



THE LISTENING POST

The Official Journal of The Returned & Services League of Australia WA Branch Incorporated

SEPTEMBER 2022

**Resilience Retreat
Instils Lifelong
Lessons**

**TORNADO
ALLEY**

**NEW MEMBERS
BOOST RSLWA
BOARD**



**THE LISTENING POST
CENTENARY 1921-2021**



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RSL STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The RSL was founded in 1916 to provide comradeship and support to Australia's Veterans and their families.

That core mission has never changed but has continued to evolve to meet the needs of each generation of servicemen and women.

We have a branch network that covers Australia and any Veteran who needs help will get it - every serving ADF member and Veteran will be warmly welcomed at their local RSL Sub-Branch or club.

We advocate for the best possible conditions for our serving men and women and for those who have served the nation in the past.

We foster respect and thanks from the nation for all those who have made sacrifices in Australia's name and we will provide a strong voice on issues of national unity and security.

PREVIOUS EDITIONS

Copies of *The Listening Post* are available on our website:

www.rslwa.org.au

PUBLISHING

Publishing of *The Listening Post*:

Published four times a year with a readership of more than 25,000.

To all Sub-Branch Presidents and Secretaires: Send photographs (1MB plus) and a short article (in a Word document) on special activities at your Sub-Branch to *The Listening Post*.

Deadline for next edition:

25 October 2022

The preferred method of receiving submissions is by email. Photographs should be attached separately and a minimum of 1 MB. This is our magazine and contributions and letters are welcome.

Address to:

The Listening Post
PO Box Z5424

St George's Tce, PERTH WA 6831

Email: publicaffairs@rslwa.org.au

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INSIDE

FEATURES

- 6 New members boost RSLWA board
- 8 Resilience Retreat Instils Lifelong Lessons
- 12 Enerflow digs deep to support Veterans
- 14 Tornado Alley
- 22 RSLWA State Congress 2022

REGULAR

- 3 From the President
- 45 On The Book Shelf
- 47 The Last Post
- 48 Unit and Kindred Listing

EVENTS & NEWS

- 5 Winds of change bring new RSLWA CEO
- 16 A postie bike ride for PTSD
- 21 Australia's Ambassador of Japan visits ANZAC House
- 30 Not quite a walk in the park
- 32 Don't Cry for Me – Arthur Leggett

COVER PHOTO



Jacob Holmes was the first participant to cross the high ropes course at the Resilience Retreat.

CONTACT DETAILS

The Returned & Services League of Australia WA Branch Incorporated

Level 4/28 St Georges Tce, Perth WA 6000

PO Box Z5424 St Georges Tce, Perth 6831 | T: 08 9287 3799

E: admin@rslwa.org.au | W: www.rslwa.org.au | FB: www.facebook.com/rslwa

Writing and Advertising Information: publicaffairs@rslwa.org.au

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CONTACT DIRECTORY

BOARD

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MEMBERS

Bill Collidge RFD, Ken Morris, Stephen Barton,
Matt Moran, Robyn Steenbach, Miquela Riley

CO-OPTED MEMBERS

Tim Curtis, Neil Gerrard

TRUSTEES

Wayne Tarr RFD ED, Doug Simpson JP,
Philip Orchard AM, AFNI CMDR RAN (Ret'd)

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Vince Connelly

(08) 9287 3799 admin@rslwa.org.au

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO THE STATE PRESIDENT AND CEO

Nola Keen (08) 9287 3799 admin@rslwa.org.au

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

Peter McGlade BBus, CPA

(08) 9287 3799 cfo@rslwa.org.au

FINANCIAL AND CORPORATE SERVICES MANAGER

Karen Cleverly

(08) 9287 3703 accounts@rslwa.org.au

STATE MEMBERSHIP OFFICER

Catriona Wasson

(08) 9287 3705 membership@rslwa.org.au

STAFF SUPPORT OFFICER

Liz Beesley

(08) 9287 3799 reception@rslwa.org.au

VETERAN SERVICES MANAGER

Milton Brooks

(08) 9287 3746 miltonb@rslwa.org.au

ADVOCATES

Andrew Endrey, Nathaniel White, Darren Smith,

Stacey Bullock, Kristian Lannu, Tori Blake,

Bob Sheppard, Carl Ponnuthurai

(08) 9287 3799 advocacy@rslwa.org.au

City of Cockburn RSL info@cockburnrsl.org.au

Joondalup Veteran Services Centre

veterancentre@joondalupcityrsl.com.au

Peel Veterans' Centre manrsl@westnet.com.au

South West Veteran Centre

contact@southwestveteranscentrewa.org.au

STATE WELFARE OFFICER

Rosalind Howat

(08) 9287 3707/0417 905 742 welfare@rslwa.org.au

STATE FINANCIAL COUNSELLOR

Nicky Sligo

(08) 9287 3756 nicoles@rslwa.org.au

VETERAN EMPLOYMENT OFFICER

Sherry Baxter (08) 9287 3724 vetjobs@rslwa.org.au

ANZAC HOUSE VETERAN CENTRAL MANAGER

Matthew Holyday

(08) 9287 3714 ahmanager@rslwa.org.au

CONCIERGES

Scott Newton, Peter Foux, Felix Reincastle

(08) 9287 3711 concierge@rslwa.org.au

CHAPLAIN

Barrie Yesberg 0430 507 271 chaplaincy@rslwa.org.au

EVENTS & COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

Karen Ormesher (08) 9287 3710 events@rslwa.org.au

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

Rachel Hogan (08) 9287 3712 marketing@rslwa.org.au

VETERAN LIAISON OFFICER

John McPherson (08) 9287 3720 vlog@rslwa.org.au

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Community Spirit Alive and Well in Esperance

Esperance RSL Sub-Branch Secretary, Hugh Knight acknowledged the generosity of a section of their local community, which made a conscious decision to express its gratitude to "some who have given in the past".

