports you may need. They can connect you with other claims and services from DVA, such as a Permanent Impairment claim or household services.

How long it takes

Some claims take longer than others because they are complex. Complex claims might:

- include multiple conditions
- relate to more than one Act
- need significant investigation into the condition itself or what caused it.

The single most effective step you can take to speed things up is to provide all the information we might need when you lodge your claim, or as soon as possible afterwards.

This includes making sure that you and your treating medical professional complete all relevant sections of any claim you submit.

Contact us or an advocate if you're not sure what documents you need to support your claim. If you are looking for an advocate in your area, you can find an ESO that provides advocacy services through the Advocate Register at www.advocate-register.org.au.

You may be eligible for free health care and treatment

Free Non-Liability Health Care (NLHC)

For eligible veterans, we will pay for the treatment of certain conditions, including mental health conditions and cancer. These conditions do not need to be service-related.

For more information, go to dva.gov.au/nlhc.

Provisional access to medical treatment (PAMT)

You may be eligible for free treatment while we are considering your claim if it is for one or more of the most commonly accepted conditions under the DRCA or MRCA.

You can go to the PAMT page of our website (dva.gov.au/pamt) for details.

Veteran Payment

The Veteran Payment is an interim payment that you may receive while we decide your claim. You may be eligible for it once you have lodged a claim for a mental health condition under either the DRCA or MRCA.

Go to dva.gov.au and search for 'Veteran Payment'.

Open Arms - Veterans & Families Counselling

Open Arms is a free service available to current and former ADF members and families. It offers, among other things, 24/7 telephone counselling.

For more information, phone Open Arms on 1800 011 046 or visit their website at openarms.gov.au.

Gold Card

If you have a Veteran Gold Card, you can get any required medical treatment even if it is not related to your service.

Your privacy is protected

Go to the privacy page of our website (dva.gov.au/privacy) to find out more about how we handle your personal information. This includes what information we can ask for, how we manage it and who we share it with.

More information

The DVA website (dva.gov.au/compensation) has a lot of information on compensation claims. You can also talk to staff in one of our VAN offices or Services Australia service centres (dva.gov.au/location-finder) or phone us on 1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372).

Underwater archaeology – preserving our maritime past

The battlefields of Gallipoli remain largely unchanged since 1915. There's a road there now, as well as cemeteries and memorials, even a museum. But the unforgiving landscape, including many of the trenches, is much the same.

Evidence of the conflict can also be found in the waters around the Gallipoli Peninsula. These include the remains of piers that were life-lines for Allied troops, wrecks of British, Ottoman, German, French and Australian vessels, remnants of shells and bullets fired at bathing soldiers, warships and merchant vessels serving offshore during the campaign.

These remains form an *in situ* underwater museum that gives visitors the opportunity to dive and explore wartime heritage at Gallipoli.

In parts of the world including in Australia, shipwrecks aren't so well visited or protected. Many are at risk of illegal salvaging, or are rarely visited by diving enthusiasts.

Dr Andy Viduka (pictured) is largely responsible for protecting Australia's underwater cultural heritage and navigating the complexities of managing wrecks. He is from the Australian Underwater Cultural Heritage team at the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment.

When he met with *Vetaffairs*, Dr Viduka explained there are more than 8,000 wrecks in Australian waters, of which around 5,000 have connections with other countries. These sites are the legacy of more than four centuries of

trade and the incursions of global conflict into our waters. Australia's oldest known wreck is the *Trial*, which was lost off the coast of Western Australia in 1622.

'There are very few of us around the country who look after underwater heritage,' Dr Viduka says. 'I'm a conservator, I'm a maritime archaeologist, and I got in to my current role because I was interested in preserving the past for the future.'

The remains of Australian vessels are also dotted across the globe. Many of these are the final resting places of Australian military personnel and sailors of the merchant navy.

Caring for this shared underwater heritage involves building relationships with foreign nations that are founded on respect of their rights and recognition of their laws. A common element for all countries is a desire to link the protection and management of heritage with appropriate public access through tourism. This model of site management ensures ongoing benefits to the country and people living near the heritage through tourism. This can outweigh any potential short-term financial gain from salvaging.

'There are some sites that lend themselves to tourism because they can be managed appropriately, and some that don't because they are more remote, more complex,'

says Dr Viduka. 'When a site is disturbed it's like ripping chapters out of a book. The best way to facilitate the protection of our heritage in foreign waters is to actively support that country's capacity to preserve that heritage and to collaboratively monitor its condition.'

At times, the search for, and conservation of shipwrecks, is boosted by private interest and funds for high-profile discoveries. This drove the discovery of HMAS *Sydney* (II) off the coast of Western Australia in 2008 and AHS *Centaur's* discovery off Queensland's coast in 2009. The *Sydney* had been sunk by the German raider HSK *Kormoran* on 19 November 1941. Tragically, all 645 officers and crew were killed. The *Centaur* had been sunk by a Japanese submarine. Of the 332 people on board, only 64 survived.

Tackling the modernisation of Australia's 1976 historic shipwreck-focused legislation at home has also been a key aspect of Dr Viduka's career. The introduction of the *Underwater Cultural Heritage Act 2018* has made a huge difference in the Australian Government's ability to protect not only shipwrecks, but submerged aircraft and other underwater cultural heritage, such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's sites.

'The new Act means all heritage that needs to be protected is able to be protected in our waters, which is a massive outcome and is more inclusive for our society.'

The ocean is still giving up its secrets, with the final resting place of HMAS *AE1* discovered off the coast of Papua New Guinea (PNG) in 2017, more than a century after her loss.

HMAS AE1 was one of the first two submarines commissioned into the Royal Australian Navy. The submarine sunk just over a month after the First World War broke out. It was the first Australian vessel lost in the First World War. It sunk with all 35 crew, the largest naval loss of life for Australia in that war.

Dr Viduka says that supporting PNG manage this site is critical to ensuring it is protected for future generations, and the lost



submariners are respected. 'It's a connection between us and PNG who are fantastic in the way they are working with us to protect that site,' he says.

'The highest priority is that the site has to be maintained. A key consideration is the dignified and respectful treatment of the memory of those who lost their lives onboard. The submarine is at a depth where you couldn't archaeologically recover the whole thing. The site could be subject to salvage activities that would destroy the vessel piecemeal. To avoid this, we are in the early stages of working with PNG to try and manage it *in-situ*.

'While well intentioned Australians who would like to see an artefact representing that sacrifice salvaged – it may be damaged. It is therefore important that if any regulated activity, specifically archaeological, is to impact the site, then a detailed research plan be developed. This plan will take into consideration the potential for human remains to be undisturbed among many other factors. As PNG is the regulating authority, our task is to assist them when asked, to achieve an agreed best practice outcome.'

With limited staff and resources, Dr Viduka is calling for people to become 'public researchers' and contribute to the Australasian Underwater Cultural Heritage Database. Members of the public can add data, photos and video to records of Australian wrecks and sites.

This online database also allows people to search sites, helping the public access the thousands of recorded shipwrecks.

