# NOMINAL ROLLS

## COMMEMORATING THE SERVICE AND SACRIFICE OF ALL THOSE WHO SERVED AUSTRALIA AND ITS ALLIES IN WARS AND CONFLICTS

The Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) looks after four nominal rolls, which include the names of people who were in Australia's defence forces and served in the Second World War, Korean War, Vietnam War and First Gulf War

## Who is this activity for?

These activities are designed for upper primary and lower secondary school students. Students will work through the process used to access and search for veterans using The Department of Veterans' Affairs Nominal Rolls. Students will initially focus on two well-known veterans, before then researching family members or friends who have served. This resource can be used to support teachers and parents in their learning activities regarding Anzac Day or other days of remembrance.


AWM BEL/69/0600/VN

## Connecting with family and friends

The histories of those who have served may raise issues in relation to war and conflict, including loss, sadness and death. Discussion of these themes may be distressing to some students, particularly those who have experience of war zones, or with family members currently serving overseas. Teachers and parents are advised to be sensitive to the perspectives and emotions of students while working with these materials. There are additional resources available to assist students when interviewing veterans. Go to **anzacportal.dva.gov.au/resources/ reflections-capturing-veterans- stories**, for ideas about talking to people about sensitive topics and best practice principles about conducting oral histories.

## Using the activities

These activities aim to assist you in building student understanding and appreciation of the concept of commemoration and to broaden knowledge of Australia's wartime experiences. The key concepts include: research, commemoration, identifying connections to the past, symbols, service and sacrifice.

Through this activity, students will learn to:

· Undertake research using online tools.
· Improve and refine results by refining search terms and parameters.
· Identify theatres of war that Australia has participated in since the Second World War.
· Identify the service of family members or friends who are veterans.
· Connect with family and friends who are veterans, or who know their family history.

## Background of DVA's Nominal Rolls

A Nominal Roll provides a snapshot of each veteran who served in a war or conflict in which Australia has participated. A veteran is a person who was enrolled in the Australian Defence Forces, which includes the Navy, Army and Air Force. To be a veteran, they must have completed at least one day of service and no longer be serving in the ADF.
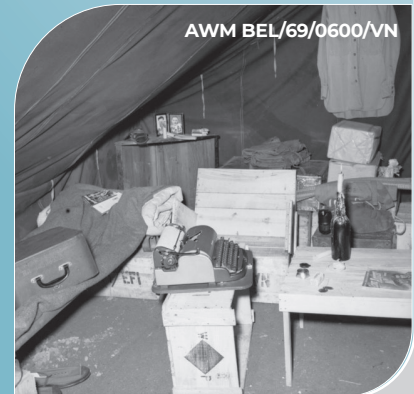
DVA looks after the Nominal Rolls for:

· **Second World War**, during the period 3 September 1939 to 2 September 1945.
· **Korean War**, during the period 27 June 1950 to 19 April 1956.
· **Vietnam War**, during the period 23 May 1962 to 29 April 1975.
· **First Gulf War**, during the period August 1990 to September 1991.

The Nominal Rolls can be used to look up the records of well known Australians who served, friends and family. You can also and print out a certificate that commemorates service and sacrifice.

You can find further information about the Nominal Rolls through DVA's website at **dva.gov.au/recognition/events-and-reminders-all-who-served/records-and-military-history/nominal-rolls/about**.

The Nominal Rolls managed by DVA can be located at **nominal-rolls.dva.gov.au**.

AWM BEL/69/0600/VN

## What about other Nominal Rolls?

AWM P10799.001

Other organisations manage Nominal Rolls that cover earlier wars and conflicts.

The Australian War Memorial manages rolls for those who served in Pre-First World War Conflicts including Sudan (1885), the Boer War (1899 to 1902), and the Boer Uprising (1900 to 1901), and for personnel who served with the Australian

Imperial Force (AIF) during the First World War (1914 to 1918). These can be accessed through their website at **awm.gov.au**.

The National Archives of Australia also provides the ability to search digital copies of the service records of many Australians who served in the First and Second World Wars. These can be accessed through their website at **naa.gov.au**.

## Completing the activities

**Refer to the Activity Sheet to guide students through the tasks at their computer. The Activity Sheet can be downloaded and printed. Students will begin by researching two very well known Australians whose service snapshot and certificates can be found in the Nominal Rolls. They will then progress to researching family members who served in conflicts within DVA's remit.**

# The two examples

**Sir Ernest Edward 'Weary' Dunlop** (Lieutenant Colonel) joined the Australian Army Medical Corps in 1939 as a medical officer. In 1942 he was in charge of the No.1 Allied Hospital at Bandoeng when Java fell to the Japanese, and he and his troops became prisoners of war. He was sent to work on the Burma-Thailand Railway in 1943 and stayed there until the Second World War ended. He did all that he could to save wounded, sick and starving men even though he himself was very unwell.

AWM 117361

Many times, he put his own life at risk when he stood up to his Japanese captors to protect others. He was very selfless and his name became a legend amongst the Australian prisoners of war and he was an inspiration for their survival.

**Sister Vivian Bullwinkel** (Lieutenant Colonel) was in the Australian Army Nursing Service during the Second World War. In 1942, she and 65 other nurses from the 13th Australian General Hospital were forced to evacuate from Singapore by boarding the Steam Ship (SS) *Vyner Brooke* to escape, but two days later the ship was sunk by Japanese aircraft.

Bullwinkel, and 21 other nurses and a large group of men, women and children made it ashore. Japanese soldiers killed the men and then instructed the nurses to wade into the sea. When they machine-gunned the nurses from behind, Bullwinkel was struck by a bullet and pretended to be dead until the Japanese left.

Bullwinkel was captured by the Japanese again and put in a prisoner of war camp, were she was reunited with other survivors of the SS *Vyner Brooke*. She told them of the massacre, but none spoke of it again until after the war in case in put Bullwinkel, as witness to the massacre, in danger. Of the 65 nurses on board the SS *Vyner Brooke*, only 24 survived to see the end of the Second World War.

Bullwinkel spent three and a half years in the prisoner of war camp.

AWM P03960.001

# Researching family and friends

The Nominal Rolls enable students to enter different search criteria when looking up the records. It doesn't matter if the person they are researching can't remember their service number as students can search the conflict, surname, first name, date-of-birth, and other criteria.

Students should be aware that sometimes veterans do not want their details to be included in the Nominal Roll and the Department of Veterans' Affairs takes these requests for privacy very seriously. In cases where this has been requested, records are not made public.

## Suggested teaching approaches

Once students have completed the Activity Sheet, ask them whether they have any questions about the following:

- **What is a veteran?**
- **Do you know anyone who is a veteran?**
- **What conflicts has Australia fought in?**
- **What is a Nominal Roll?**
- **What and when is Anzac Day?**
- **What does Anzac Day commemorate?**



AWM CAM/67/1001/VN

## Anzac Day School Awards

Teachers and schools might want to consider entering the **Anzac Day Schools' Awards**. This is a national competition recognising the work of primary and secondary students, teachers and schools to engage with and honour Australia's wartime history. More information can be accessed at **https://anzacportal.dva. gov.au/research-education/ competitions/anzac-day-schools-awards**.

## Other education resources

The Department of Veterans' Affairs has further teaching resources available on the Anzac Portal at **https://anzacportal. dva.gov.au/resources/australians-merchant-navy-history-focus**.

The Australian War Memorial has Classroom resources available at **https://www.awm.gov.au/learn/schools/resources**.