It was a very pleasant day when 14 of us were picked up at the Esperance RSL club by the footy club committee member (and bus driver) Steve Rolland and driven to Gibson Football ground. During the 25-minute trip one of the main topics of discussion was the possible (or perhaps probable) demise of small Sub-Branches of the RSL, due to a lack of younger volunteers to 'take over the reins'.

When we arrived at the Gibson Football ground we were ushered into their magnificent Club area and seated at a long table in the viewing area to watch Gibson play against Ports. We were served tea or coffee by some club members and then left to get on with feasting and football. The Esperance RSL members were treated to an absolutely wonderful day.

I'd heard that the Gibson Football Club had been donating deliveries of firewood to RSL members and when I enquired about this I was told it had been happening for some years. The GFC members, young and older, are happily volunteering their time and energy to cut and deliver the wood. I was also told by Steve Rolland that the bus used to transport us to and from the ground had been hired by the Club just for this occasion.

I went home with a somewhat different view of the 'younger' generations of Esperance. Here is a multi-aged group who have raised a great deal of money to improve their Club's facilities and are now giving back to 'those who have given a great deal before them. It has now gone out of its way to entertain and accommodate the Veterans of our community for the past three years and plan to continue for many more years. You have certainly impressed me and the Esperance RSL Sub-Branch.

You can email your **Letters to the Editor** to publicaffairs@rslwa.org.au

If you prefer more traditional means, please post to:

Letters to the Editor

PO Box Z5424

St George's Tce, PERTH WA 6831

The best of your submissions will be published in the next edition of *The Listening Post*.

P.S.: Nothing makes us happier than receiving all your emailed story and letter submissions. But please ensure all The Listening Post email submissions are provided on a Word document. Also, all photos must be 1MB or higher resolution in jpeg form, sent separately as an attachment.

Members and Veterans.

Since the last edition much has transpired within not only Western Australia but also nationally.

FROM THE STATE PRESIDENT



DUNCAN ANDERSON

RSLWA STATE PRESIDENT

Of most importance RSLWA has appointed a new Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Mr Vince Connelly. An Army veteran, Vince has significant private sector experience and was most recently the Federal Member for Stirling, prior to the seat being abolished in a boundary realignment. Vince looks forward to continuing his service to the community as our CEO and on behalf of all members I wish to congratulate Vince on his appointment.

The Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran suicide has released an interim report. Although reflecting what many of us intuitively understand, this report calls for immediate action. The RSL in WA will not only continue to provide services such as welfare and advocacy but will look to take an active leadership role within the support organisation community. By working together, the support organisation community can increase positive outcomes for veterans and their families. I can assure you RSL in WA will remain my absolute priority.

In the spirit of collaboration, RSLWA and Legacy WA will be hosting the 'Better Together' Ball on November 12 this year. The objective of this is to raise funds for both RSLWA and Legacy WA. This event is a continuation of RSL in WA's continued collaboration with Legacy WA. Our objective is that this ball become an annual event that both organisations can not only raise important funds to support operations, but also raise the profile of the partnership and the organisations in the broader community.

The first Presidents forum has been scheduled to coincide with a commemorative event in the Great Southern. All members are welcome to attend future Presidents forums. I intend to hold forums to align with previous regional forums and also hold forums in the south, north and eastern metropolitan areas.

Along with the Board I am focussed on increasing engagement with the veteran community; increased engagement in all forms will have a resulting positive impact on memberships. We are also committed to the sustainability of RSLWA; improving revenue and our cash position is a priority. These two key priorities will see an increased focus on communicating with veterans and the broader community through all channels, this is an exciting and challenging opportunity.

Along with the Board, I look forward to meeting more of you in the coming months.

RSLWA LUNCHEON HONOURS WWII VETERANS



Western Australia's WWII Veterans were the special guests for RSLWA's farewell luncheon for the outgoing Governor the Honorable Kim Beasley AC.

In collaboration with the Department of Veteran Affairs, State President Duncan Anderson extended invitations to some 40 WWII veterans to attend the special event held at ANZAC House.

Duncan gave a welcoming address before the Governor spoke admirably of the significance of the service by the guests in the room who put their lives on the line during that particular theatre of war.

Duncan said the luncheon was a great recognition of some of the State's oldest veterans, which due to its success, will likely become an annual event to acknowledge and honor WWII veterans.

Well known veteran Jack Le Crass was called on to make a spontaneous response to the Governor's address.



WINDS OF CHANGE

BRING NEW RSLWA CEO

The RSLWA's new Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Vince Connelly, has been on board now for almost a month and is rapidly getting across RSLWA's current operations, with one eye also on the future. When he started in the role Mr Connelly said that he felt immensely privileged to be stepping into the role of CEO at RSLWA.