Dr Viduka believes the more people become part of documenting and conserving our underwater cultural heritage, the better the protection will be for the thousands of shipwrecks in Australian waters and overseas. This will help preserve this history for generations to come, and remind us all of the human cost of maritime conflict.

The remains of a barge off Anzac Cove. It was used to transport wounded troops to hospital ships, and now lies in 54 metres of water. © Mark Spencer



"The remains of Australian vessels are also dotted across the globe."

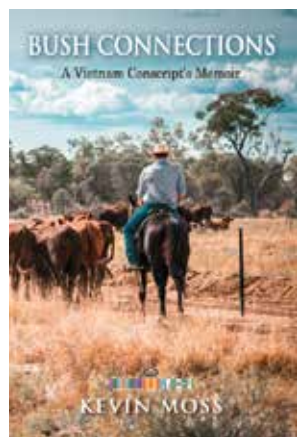
BOOKSHELF

The following books have been written, and often self-published, by veterans who have contacted *Vetaffairs* asking that we bring them to readers' attention. If you have a book for a subsequent edition, please email vetaffairs@dva.gov.au, noting that we might not have room to include it. Please provide the following: title, name of author, blurb (short description that we reserve the right to edit), publisher (if any), price, how to buy it, and image of front cover.

Please note that the following are not reviews or promotions of the books. DVA takes no responsibility for the accuracy of their content or the opinions expressed in them.

Bush Connections – A Vietnam Conscript's Memoir

By Kevin Moss OAM

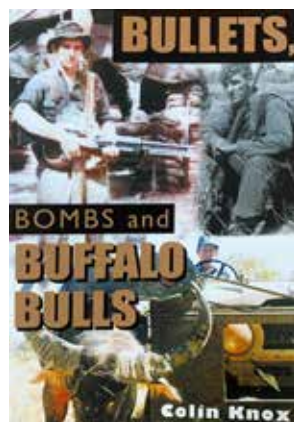


Boy becomes man in this strong portrayal of Kevin Moss's transformation from carefree jackeroo to conscripted soldier in the Vietnam War. On his return to Australia, he struggles to regain his equanimity and cast off the devils born of his wartime experiences as he attempts to resume a meaningful and productive life. Kevin is a former Army officer with 23 years service.

- **Pages:** 237
- **Cost:** \$20 plus \$5 postage within Australia
- **To buy:** email kevin.moss04@gmail.com and deposit \$25 into BSB: 633 000 Acc: 187 483 094

Bullets, Bombs And Buffalo Bulls

By Colin Knox

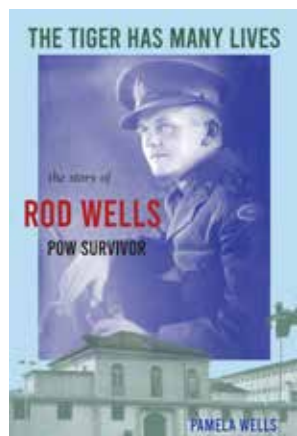


This is a memoir of Colin Knox, an Australian who served in Vietnam with Charlie Company 7 RAR. He also worked as a station hand and buffalo bull catcher in the Northern Territory and as a timber cutter in Queensland. Having worked in such adventurous and dangerous jobs, the author recounts both humorous and scary stories about his work days.

- **Pages:** 156
- **Cost:** \$29.95
- **To buy:** Pearls Books n Music in Cairns, or online at pearlsbooksfnq.com

The Tiger has Many Lives: The Story of Rod Wells

Compiled by Pamela Wells



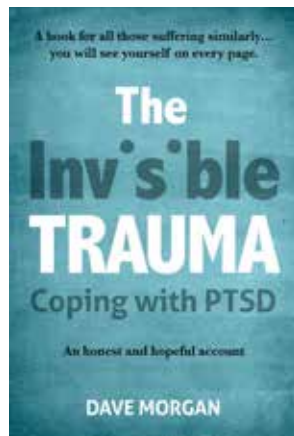
This biography is a remarkable tale of survival in the Second World War. It contains first-hand accounts of POW life in Borneo's Sandakan Camp and the equally infamous Outram Road Gaol in Singapore.

As a prisoner of war in Borneo's Sandakan, Rod joined a local underground movement. Using his ingenuity and skill, he built a wireless radio and a transmitter virtually from scratch. Arrested by the Kempeitai in 1943, Rod was subjected to brutal torture.

- **Cost:** \$34.99.
- **To buy:** available to order through local bookshops, or Sevenpens Publishing (sevenpenspublishing.com)

The Invisible Trauma – Coping with PTSD

By Dave Morgan



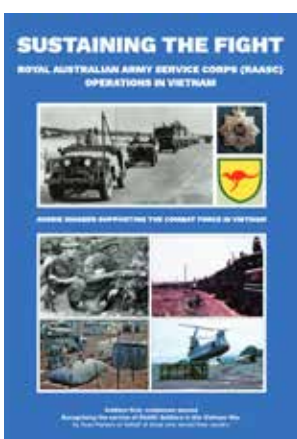
Dave Morgan gives a detailed and clear account of his battle with PTSD. He describes his traumatic experience in Vietnam and how PTSD gradually emerged after his return to Australia.

There is no completely effective treatment for PTSD, but people like Dave Morgan are doing all they can to reach that goal.

- **Pages:** 346
- **Cost:** \$29.99
- **To buy:** bigskypublishing.com.au as well as all bookstores including Big W, Booktopia and Amazon.

Sustaining the Fight – RAASC Operations in Vietnam

By Russ Morison

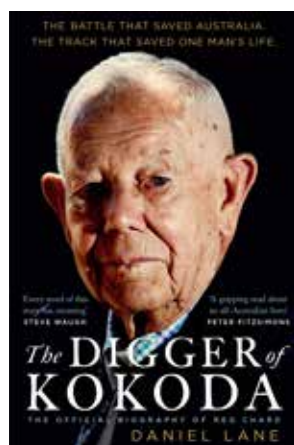


This book reflects the work of the Royal Australian Army Service Corps (RAASC) companies and those 4000-plus unit members who served in the Vietnam War. It includes more than 200 photos, stories of the units, some patrol reports and personal stories. It is for veterans and non-veterans alike and is intended to remember and honour those who served.

- **Pages:** 240 in full colour
- **Cost:** \$39 plus postage of \$13 (if required).
- **To buy:** contact Russ via dabblers2@hotmail.com or 0408 947 935

The Digger of Kokoda – the official biography of Reg Chard

By Daniel Lane



The publication of this biography of 98-year-old Reg Chard coincided with the 80th anniversary of the Battle of Kokoda. Reg, just 18 years old when sent to war, endured a hell like no other on the infamous Kokoda Trail. As one of the last surviving soldiers of the campaign, he has now become a custodian of its legacy. This deeply moving, healing and inspiring biography tells us of Reg's war in the jungle and how, 80 years after the battle that saved Australia, Kokoda still lives within him.

- **Pages:** 368
- **Cost:** \$36.99 (paperback); audiobook (\$34.99); ebook (\$17.99)
- **To buy:** Book stores, Amazon and the Pan Macmillan website (panmacmillan.com.au)

How to research and honour our returned war heroes

By Ian D Burrett JP



Described by Dr Brendan Nelson AO as 'the stuff of legend', this book gives step-by-step guidelines to assist communities and RSL sub-branches update their local war memorials to also name returned veterans. It's virtually a text book.

It also gives invaluable advice on how to research and better honour both those who died and those who served in all wars and conflicts.

- **Pages:** 279
- **Cost:** Normally \$39.99. For *Vetaffairs* readers, signed copy for \$25 plus postage. Enter the code: V5A8N49 when ordering below.
- **To buy:** www.howtoresearchwarheroes.com

From boy to man – Sailing with the Royal Navy in World War Two

By Frederick Rogers



The book deals with Frederick Rogers' life aboard the aircraft carriers HMS *Furious*, hunting the terror battleship *Tirpitz* in Norway's fjords, and the *Illustrious* dodging Japanese suicide planes while guarding convoys. It also follows his life after the Navy.

- **Pages:** 204
- **Cost:** \$27
- **To buy:** Amazon (amazon.com.au), Booktopia (booktopia.com.au) and Book Depository (bookdepository.com)

New resources to help educate about our military history

DVA has sent more than 17,000 schools, community groups and ex-service organisations across Australia a resource pack to help Australians learn more about the service of our defence forces.

This year's resource pack includes:

- *Stories of Indigenous Service* – a companion text to DVA's Indigenous Service School Resources kit, with more stories of the experiences of Indigenous men and women who served during the First and Second World Wars
- new online resources in the series *Expressions*, which helps students understand commemoration through art; and *Great Debates*, which examines the role of the Australian media in the Vietnam War
- a commemorative poster marking the 30th anniversary of the Australian peacekeeping mission to Somalia.

Schools, ex-service organisations and community groups are encouraged to make full use of these informative and interactive resources to help all those eager to gain a deeper appreciation of service for our country.

To download these free and creative resources, visit DVA's Anzac Portal (anzacportal.dva.gov.au and search for 'Resource pack for Anzac Day 2022').



Significant anniversaries

Remembering the Battle of Kapyong in the Korean War

On 24 April, we paused to acknowledge Kapyong Day, an annual day of remembrance that honours those who served in the Battle of Kapyong, and all who fought during the Korean War.

War between North and South Korea had broken out in June 1950. Soon after, Australia committed personnel from the Navy, Army and Air Force to fight as part of a United Nations force in defence of South Korea.

In April 1951, United Nations personnel were deployed to the Kapyong Valley to defend the South Korean capital Seoul from advancing Chinese and North Korean communist forces.

On the night of 23 April, members of the 3rd Battalion Royal Australian Regiment (3RAR) were subjected to repeated attacks by the advancing Chinese forces. On the morning of 24 April, 3RAR were forced to withdraw and re-join the remainder of the Commonwealth Brigade.



General J Van Fleet, General Officer Commanding, 8th US Army (far left) inspects unidentified members of the 3rd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment.

The next day, the Chinese advanced on positions held by Canadian forces. With assistance from the New Zealand artillery batteries, the Chinese advance was halted. For the remainder of the war, Seoul was not subjected to any further ground attacks.

The battle had been costly for Australia, with 32 men killed, 59 wounded, and three taken prisoner. 3RAR, 2nd Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, and the United States 72nd Heavy Tank Battalion, were each awarded the United States Presidential Distinguished Unit Citation for their part in the battle.

Remembering Victory in Europe Day

On 8 May 2022, we commemorated the 77th anniversary of Victory in Europe Day, or VE Day, marking the end of the war against Germany.

Following the signing of an unconditional surrender by the German High Command on 7 May 1945, which came into effect the following day, the Allies proclaimed 8 May 1945 as VE Day.

The surrender brought an end to almost six years of fighting between the Allies and Nazi Germany. The end of the war in Europe liberated Australians being held as prisoners of war in German-occupied countries, as well as hundreds of thousands of men and women in internment, forced-labour and concentration camps across Europe.

Some 10,000 Australians lost their lives, at least another 10,000 were wounded and an additional 8,000 became prisoners of war while serving in Europe or the Mediterranean. They fought and died in the skies over Britain, north-west Europe, the Atlantic and the Mediterranean, on land in North Africa, Greece, Crete, the Middle East and at sea.



RAAF crews celebrate VE Day.

Five Australians received the British Empire's highest recognition for their courage in the war against Germany, by being awarded the Victoria Cross.

In Australia most people read the news of Germany's surrender in their local newspaper and thanksgiving services were held at churches nationally to celebrate the end of the war in Europe. In Melbourne more than 100,000 people attended a service at the Shrine of Remembrance.

It would be another three months before the war in the Pacific would end, with Victory in the Pacific on 15 August 1945.

Australians from each of the three services and the merchant marine served in the war against Germany and its European allies. On the anniversary of VE Day, we remember and reflect on the war efforts and sacrifice of Australians across the European theatre of war during the Second World War.

To learn more about Victory in Europe Day, visit DVA's Anzac Portal (anzacportal.dva.gov.au).

For more anniversaries of significant battles, visit dva.gov.au/latest-news

Australians around the world pause on Anzac Day

Thousands gathered in Australia and around the world to commemorate Anzac Day and pay tribute to those who have served this nation in wars, conflicts, and peacekeeping operations.

This year marked the return of international Anzac Day commemorations for the first time since 2019, as travel restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic eased.

Anzac Day services have been held in Australia since 1916, with the day formally gazetted as a day of commemoration in every state during the 1920s. Anzac Day pilgrimages to places of significance to Australians who have served is also a long-held tradition, with services held at Anzac Cove, Gallipoli, as early as 1923.

In Canberra, more than 18,000 gathered at the Australian War Memorial for the Dawn Service.

Anzac Day was honoured internationally with services around the world, from Hellfire Pass in Thailand to Sandakan in Malaysia, Bomana in Papua New Guinea as well as France, Turkey, England and many other places.

The Dawn Service at Gallipoli recommenced this year, with locals welcoming back their Australian and New Zealand friends with open arms. Later in the morning, Australians gathered for the Lone Pine Service, honouring the Australians who served in the Battle of Lone Pine in August 1915, and Australians who have served in all wars, conflicts and peacekeeping operations.

In France, the small towns of Villers-Bretonneux and Bullecourt were once again adorned with Australian flags to welcome those returning for the Dawn Service at the Australian National Memorial in Villers-Bretonneux and the afternoon service at the Digger Memorial at Bullecourt.