"RSL is a deeply respected, iconic organisation in WA, and we're delivering great services – but our challenge is to remain fit for purpose. Without forgetting those who've gone before us, how do we speak more directly to those who've served recently – or are still serving? That's a question I'm determined to answer".

"As I've started getting around Sub-Branches, I'm hearing some great suggestions about how RSLWA can achieve our updated vision of being relevant, agile, integrated and inclusive. We need to maintain our core services like advocacy, welfare and employment support, but how else can we best engage with younger veterans and their families – including the many thousands who've served in recent operations in Iraq and Afghanistan."

Vince said he welcomes input from veterans, their families and other stakeholders, "Please reach out to me with your suggestions, so that together we can help veterans and their families to thrive as an integral part of our broader community".

Vince received a Bachelor of Arts from the Australian Defence Force Academy and completed officer training, graduating with a Diploma of Personnel Management from the Royal Military College, Duntroon.

He served as a Company Grade Officer on operations in East Timor and the Solomon Islands. He also took part in several military exchange programs including with the United States Marine Corps, the Singapore Armed Forces and the Malaysian Armed Forces.



After leaving the Army, Vince worked with a cross-section of top-tier public and private organisations to help them manage operational and business risks.

While in the corporate sector, Vince continued serving in the Army Reserve, where he was promoted to Major. His final posting was to the SAS Regiment at Campbell Barracks, WA.

Moving into politics, Vince served as a Federal member of the House of Representatives for the Division of Stirling in Western Australia from 2019 until the seat's abolition in 2022.

Vince has a wife, Peta, and three teenage children. He has been an active member of the Scarborough Surf Life Saving Club, Legacy WA, the North Beach RSL Sub-Branch, the Lions Club of North Beach and the Veterans Transition Centre.

**RSL IS A DEEPLY
RESPECTED, ICONIC
ORGANISATION IN
WA, AND WE'RE
DELIVERING GREAT
SERVICES.**

NEW MEMBERS BOOST RSLWA BOARD

Recent new additions to the RSLWA Board means half the board is now made up of younger Veterans, including a second woman.

Miquela Riley joins the board along with Matt Moran, Stephen Barton and Co Opted member Neil Gerrard.

They join existing board members Wayne Gibson, Robyn Steenbach, Bill Collidge RFD, Ken Morris and Co Opted member Tim Curtis.



Vice President Wayne Gibson



Bill Collidge RFD



Wayne Tarr RFD ED

*Raising funds for our
veterans and their families*



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RSLWA & LEGACY WA



Date Saturday 12th November 2022

Time 6.30pm until midnight

Venue River View Room
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(L-R) Neil Gerrard, Doug Simpson JP, Ken Morris, Robyn Steenbach, State President Duncan Anderson, Stephen Barton (back), CEO Vince Connelly, Matt Moran.

RSLWA State President Duncan Anderson said that with so many younger Veterans from conflicts such as Iraq and Afghanistan, and those still serving, it's essential that RSLWA remained relevant to Veterans and their families from all generations and all theatres of conflict.

"The RSL in WA is at a point of inflection – building on the foundation of 106 years of service, we have the opportunity to not only continue supporting veterans and their families, but also empower and energise those who want to do more," Duncan said.

"Programs like our employment service and mentoring for Veteran small business start-ups are part of what we're already doing, it's a start. But, how do we unleash the potential of our Veterans for the benefit of our whole WA community? That's what we're seeking to answer.

"The RSL in WA has responsibility for diversifying revenue streams to ensure RSL remains viable for future generations, with all revenue flowing directly back to assisting Veterans and their families.

"For example, our recently completed \$30m Anzac House building on St Georges Terrace, provides function, catering and conference facilities that are second to none."

The State President is supported by Vice President Wayne Gibson.

Trustees Doug Simpson JP, Wayne Tarr RFD ED and Phillip Orchard AM provide a guiding hand to the Board. To read more about RSLWA Board members visit the RSLWA website at www.rslwa.org.au/about-us/board-trustees/



MIQUELA RILEY

is a management consultant and Navy veteran. Miquela served in the permanent Navy as a Maritime Warfare Officer for 13 years, as well as continued Naval reserve service. After leaving the Navy in 2019, Miquela was employed as a Project Manager in the construction industry, working on complex construction projects worth nearly \$400 million across multiple green and brownfield sites.

Miquela sought political office at the 2021 WA state election and has a keen interest in politics and public policy. She is currently employed as a Management Consultant in a Tier One consulting firm. Miquela holds a Bachelor of Business and two master's degrees in Project Management and Business.

MATT MORAN

is the Head of Strategy and Government Relations at Luerssen Australia and a Visiting Fellow at the UWA Defence and Security Institute. Before joining Luerssen Australia, he was the inaugural Executive Director of Defence West.

Matt is an Australian Army Afghanistan Veteran and a journalist, a Walkley Award winner. Matt deployed to Afghanistan as a public affairs officer in 2009 and East Timor in 2007. He has a Bachelor of Arts from Curtin University and has started a Masters of Business Administration at the University of Western Australia.

STEPHEN BARTON

joined the University of Western Australia Regiment in 1999. A Reserve graduate of Royal Military College Duntroon, he was commissioned into the Australian Intelligence Corps in 2001. From 2006 to 2010 he undertook full-time service, much of it with the 1st Intelligence Battalion. He deployed on operations to the Solomon Islands and Afghanistan.