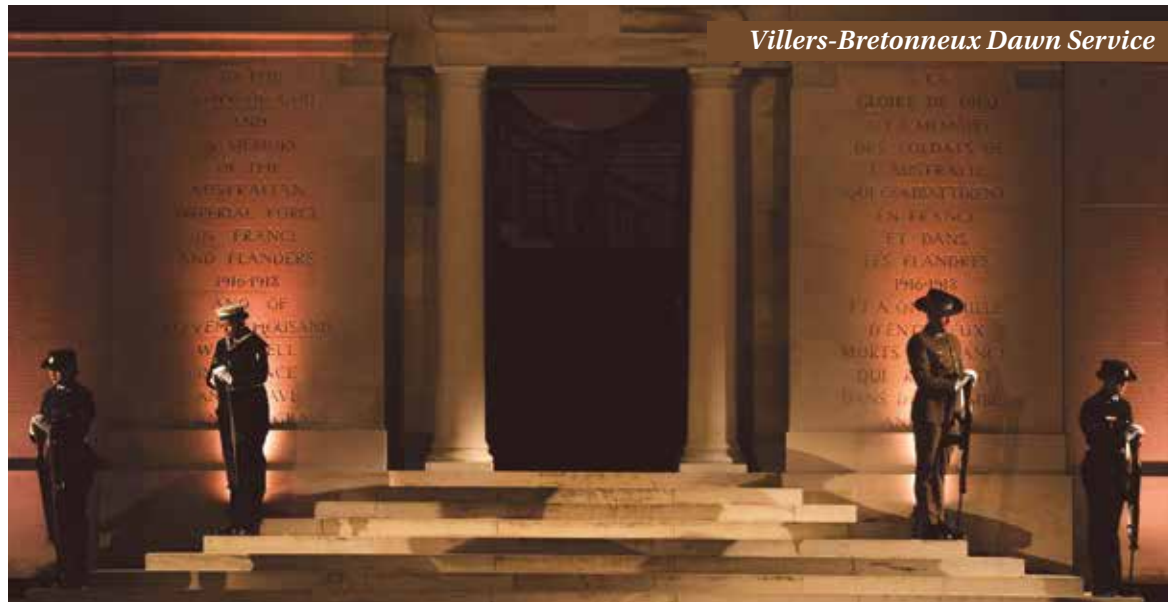
In the darkness before the Dawn Service, Australians and French locals made their way through the Villers-Bretonneux Military

Cemetery to the Australian National Memorial for the Dawn Service.

In the afternoon, hundreds gathered at the Digger Memorial in Bullecourt to remember and honour the Australians who defended the town in 1917 and the many who lost their lives in the region. A unique feature of the Digger Service is the participation of Australian and local children. Children recited the poem 'In Flanders

Fields' in French and English during the service and laid flowers as part of the official wreath-laying.

The Dawn Services in Canberra, Gallipoli and Villers-Bretonneux were televised live by the ABC, and are all available to view on ABC iView (iview.abc.net.au). The Many Days of Anzac documentary, which tells the story of Australian commemoration of Anzac Day since 1916, is also available to watch on iView.



Villers-Bretonneux Dawn Service



Gallipoli Dawn Service

Anzac Day in war cemeteries around Australia

For many Australians who have served in our military, are serving still or who support them, commemoration and remembrance can be solitary acts undertaken almost daily. They remember a friend or a loved one who is among the 102,000 Australians killed in war, or the more than 220,000 who have died of causes related to their war service.

On our national days of remembrance such as Anzac Day, Australians all around the world gather to remember, with gratitude, the selfless courage of the men and women who have served.

While many of our war dead are at rest in battlefield cemeteries overseas, some 13,000 Australians lie in civil and general cemeteries as well as Commonwealth War Graves Commission Cemeteries (CWGC) and Gardens of Remembrance throughout Australia.

This Anzac Day, more than 10,000 people stood among grave markers

and commemorative plaques in local commemorative sites. These sites are cared for, in perpetuity, by the Office of Australian War Graves (OAWG), which resides within DVA.

One of these many gatherings included a Dawn Service for around 2,500 people provided by the Kedron-Wavell RSL sub-branch at the Lutwyche War Cemetery in Brisbane; and another saw 3,000 people take part in a service at the Adelaide River Cemetery, in the Northern Territory, delivered by the Coomalie Council with the assistance of the OAWG.



Dawn Service, Adelaide River War Cemetery, Northern Territory

Other services occurred across the country including at the Springvale War Cemetery in Victoria; Wagga Wagga, Nowra and Deniliquin war cemeteries in New South Wales; and the Launceston War Cemetery in Tasmania. Meanwhile, the Geebung RSL sub-branch hosted 500 people at the Queensland Garden of Remembrance in Brisbane.

There are CWGC War Cemeteries and Gardens of Remembrance in every state and territory, which

collectively form our nation's commemorative estate.

For more information about visiting any Australian War Cemetery or Garden of Remembrance or the Australian Government's program of official commemoration, call 1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372) or visit your local DVA OAWG Depot, which you can find on the DVA website (dva.gov.au and search for 'visiting a war cemetery').

Unveiling of Queensland State Indigenous Memorial



On 27 May – the first day of National Reconciliation Week – a memorial to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander service men and women was unveiled by the Premier of Queensland Annastacia Palaszczuk in Brisbane’s Anzac Square.

‘Right throughout history, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders have served our nation courageously as members of Australia’s armed forces. It’s important their efforts are acknowledged,’ the Premier said.

The memorial was funded by the three tiers of government (including a *Saluting Their Service* Commemorative Grant from DVA) as well as philanthropists and private sector organisations.

The bronze memorial, designed by Wakka Wakka artist John Smith Gumbula and Gold Coast-based sculptor Liam Hardy, features four First Nations Army, Air Force, Navy, and Medical Services personnel and two dancers representing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.



Auntie Lorraine Hatton OAM with Repatriation Commissioner Don Spinks AM

The figures stand on a ‘Journey Stone’, which tells a story of leaving home then embarking on air, land and sea journeys, prior to returning.

The memorial is one of only a handful of memorials to Indigenous veterans in Australia. It honours, respects and remembers Queensland’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men and women who have served and those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice for our country.

‘Queensland being the only state that has Torres Strait Islander Peoples, is another reason the memorial is unique and truly, inclusively Indigenous,’ says Auntie Lorraine Hatton OAM, President and Chair of the organising committee, which worked in partnership with Griffith University.

Repatriation Commissioner Don Spinks AM attended the unveiling. ‘Today was all about remembering, respect and reconciliation,’ he said. ‘This is a very fitting memorial for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who have served our nation.’



An artist’s impression of the Korean War Memorial

Korean War veterans to be honoured with memorial in Perth

By Peter Heeney, Perth Korean War Memorial Committee, and Legatee

As we approach the 70th Anniversary of the signing of the Korean War armistice on 27 July 2023, it is important that Western Australia has an appropriate memorial dedicated to commemorating and reflecting on the service of those who fought in Korea and honouring.

The campaign for the establishment of a Korean War Memorial at Kings Park in Perth began with a small working group created in 2018. Since then, the Perth Korean War Memorial Committee Inc has been created. The committee comprises

Australian veterans from other conflicts, members of the Korean community and the Honorary Consul for the Republic of Korea.

The committee has done an enormous amount of work consulting with the Botanic Gardens and

Parks Authority (BGPA) to establish a Korean War Memorial at the Tobruk Memorial Precinct located at the intersection of Saw Avenue and May Drive in Kings Park.