He is currently General Manager, Strategic Government Partnerships with Programmed and is also a part-time Member of the Administrative Appeals Tribunal.



RESILIENCE RETREAT



INSTILLS LIFELONG LESSONS

An all-inclusive three-day retreat was designed to instil lifelong lessons in resilience, leadership and teamwork proved to be just what younger Veterans wanted.

Delivered by Mettle Global in partnership with RSLWA and sponsored by the Department of Veteran Affairs under the Supporting Younger Veterans Grant, the retreat was inundated with applications as soon as it was released through social media channels.

The Younger Veterans Retreat, held in August, applied the evidence-based Resilience Shield methodology with the experience designed to equip younger veterans with the necessary life skills and tools needed to thrive in our complex and unforgiving world.

Mettle Global Partner, Veteran Tim Curtis, said the quality of applicants, their experience and stories were heart-warming and humbling.

“We knew immediately knew that we had offered something quite special and necessary to the veteran community,” he said.

“On a cold winter’s night with the waves crashing in the distance, in his quiet and unassuming manner, Greg Wallace from Connected By welcomed us into his space for the initial orientation.





“It took immense bravery for many of the applicants to show up to our first meeting, as we had purposely kept the retreat programme vague, the veterans only knew they would travel by bus to a location an hour south of Perth and for almost three days they would be immersed in Resilience Shield theory and practical experiences.”

The retreat was three days of intense learning and philosophical wisdom where Tim Curtis and Ben Pronk explored learnings from amazing lived experiences combined with cutting-edge academic, scientific and medical research.

Participants explored their own individual resilience through the Resilience Shield Survey and they worked to discover ways they could enhance their overall Mind, Body, Social and Professional Layers of resilience.

Minister for Veterans Affairs, Matt Keogh visited the Retreat to have lunch with participants and address their concerns in a public forum.

“Our mission was ensuring that every single person left with an unfair advantage that they could apply in life,” Tim said.

“Feedback so far suggests we achieved that, with people sharing ‘the best experience of my life’ and ‘absolutely life changing.’”

Tim extended thanks to everyone who made this opportunity possible and to those who trusted organisers to get the job done.

“The Veteran participant is correct, thank you doesn’t seem enough. Without everyone’s support this would not have been possible,” he said.

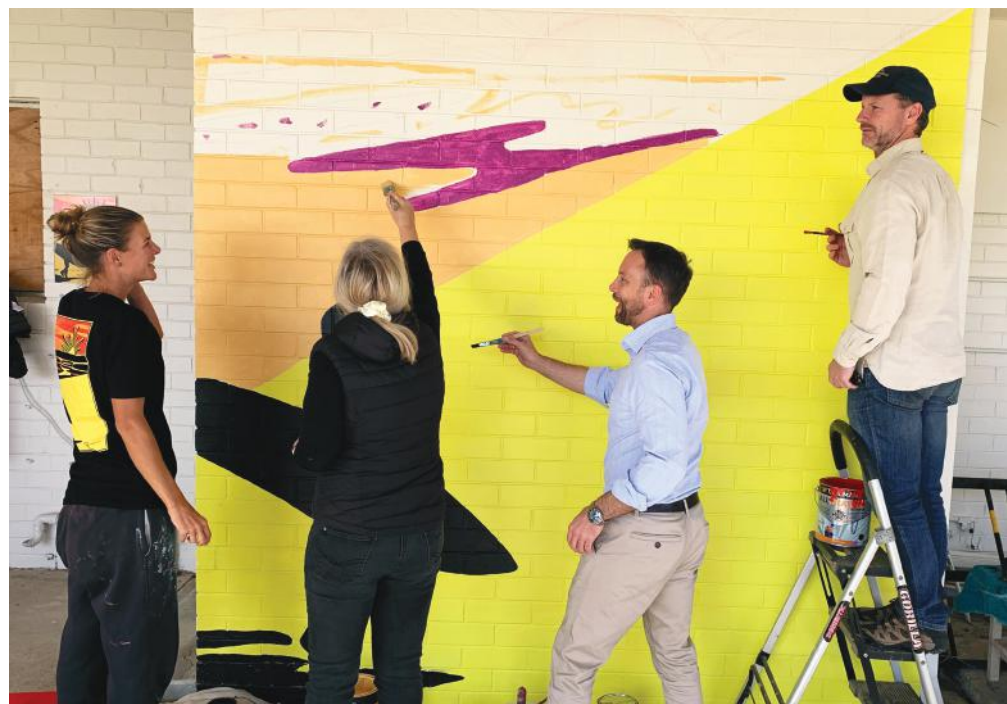


Tim extended a special thank you to Dr Richard Magtengaard who guided participants along the way with his gentle wisdom. Also to RSLWA CEO Vince Connelly and State President Duncan Anderson for traveling to Pinjarra to join the closing BBQ.

“The experience required immense courage from a group of total strangers from various walks of life. It required trust in our team, trust in each other and a willingness to ‘go always a little further,’” Tim said.

The weekend had moments of belly laughter of frustration and pushing through injury and pain to complete early morning PT with Jas Pelham and included coaching sessions with Ryan Burke and Ryan Wilson, experiencing vulnerability during moments of sharing and gratitude with Rob Redenbach. Other activities included deep meditation with Erin Hoey, journaling and understanding psychology with Ciara Mitchel, Art Therapy with Olivia Robinson and moments of reflection, fear, and friendship.

“We walked away from this experience with immense pride in ourselves and in each other,” Tim said.



RSL VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

Rewarding work for every veteran and their immediate family



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Take advantage of our free career support services, specialist coaches and gain access to our extensive employer network.

The RSL Veterans' Employment Program has received grant funding from the Australian Government and is free to access. You do not need to be a member of the RSL for us to help you.

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RSL
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Australian Government
Department of Veterans' Affairs

SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT PROGRAMME



A pilot programme designed to assist veterans and their partners looking to establish their own business was launched by RSLWA in the Co-working Space at ANZAC House at the end of July.

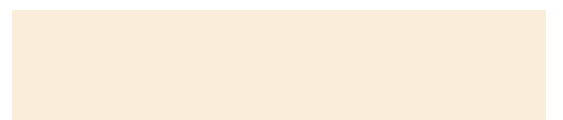
The free programme, which has links to industries and is supported by the Small Business Development Corporation, is tailored to veterans and their partners.

The first session on Monday, 25 July took participants through the ‘must have’ and ‘might needs’ required when setting up a new business.

RSLWA new CEO Vince Connelly dropped in on the session to get an understanding of what the participants sought to gain from the programme.

“Veterans bring amazing skills and attitudes back to society, and to the workforce.” Vince said.

“These sessions are tailored to help harness veterans’ energy by providing guidance and support to their new business endeavours. It’s also helping us showcase the amazing new co-working spaces and resources in Anzac House”.





ENERFLOW DIGS DEEP TO SUPPORT VETERANS

Perth-based resource sector supplier, Enerflow Mining Services, is digging even deeper in its support for WA's Veteran community with a recent \$10,000 donation through its RSLWA R9400 bucket project.





The refurbished Liebherr R9400 excavator bucket, weighing about 23 tonnes and up to 64 tonnes fully loaded with iron ore, can easily make a mole hill out of a mountain and is now a major part of the production fleet for one of its valued Pilbara clients.

With the current high demand for mining equipment in Western Australia, Enerflow Mining Services has found it viable to rebuild used mining equipment, with the bucket rebuild being the company's second project supporting Veterans.

Earlier this year, Enerflow Mining Services purchased a D65 Drill Rig from WA's Pilbara region which was stripped back to a bare chassis and given a ground-up rebuild, which took three months with all major components being replaced with either new or service exchange parts.

The D65 started its new contract in July and will spend the next 12 months working in the Pilbara, during which monthly donations will be continually made to RSLWA for the term of the Drill's contract.

Receiving the \$10,000 cheque was among the first duties for RSLWA's new CEO Vince Connelly.

"This is a very generous sponsorship program and we are extremely grateful for our partnership with Enerflow," Vince said.

"While the donations enable us to continue to provide programs that support Veterans and their families, these projects also raise awareness of RSLWA and the work we do.

"Many Veterans transition from the military to WA's resources sector, so it's great that the RSLWA brand is out there showing that our veterans are recognised and supported."

Enerflow Director Gareth Moody said he wanted to do something different when he initially reached out to RSLWA with the proposal to support Veterans through donations from some of the rebuilds.

"We were excited with the Drill Rig partnership with RSLWA and we were looking forward to future projects, so the R9400 bucket project was a very obvious one for us," Gareth said.



TORNADO ALLEY



All the king's horses and all the king's men may not have been able to put Humpty Dumpty back together but, thanks to the reassembly skills of the Queen's crack team, WA is now home to a unique piece of aviation history. **Norman Burns** discovered the new exhibit at Bull Creek's Aviation and Heritage Museum is proving quite the drawcard.

Earlier this year, Bull Creek's fascinating Aviation and Heritage Museum took delivery of an ex-Royal Air Force Tornado GR4, an aircraft that was one of the frontline weapons for the West during the Cold War standoff. Carrying a crew of two (pilot and navigator/weapons officer), measuring 16.7m long with a wingspan of 8.6m and its distinctive tailfin soaring almost 6m high, the Tornado is a formidable sight.

With a maximum speed of Mach 2.2 (2300km/h) and a range of 3900km, the Tornado was initially designed to do the unthinkable – skim at supersonic speed under radar to drop nuclear bombs on Soviet targets if the Cold War turned hot. Thankfully, those missions never eventuated, but the Tornado did see active service in Iraq (2001, when six out of 48 aircraft were lost, and in 2003), then in Libya in 2011 and as recently as 2019 over Syria. While the Royal Air Force retired all of its Tornados in 2019 after nearly 40 years' service, the aircraft is still flexing its muscle today on active duty with the air forces of Germany, Italy and Saudi Arabia.

So just how did a tiny (if impressive) bastion of aviation history on the other side of the world acquire the Tornado, particularly given it's the only one on display anywhere in the world outside of the United Kingdom. It's a story of Aussie 'chutzpah', good luck, some great connections and proof that the dedication and hard work of the volunteers

and staff who run the Bull Creek museum are reaping rewards. Meeting Ian Craig, who oversees the Clear Skies division of RAAFA which looks after the museum, at the Tornado display reinforces just what a 'coup' he and his team have achieved.

"We heard that the RAF was going to gift Tornados to museums – they had about 21 decommissioned aircraft – and although we weren't that confident, we thought we'd give it our best shot," says Ian.