There has been significant progress since that announcement with the Korean War Memorial design being approved by the BGPA Board. A DVA *Saluting Their Service* Grant of \$120,000 has also been approved. The WA Minister for Veterans, the Hon Paul Papalia CSC MLA, has announced approval of a grant of \$150,000 from the ANZAC Day Trust. Some initial funding was provided by Santos Ltd, by members of Perth’s Korean community and by Australian veterans of the Korean War. The Republic of Korea has invited the Committee to make an application for matching funding of up to \$450,000.

The County of Gapyeong in South Korea has donated and shipped the 10-tonne centrepiece stone and plinth for the memorial which is currently being stored with the assistance of Perth Korean-born sculptor Jina Lee.

The stone is from the area where the Battle of Kapyong took place in 1951. It was a critical year for the Korean War and the men of the 3rd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, showed great courage in this significant battle.

Of the 340 Australians who gave their lives, many are buried in the United Nations Memorial Cemetery at Busan. More than 1,600 people born in WA are estimated to have served in the conflict, 34 of whom made the ultimate sacrifice, and as some remains are still unrecovered, six are classified as missing in action.

As someone who volunteers with Legacy, I am proud that the organisation has provided so much support to the families of Korean War veterans over many decades.

The memorial will be unveiled on the 70th anniversary of the signing of the Armistice – 27 July **next year**. All are welcome to attend.

To read the full article, visit the DVA website (dva.gov.au/vetaffairs).

COMMEMORATIONS

80 years since midget submarine attack on Sydney

In May 1942, fears of a Japanese invasion were widespread after the forces of Imperial Japan swept through Southeast Asia and the Southwest and Central Pacific.

On 23 May, a reconnaissance float plane launched from a Japanese submarine, flew a mission over Sydney Harbour and confirmed the presence of Allied warships.

Six days later, five large I-class Japanese submarines positioned themselves off Sydney, and a second reconnaissance flight was launched early the following day, which confirmed the Allied warships were still in the harbour.

On the evening of 31 May, three two-man midget submarines launched from their 'mother' submarines and headed for Sydney Harbour.

The first midget submarine to enter the harbour became trapped in an anti-submarine boom net, which stretched from George's Head at Mosman to Green Point at South Head. With no means of extricating their vessel, the crew detonated demolition charges, destroying the submarine and killing themselves.

The two remaining midget submarines were spotted as they made their way into the harbour. One was pursued and rammed by HMAS *Yandra*, which then followed up with an inconclusive depth-charge attack but was damaged in the process and forced to retire for repairs. This submarine was later repeatedly attacked by Royal Australian Navy (RAN) auxiliary patrol vessels *Sea Mist*, *Steady Hour* and *Yarroma*. When this disabled vessel was later recovered, it was found the crew had shot themselves rather than surrender.

The other midget submarine was unsuccessfully fired upon by the cruiser USS *Chicago* and the corvette

HMAS *Geelong*. This midget submarine shortly afterwards fired its two torpedoes at the *Chicago* but missed. One torpedo ran aground on Garden Island without exploding, while the other passed under a Dutch submarine and hit the sea wall where the RAN depot ship HMAS *Kuttabul* was moored.

Nineteen Australian and two British naval personnel lost their lives when HMAS *Kuttabul* sank, and 10 other sailors were wounded.

The midget submarine responsible escaped from Sydney Harbour, but failed to rendezvous with its waiting 'mother' submarine.

All six Japanese submariners lost their lives in the attack on Sydney Harbour, and no significant Allied warship was destroyed in this attack.

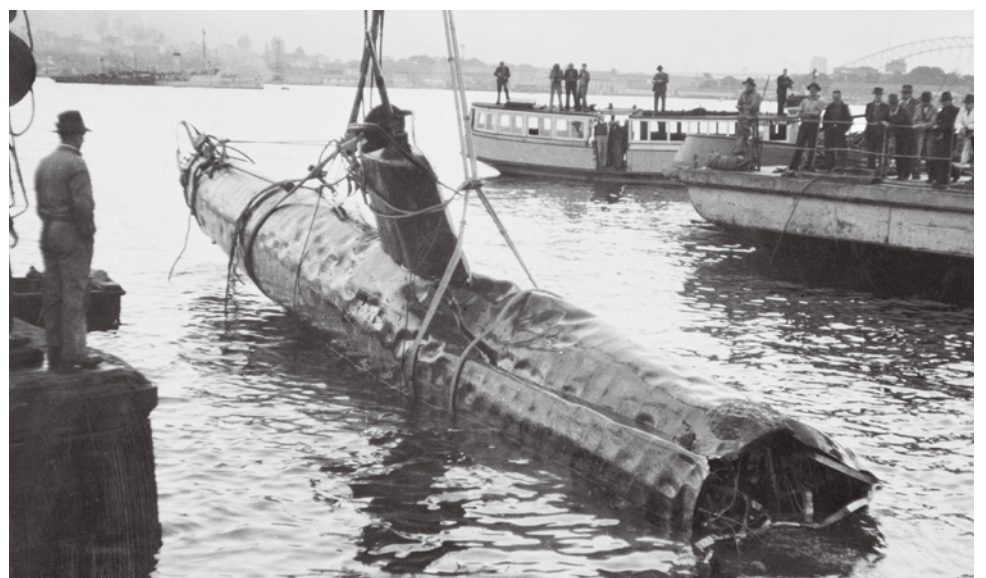
The two midget submarines lost in Sydney Harbour were raised and both crews' bodies were cremated at Sydney's Eastern Suburbs Crematorium with full naval honours. Their ashes were repatriated to Japan through a neutral party.

In June 1942, a submarine lightly shelled the eastern suburbs in Sydney and then Newcastle. Japanese submarines also attacked coastal shipping, causing the loss of some 60 lives and 29,000 tons of shipping during the two months after the midget submarine attack on Sydney Harbour.

A composite of these two recovered midget submarines was put on display and later toured around Australia to raise money for sailors' charities. It was later installed at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra where it remains on display.



Above left: salvaging of midget submarine caught in boom net; above right: the partly submerged HMAS *Kuttabul* following the attack



The midget submarine rammed by HMAS *Yandra* is raised from the harbour bed.

In 1968, the mother of one of the Japanese submariners travelled to Australia to visit the site of her son's death. To commemorate her son's memory she scattered cherry blossoms in the water where his midget submarine had been found.

In November 2006, the final resting place of the missing Japanese midget submarine that escaped

from Sydney Harbour was located by recreational scuba divers on the seabed. This was about five kilometres off Sydney's Northern Beaches near Bungan Head, Newport.

You can watch the five-minute video about the midget submarine attack on the DVA TV YouTube channel ([youtube.com/DVATVAus](https://www.youtube.com/DVATVAus)).

Funeral service for *Kuttabul* casualties



Service to recognise 75 years of Australian peacekeeping

A national commemorative service will be held at 10:30 am on 14 September 2022 to recognise the 75th anniversary of Australia's involvement in international peacekeeping operations.