With around 63 applicants (the majority in the UK), Bull Creek's chances would have seemed slim. Even if successful, there would be a mountain of red tape and logistical issues (shipping and delivery for example) to overcome. Undaunted, the team sent a letter outlining their bid (and spruiking the museum's pedigree and highlighting its collection) to the RAF officer in charge of selecting the recipients, Wing Commander Erica Ferguson, head of the RAF's heritage and stories.

"Apparently, she was going through the letters and read ours and kind of tossed it aside... but after reading the next letter, she picked it up again," says Ian.



Bull Creek had an ace in the pack – its magnificent display of a Lancaster Bomber, the only one in the world that you can take a guided tour in, and that touched a chord with Wg Cmdr Ferguson.

“I went online and read about the museum and its Lancaster and was drawn by the connection, the Tornado that has been gifted to the museum was part of the famous 617 Dam Buster Squadron that devastated Germany’s wartime efforts. I just loved the story that could be told by bringing these two incredible aircraft together in one collection, she said.

There was another connection, too, between the Tornado and Royal Australian Air Force personnel, some stationed at RAAF Base Pearce in Perth’s north.

“Some flight instructors had flown the Tornado and Wg Cmdr Ferguson knew them personally. There are also many retired technicians, engineers and exchange pilots throughout Australia who worked on or flew the Tornado, so there is a real connection to the aircraft,” says Ian.

Even with the decision to grant Bull Creek the aircraft (serial number ZG791), Ian and his team still had many hoops to jump through.

“Because Tornado was a joint production by Britain, Italy and West Germany (under the Panavia consortium), each country had to give permission; plus, we needed Pentagon approval because some of the components were US-made,” he says.

With all the paperwork complete, the next step was shipping the now-dismantled aircraft to Perth. However, the COVID pandemic had other ideas, and the project was ‘frozen’ for nearly two years. Ian’s patience paid off and earlier this year the Tornado began the long journey to Fremantle on a container ship. But with the Tornado literally within their

sights at Fremantle Port, the team faced another hurdle – Agricultural inspectors discovered some seeds in the crates, so they had to wait another five weeks as the shipment was quarantined until they figured out what the seeds were.

It would have been strange indeed if plant contamination had ended the Tornado’s journey when enemy fire – being shot at over Iraq – could not. Thankfully, in mid-May, about two years after Wg Cmdr Ferguson had been swayed by the great story behind the Bull Creek museum, several tonnes of knocked-down Tornado GR4 arrived in crates at the Air Force Memorial Estate site for the not-so-simple task of reassembling the aircraft... Which is where the Queen’s JARTS specialists (Joint Aircraft Recovery and Transportation Squadron, led by Wg Cmdr Ferguson) came in, bringing the Tornado ‘back to life’ and briefing museum volunteers on literally the nuts and bolts of what is now an impressive exhibit that has already proved a smash hit with visitors. And there’s more to come for the Tornado, with the RAF agreeing to supply two engines (static only folks) to complete the exhibit.

“This aircraft was flown by the now head of the RAF and he insisted the Tornado needed to be complete if on display,” said Ian.

“More than 5800 people went through the museum in July, that’s a huge number. People love to come up and run their hand along the Tornado fuselage, as if they’re stroking a cat. That tactile element is unique.”

And even with Tornado-fever, the Aviation and Heritage Museum isn’t resting on its laurels, with plans to add several more iconic aircraft, although Ian can’t reveal details at this stage. Watch this space...

The RAAFA Aviation Heritage Museum

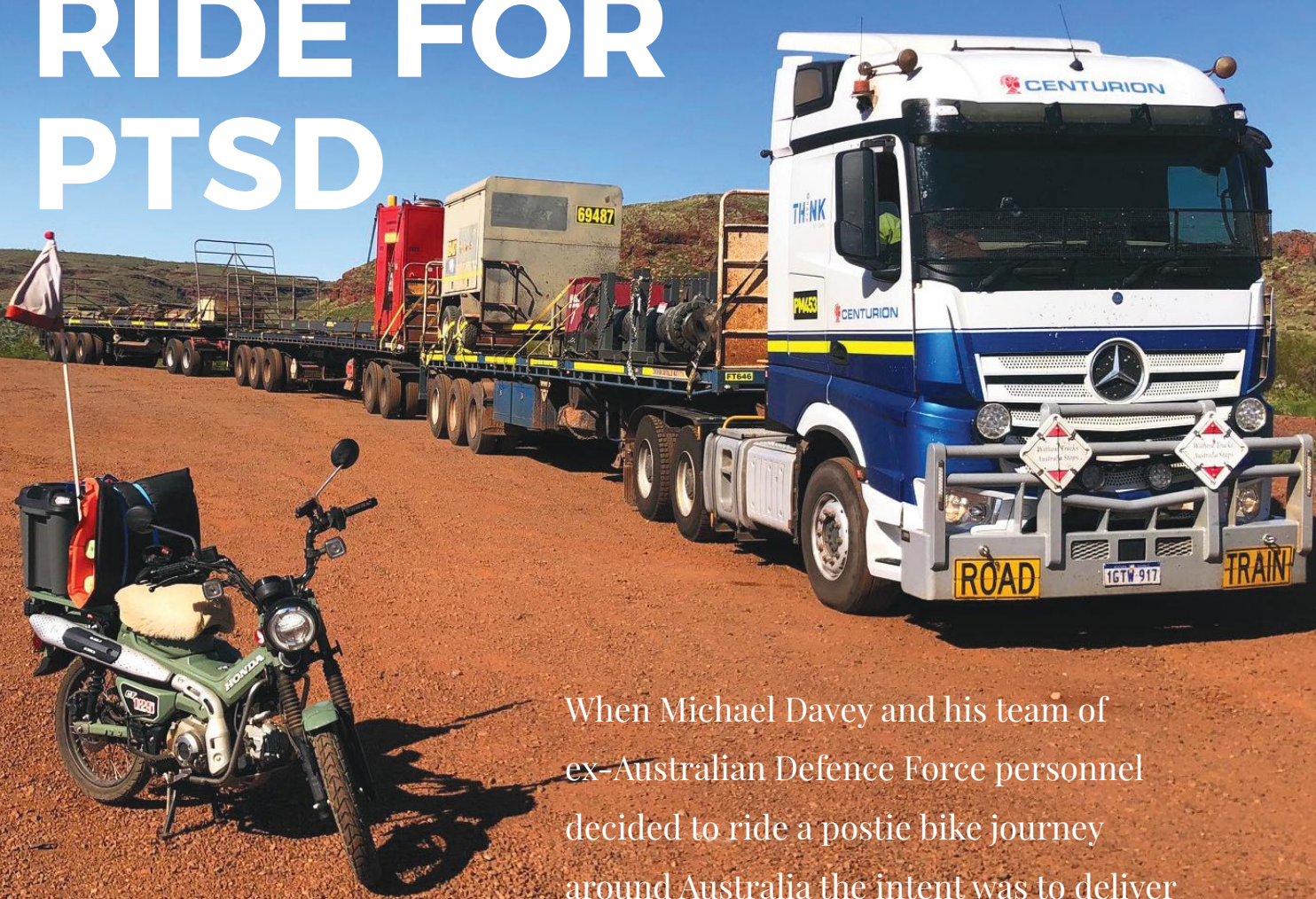
2 Bull Creek Drive, is open Mon-Sun 10:00am - 4:00pm

Visit aviationmuseum.org.au or phone 9311 4470

Image Credit
Norman Burns/Infused Communications/RAAWA



A POSTIE BIKE RIDE FOR PTSD



When Michael Davey and his team of ex-Australian Defence Force personnel decided to ride a postie bike journey around Australia the intent was to deliver a strong message about Veteran suicide. Rachel Hogan chatted with them as they passed through Western Australia.



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Leaving HMAS Albatross on the South Coast of NSW on June 18 this year, the intrepid riders, Michael (Mick) Davey from Nowra, NSW, David Mace from Adelaide and Joseph Kolossa from Ingham, Queensland. The trio, who met as 16-year-olds while serving at HMAS Albatross, were joined by their adventurous support crew Rhonda Green, Cherre Hawkins and Barbara Davey.

“We signed up to the Navy as 15-year-olds then a year later we met at Albatross and became the best of mates,” Mick said.

Mick Davey was the brainchild of the ride, having once before raised more than \$51,000 on a pedal-powered bike ride to support kids living with cancer. The team’s mission was to raise funds for Defence personnel and Veterans suffering trauma from their Service.

“While we are raising awareness and funds for those in need, we want to destigmatise depression and anxiety and inspire and encourage people who find themselves in a dark place to start a conversation with a friend, and in the process seek professional help,” says Mick.

The Postie Bike ride is raising money for Soldier On, a registered charity which helps Defence Personnel and Veterans who suffer trauma from their service. The Journey largely follows Highway 1 in a counter-clockwise loop of Australia and spans almost 15,000 kilometres to complete a full loop of Australia.

“We served our country and now we want to help people who served or are serving, but find themselves in a dark place,” Mick said.

“We’re trying to inspire defence personnel and veterans to start a conversation, to chat with someone, that’s the single most important thing you can do. You’re not weak if you’re suffering depression and it’s not weak to seek professional help, that’s a sign of strength.



Minister for Veterans' Affairs the Hon Matt Keogh MP welcomed the team to Perth.



“My son told me it was good we’re supporting Soldier On because he told me a story of a young veteran who came back from Afghanistan suffering from PTSD and took his own life, then his best friend committed suicide in sympathy and that breaks my heart.”

The Soldier On group advocate for veteran suicide prevention and was a natural pick for the trio who will also be standing behind the Soldier On motto of HELP - Health and Wellbeing, Employment Support, Learning and Education and Participation, which results in social connection.

The Soldier On group advocate for veteran suicide prevention and was a natural pick for the trio who will also be standing behind the Soldier On motto of HELP - Health and Wellbeing, Employment Support, Learning and Education and Participation, which results in social connection.

Mick said the trio decided they would dress as ‘Where’s Wally’ for five weeks of the six week ride.

“We’ve been a bunch of Wally’s riding around. It’s something we’re doing because people suffering mental illness are hard to find, they’re trying to blend in and hide their symptoms, so that’s the metaphor.”

But the journey around Australia wasn’t always smooth sailing.

“We crossed multiple causeways that had crocodiles in them and got severely dehydrated in Darwin. My bike blew up in Townsville and Joseph’s blew up in Ingham. There have been multiple mechanical issues along the way. We do big kilometres every day, up to 690 some days but generally aim for around 500.