It will take place at the Australian Peacekeeping Memorial on Anzac Parade in Canberra, and will be broadcast live on ABC TV nationally and on iView.

In 1947, the first Australian peacekeepers served as military observers to a United Nations operation in the Netherlands East Indies (present-day Indonesia).

This would foreshadow the experiences of generations of Australians to come.

Since that time, Australian peacekeepers have served in locations ranging from the Middle

East to Africa, Iraq, Afghanistan, Cyprus, East Timor, Southeast Asia, Bougainville, the Solomon Islands and many more.

Tragically, 16 Australians have lost their lives during peacekeeping operations.

The commemorative service on 14 September is a timely opportunity for all Australians to honour the service and sacrifice of all Australian military, police and civilian peacekeepers and families.

More information on the service will be available on the DVA website ([dva.gov.au/recognition](https://www.dva.gov.au/recognition)).



NOTICEBOARD

REUNIONS

Please note that the following reunions may be affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Please contact organisers for more information.

Army Aussie Red Hat Chapter

6 August 2022, Penrith Panthers Leagues Club, NSW

Army Aerial Delivery veteran community, families and friends (Army air dispatchers and parachute riggers, etc) are invited to attend the first ever 'Aussie Red Hat Chapter Annual Reunion'. This is a formal evening so please wear formal attire. Time: 1800 to 2330. Visit the website for tickets.

Contact: Anthony Eddie

☎ 0401 417 497

✉ vicepres@adaa.net.au

🌐 www.trybooking.com/BXTNT

Naval Stores Reunion

26-27 August 2022, Sydney CBD, NSW

A reunion of Naval Stores and MLSC members of all ranks.

Contact: Alan Cady-Ellis (Cady)

☎ 0407 436 498

✉ temporaryloan@gmail.com

21EST

29 August - 3 September 2022, Foster/Tuncurry, NSW

We invite all 21EST and 17Const Elec troop veterans, partners and mates. Contact Phil for further details.

Contact: Phil Hincks

☎ 0414 761 032

✉ 21estcommittee@gmail.com

Navy Cooks, Chefs and Stewards

7-9 October 2022, Melbourne, VIC

Ex-serving, serving and reserves are invited to attend and celebrate 100 years of professional training at HMAS *Cerberus* over the journey. For all details, email David (below) or ex WOSTWD Dave Stevenson (djstevenson7@bigpond.com).

Contact: ex CPOCK David Speed Dwyer

☎ 0423 675 146

✉ davidgdwyer@hotmail.com

B Company 3RAR (ex-Vietnam) 1967-68 Reunion

14-16 October 2022, Tweed Heads/Coolangatta, NSW

Please contact Bill for registration details

Contact: Bill Roffey

☎ 0412 305 734

✉ billroffey@bigpond.com

Facebook - B Company 3RAR (ex-Vietnam) 1967-68

1 Fd Sqn Wksp SVN 66/71

20-22 October 2022, Wodonga, VIC

Wksp 2022 reunion Part 2 which coincides with the week the Wksp left Nui Dat for good! Wksp members and those associated with the Wksp, regardless of Corps, are invited to attend.

Contact: Mick Leonard

☎ 02 6059 2771

✉ mick.jude@bigpond.com

RAAF Airman Aircrew Association 25th Anniversary

21-22 October 2022, Caloundra, QLD

Meet and greet on 21st and dinner on 22nd. To register, visit the website.

Contact: Grendell 'Skip' Antony

☎ 0412 602 353

✉ theantonys@optusnet.com.au

🌐 http://airmanaircrew.com.au

21 Construction Squadron Reunion RAE

22 October 2022, Seymour, VIC

Proposed reunion for all past and present members of the Squadron and their partners. Please contact Bill or Audrey, toyota_page@bigpond.com for more information.

Contact: Bill Thornley

☎ 0438 140 759

✉ we.2.bez@bigpond.com

55th Birthday Reunion of 9 RAR (67/73)

10-14 November 2022, Sunshine Coast, QLD

All those who served in the Battalion are invited. The event will be centred around Mooloolaba/Maroochydore. Please ensure your postal/email address is up to date with your state secretary.

Contact: Kevin Lynch

✉ kevannlynch@hotmail.com

HQ1ATF Association

18-21 November 2022, Capital Country Holiday Park, ACT

Call or email John for detailed itinerary.

Contact: John Verhelst

☎ 0437 212 121

✉ jeverhelst@gmail.com

5 Field Ambulance RAAMC Association

26 November 2022, Parramatta RSL Club, 2 Macquarie St, NSW

The Association will hold their annual 'mixed' reunion luncheon 11.45am to 3pm. Members and their family/partners/friends are most welcome. Please RSVP by 23 November 2022.

Contact: Alan Curry OAM -

Hon Sect 5 Field Ambulance Association

☎ 0427 824 646

HMAS *Nirimba* 2nd Sailstruc Apprentice Intake - 50-Year Reunion

10-12 February 2023, Gold Coast, QLD

Expressions of interest for the reunion can be made on Facebook Group HMAS *Nirimba* Jan 1973 - 2nd Sailstruc (34th) Apps Intake or contact Allan. All 34th intake and partners are welcome.

Contact: Allan Dow

✉ Allan_dow@bigpond.com

HMAS *Sydney IV* Commissioning Crew 40-Year Reunion

17-20 February 2023, Hobart, TAS

All members of the Commissioning Crew and partners are encouraged to attend for a great catch-up. More details to be advised closer to the date.

Contact: Derek Leecroft

☎ 0409 632 961

✉ gimakide@bigpond.com.au

🌐 facebook.com/

groups/344780545578473

Headquarters & Headquarters Company 1st Australian Logistic Support Group (1 ALSG)

20-25 March 2023, Broken Hill, NSW

Please make contact for details.

Contact: Tony Brown

☎ 0428 852 736

✉ tr4950@optusnet.com.au

RAADC 80th Shin Dig

21 April 2023, the Portsea Camp, VIC

Open to all past, present, family and friends of our outstanding Corps. Golf day on Friday 22 April. Pop-up spit roast on Saturday. Walk the Portsea Barracks at your leisure on Sunday. Reaching out to members not on Facebook.

Contact: Sonia Thompson

☎ 0402 444 460

✉ sonithompson1@gmail.com

1 RTB Kapooka - B COY 11+12 PL - 10-year reunion

13 May 2023, Townsville, QLD

Get together for all those members that are still in, or still with us. Catch up and have a beer.

Contact: Rosie and Goody

☎ 0455 531 599

Seeking Members of Moran Division Class 5/82, 83

Looking to organise a reunion later in the year. If you are interested in attending and you are a member of this division, please contact us on Facebook under the class heading name or via email.

Contact: Rod Beattie

☎ 0418 294 972

✉ rodbeattie@hotmail.com

8RAR (Royal Australian Regiment) 1969/70

Seeking veterans living in Tasmania who served in Vietnam with the 8 RAR in 1969/70. Our reunion next year will be held in Melbourne around Anzac weekend.

Contact: David Brooks - Rep for Tas ex 8 RAR

☎ 0400 518 924

✉ vcwc@outlook.com.au

Seeking members of A Company 8 RAR

I was a digger in Operation Hammersley in February 1970. There was an incident on 28 February where my platoon in A company 8 RAR received severe casualties. I am trying to contact the wounded soldiers

from that day. We stayed in Vietnam until November 1970. 8 RAR are having a reunion on Anzac day 2023 in Melbourne and I would love to have as many of these heroes there.

Contact: Jo McGillion, Brisbane

☎ 0429 826 425

✉ jmcgillion@bigpond.com

MEDALS LOST AND FOUND

LOST

Purser brothers Arthur and Glenroy

I am hoping to find the medals belonging to the late brothers, last being held by the late Eric Purser.

Contact: Graham Minchin

☎ 0413 459 972

✉ minchinfamily08@gmail.com

Herbert Arthur Thomas SCUDDS

I'm looking for my grandfather's stolen WWII medals. His service number was NX40495.

Contact: Tracey Harrington

☎ 0438 769 382

✉ traceyharrington73@gmail.com

VX32482 Vere James Frederich BULMAN

Trying to locate the Africa Star, 1939-45 Star, War Medal and Australian Service Medal 1939-45. Apparently, they were donated to Cranbourne RSL around 10 years ago, but there is no record of them.

Contact: Lance McDermott

☎ 03 9792 1535

✉ gbetros@southeastrsl.com.au

William James Laughton Lampe (known as Jim)

Looking for my grandfather's WWII medals (service number SX7916). He served in the 2/48th Battalion.

Contact: Tori

☎ 0448 860 734

✉ vlampe84@bigpond.com

FOUND

J W Fyfe

WWII Australian Service Medal (1939-45), serial number 120365. We'd like to return it to its rightful owner or next of kin.

Contact: Jarrod Graham

☎ 0406 393 001

2174964 Moxham P R

Please contact Greenbank RSL Sub-Branch, QLD.

Contact: Doug Watts, Secretary

☎ 07 3380 0273

J R Hawkes

Vietnam Medal

Contact: Laurie Southern

☎ 0409 248 177

✉ fiona.southern@bigpond.com

G S HIRST - Victory Medal

The medal, without ribbon, has been found in Canberra.

Contact: John Gill

☎ 0405 094 016

✉ jlgill@optusnet.com.au

Corporal William Dolan S/No 4789 WW1

British War Medal 1914-18 for general service during WWI, and Military Medal for Bravery in the field. William was specially mentioned in Sir Douglas Haig's dispatches 1 April 1918. My father had these medals in his possession.

Contact: Peter John Franklin

☎ 0428 500 629

✉ r95419@bigpond.com

Issued to Harold Charles Q90807

WWII medals - Australia Service Medal 1939-1945 and British Commonwealth War Medal 1939-1945.

Contact: Stephen and Roz Bentley

☎ 0429 130 312

✉ stevebentley1959@yahoo.com.au

G P BASSETT

Australian Active Service Medal with name engraved as 'A124819 G.P. Bassett'

Contact: Terry Walsh, Griffith RSL Sub-Branch

☎ 0427 622 902

✉ twalsh@aapt.net.au

A M Allan

Iraq medal with name engraved as '8224578 A.M. ALLAN'

Contact: Terry Walsh, Griffith RSL Sub-Branch

☎ 0427 622 902

✉ twalsh@aapt.net.au

You may also want to visit the Defence Department website's Honours and Awards page for information on applying for medals, replacements and relatives' medals (defence.gov.au/adf-members-families/honours-awards).

NOTICEBOARD

If you'd like to share in *Vetaffairs* an interesting reunion story arising from one of the 'seeking' notices below, please email us at vetaffairs@dva.gov.au

NAVY

HMAS *Torrens* DE 53

I would like to contact the Navy photographer, who was posted aboard HMAS *Torrens* during her deployment to Southeast Asia in 1989-90.

Contact: Dave (Harry) Butler
ABRP
☎ 0411 186 909
✉ davebutlersydney@hotmail.com

Officer's Ceremonial Uniform ('Ice-cream suit')

Seeking the jacket to the 'ice-cream suit' for Armistice Day ceremony. I am the son of a WWI pilot who fought in France and was part of the Occupation Force in Cologne in November 1918 and as such, I am called upon to deliver the speech. I am prepared to pay for it - size 42 or 44.

Contact: Cmdr Peter Lancaster
☎ 0419 659 982
✉ sanctuarycovegetaways@bigpond.com

Looking for HMAS *Sydney* III Ceremonial Bell

My search has included Naval Air Station Nowra, Garden Island, Maritime Museum and the Lord Mayor's office of the City of Sydney. The Wikipedia page for the vessel states: 'The carrier's chapel and bell were removed and installed at the naval base HMAS *Moreton* in 1974, then were relocated to the Australian National Maritime Museum's collection in the 1980s'. I am an ex HMAS *Sydney* crewman and my eldest daughter (now 53) was christened on board *Sydney* and an inscription displayed inside the bell declaring this.

Contact: Brian Harrold
✉ patandbongo@hotmail.com

Nashos at *Penguin* and *Albatross*

Seeking information about the Nashos at HMAS *Penguin* and *Albatross* in 1957. I was in National Service, #7869, as a naval airman and did three months there, and three months at *Albatross*, Nowra.

Contact: Alwyn (Jim) Perrett
☎ 0413 897 653
✉ jimperrett@outlook.com

HMAS *Cerberus*, Moran intake 25/11/1967 - 55-year reunion

If anyone is interested in organising a reunion with me, around November this year, please make contact.

Contact: Daniel Mays
✉ danielscottmays@gmail.com

Missing 100-year-old weather vane

The iconic copper weather vane, in the form of a galleon-style sailing ship, has been stolen from the roof of the Mission to Seafarers building in Docklands, Melbourne. Any help to find it would be greatly appreciated.

Contact: Sue Dight
☎ 03 9629 7083
✉ naval.commemoration.committee@gmail.com

ARMY

Seeking Graeme Roll

National Serviceman Oct. Intake 1967, Puckapunyal. Last known address, Sylvania Waters, NSW.

Contact: Roger Thompson
☎ 08 9401 3632 or 0431 702 461
✉ rogert@iinet.net.au

Sealed ration pack butter - tins, tubes, etc

Seeking unopened tins or tubes of ration pack butter, for ecological research. Would also like any packing notes, to help with dating. If you have an old tin lying around, please get in touch.

Contact: Bruce Gray
☎ 0450 960 100
✉ Bruce.and.Tricia@gmail.com

Ex Supply Platoon members 1973-1990

Seeking expression of interest in a reunion of all ex members, including cooks, TPT drivers and ammo tech.

Contact: Michael Stone -
RAAOC-25 COMBAT (SUPPLIES PLATOON)
✉ michael.stone@bigpond.com

2 RAR Historical Collection - Seeking donations

The 2 RAR HC scope is 66th BN 2nd AIF, 2 RAR, 2/4 RAR. The Collection is located on Lavarack barracks in Townsville, QLD. We would appreciate any donation of photos, slides, items, uniforms. Please bring photo ID and make an appointment prior, to facilitate access. The Collection is staffed by volunteers who have served in the Battalion.

Contact: Jason Harrison
☎ 0419 749 198
✉ 2RAR.Museum@gmail.com
🌐 www.thecollectingbug.com/2rarmuseum

10th Bn RSAR Signals Pl 1973-87

Former Pl and Radio Sgt seeking contact with members who served with Spt Coy Signals Pl 10th Bn RSAR between 1973 and 1987 before it became 10/27Bn. Names may include: Don Harper, Ray Dennis, Pat Hawkins (nee Bergeman), Tammy Whealan (nee Rebbeck), Rose Scott, Trevor Scott, Peter Dodd, Steve Donovan, Owen Bower, Mimi Ewens (nee Kusmuk), Beryl Hudson (nee Rowe), Jill Bowley, Karen Mengersen, Jan Radford.

Contact: Des Hawkins
☎ 0434 676 050
✉ desmondh@ozemail.com.au

Seeking Private Eric Cooper

He was in RAASC or RACT in 1971 or 1972. Posted to Victoria at that time.

Contact: Phill Quartermaine, WA
✉ phquarter@gmail.com

Greg Akhurst

Seeking Greg (Army RAAC) ex SI Dvr and Svc, Wing School of Armour.

Contact: Chris Osborn
☎ 0457 474 486
✉ cosborn1@iinet.net.au

Seeking Garry Robinson, Vietnam Veteran

He was born appropriately 1950, possibly Sydney. We believe he only served a short time due to injuries received. He has family he has never met and we would like to make contact with him.

Contact: Lyn Irwin
☎ 0418 693 208
✉ lmirwin@outlook.com.au

Seeking contact with Alan Smith

Alan was previously 8 Platoon 7 RAR medic and was wounded on Operation Coburg 1968.

Contact: Mark Moloney
☎ 0419 637 915
✉ mark_moloney90@hotmail.com

Seeking Robert (Bob) Hicks

2/6 Signals Beleah Park, SA. Transferred to Melbourne, Victoria. Last contact, 144 Hills Street, North Adelaide, SA (1965).

Contact: Kym Fitzgerald on 0408 061 610 or Marian Dickson on 0439 898 516
✉ kymfitz@hotmail.com

Colonel Greg Baker

Seeking Greg, who was COMASC Op Manager in 2000, for the authoring of a short history of service in Dili in 2000 titled *Stories by Bargearse*.

Contact: Grant Palmer
✉ sticksboneskin@gmail.com
🌐 Penandbones.com.au

16th Garrison Battalion Hay 1940-46

Seeking photos of personnel who served at this location around April 1941 to late 1942, and of Cecil Gordon 'Buddy' Arnold who was part of Camp 7 Hay 1941/42. Buddy came from Hillston, NSW.

Contact: Gordon Arnold
☎ 02 4954 7537

AIR FORCE

RAAF and Ex-RAAFies on the Sunshine Coast

Seeking any RAAF, ex-RAAF, plus allied personnel interested in joining old and bold RAAFies on the Sunshine Coast. RAAF Association Kawana Waters Branch gets together every 2nd Saturday of the month. We also have social monthly gatherings.

Contact: Warren Duff
☎ 0418 749 471
✉ secraafakaw@outlook.com

Seeking Kay Isabel Peace Simpson

Served with No 4 RAAF Hospital, Butterworth, in the early 1970s. Also served in Vietnam with the last medical team from Princess Alexandra Hospital. I would love to catch up with Kay after all these years.

Contact: Sylvia Raddatz
☎ 07 5491 1584

Seeking injured RAAF member

Between 16 September 1986 and 16 April 1987, near RAAF Base

Butterworth, I attended an accident as a Corporal RAAF Policeman. The accident involved an off-duty RAAF member who sustained a substantial injury to his knee. He was taken by ambulance to hospital and then medically evacuated back to Australia the next day.

Contact: Keith Skinner
☎ 0457 355 628

RAAF Association, Launceston Branch

Our Branch comprises mainly ex-RAAF and serving (PAF or Reserve) members and partners, in/near Launceston. Aviation-related personnel from other Australian and allied armed services are welcome.

Contact: George Merridew
☎ 0419 371 654
✉ cgmerridew@gmail.com

Seeking Bill Peters (Cpl General hand)

Bill and I worked together at HQOC in 1971 and I lost track of him and his mate Blossom over the next 20 years. Would very much like to catch up and return the LP you loaned me.

Contact: Bill Hall
☎ 0411 257 460
✉ bill319209@yahoo.com

MISCELLANEOUS

AFC and RAAF Association - Toowoomba Branch

We are reaching out to all those who serve/have served in the RAAF, either Regular, Reserve or National Service, to join in the camaraderie of the Association. This invitation is also extended to Army Aviation and Commonwealth Allied Forces. The Branch meets on the first Sunday of each month at Club Glenvale, Boundary Street, Glenvale, commencing at 10.00 am.

Contact: Bruce Kucks
☎ 07 4634 6668
✉ bruce.kucks@bigpond.com

Flag photos and memorabilia

The flag society seeks photographs of the Australian flag in a war zone or any other military-related flag memorabilia.

Contact: Nigel Morris
☎ 0431 149 177
✉ nigelrnmorris@hotmail.com

The Ballarat Base Hospital Trained Nurses League - seeking information

The League is compiling and seeking information about its past trainees who served in WWI, WWII or any other military conflicts. For your interest, the League has a WWI nurse diary and photos on the Victoria Collections website.

Contact: Trina Jones
☎ 0438 396 180
✉ tljones80@bigpond.com
🌐 <https://victoriancollections.net.au>

Kokoda Track Campaign

2022 marks the 80th anniversary of the pivotal 1942 Kokoda Track campaign in PNG. On 3 November 2022, a special commemorative event will be held at the Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway at Concord NSW, 10.00am - 12.30pm. Kokoda veterans, widows and family are invited to attend. Please email to register.

Contact: Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway Ltd
☎ (02) 9166 0890 (Mon-Fri 10am-2pm) or 0488 488 297
✉ admin@kokodawalkway.com.au
🌐 www.kokodawalkway.com.au

State Conference - 50th Anniversary of the last NASHOs Intake

The Queensland National Servicemen's Association of Australia Committee will host the conference in Hervey Bay for all members and supporters - relevant dates are 27 and 30 September, and 1 October. More information and registration forms are available via the below.

Contact: Qld NSAA HQ / Hervey Bay NASHOs
☎ 07 3324 1277 or 0490 798 394
✉ nashos4655@outlook.com
🌐 officeadmin@nashosqld.org.au

Name Change to tri-service organisation

The Vietnam and Logistic Support Veterans Association Inc. has officially changed their name to the HMAS *Sydney* Association Inc. but will remain a tri-service organisation. We are the only ex-service organisation that affords their partners full membership.

Contact: Casey Jones
☎ 0418 783 281
✉ caseyjones1242@gmail.com

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