Mick also reflected on how much he’s been touched by the generosity of Australians on his journey. “We’ve just been amazed at the generosity all the way around the country, we’ve had pretty much free accommodation and even people paying our petrol, it’s just been amazing” Mr Davey said.

To learn more about Michael’s journey or to donate, visit: apostieride4PTSD.com.au



LIGHT THROUGH THE STORM

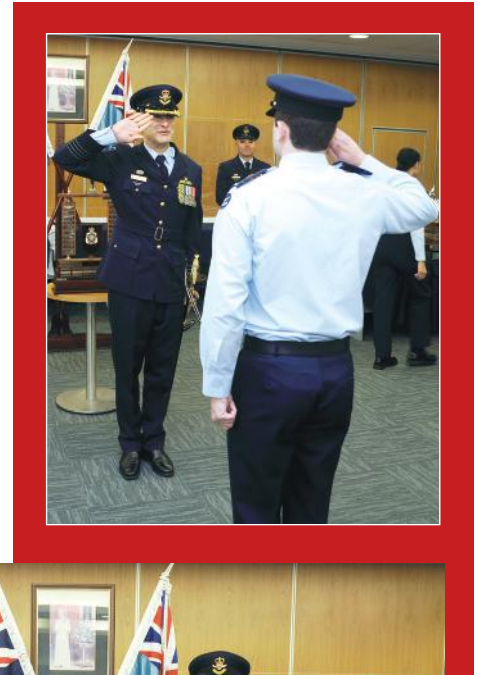
AS NEWEST ADF PILOTS RECEIVE THEIR WINGS



The storms dominating the Perth skies couldn't deter the spirit of the fourteen students from No. 266 Australian Defence Force Pilot's Course as they received their wings and graduated from No. 2 Flying Training School at RAAF Base Pearce at the end of last month.

by Peta Magorian





The parade was held inside the Airmen's Mess and the students marched into the room and took up their positions for the ceremony with uniform precision, before welcoming the Commanding Officer, Wing Commander Jay Tuffley and Reviewing Officer Group Captain Phil Trigge.

**FOUR GRADUATES
RECEIVED AWARDS
FOR THEIR
ACHIEVEMENTS
DURING THE COURSE.**



RSLWA's new CEO, Vince Connelly, attended the ceremony and presented PLTOFF Jeremy Njegac with the Returned Services League Trophy for Leadership.

Pilot Officer (PLTOFF) Riley Turnham was awarded the Fit-to-Fight Physical Training award and PLTOFF Ginte Waugh was awarded the D.J Friedrichs Aerobatics Trophy for aerobatic skill.

PLTOFF Angus Johnston received the Royal Australian Air Force Association (WA Division) trophy for most improved and PLTOFF Daniel Carbonatto-Bowkett was awarded the Defence Force Welfare Association Prize for displaying the highest level of navigational skills, the SJ Goble Memorial Trophy as most proficient pilot, the G. Scutt/E. Davey Memorial Trophy for

most proficient at instrument flying and the BP (Australia) Ltd Trophy for the highest aggregate of academic marks.

It came as no surprise when PLTOFF Daniel Carbonatto-Bowkett took out the Pilatus Aircraft Trophy as course dux.

Air Force Training Group Chief of Staff, Group Captain Phil Trigge addressed all those in attendance, acknowledging the centurion graduates present from No. 266 course and the family and friends that had supported the current graduates to achieve the ultimate goal of receiving their wings on parade.

"You have successfully completed a course which is known to be one of the most difficult and respected courses in the ADF and around the world," GPCAPT Trigge said.

"Your wings are your licence to learn: there are no dull or easy postings for pilots in the ADF. Make the most of every day, honour those you serve with and lead by giving your best; remember that your careers have the potential to make a real difference at a time when your country may need you most".

This milestone marks the beginning of an exciting career for the fourteen newest pilots as they move on to join their new Royal Australian Air Force and Royal Australian Navy squadrons across Australia.

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A Gleaming Salute to The Lancaster Bomber and Its Legendary Mission

On 17th May 1943, a squadron of WWII's most successful bombers prepared to embark on Operation Chastise. Their daring mission? Use a specially developed "bouncing bomb" to destroy the dams of the Ruhr Industrial area, thereby crippling the Germans' hydro-electric power, steel-making and canal transport. Flying at only 25 metres high to avoid radar detection, the courageous RCAF and RAF crews and iconic Lancaster Bombers soared into history as the Dambusters. Now, we honour these brave men and their crucial mission and their legendary planes with a handsome men's diamond ring.

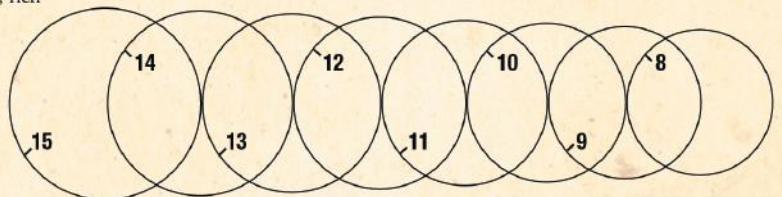
For its innovative strategy, daring execution, and technical ingenuity in its successful use of the famed "bouncing bomb," the RAF's Operation Chastise is widely hailed by historians and military authorities as the most brilliant Air Force mission of World War II. In honour of history's heroes, The Bradford Exchange presents this uniquely-designed men's ring. It features 14K gold plating, rich

rhodium plating, and two genuine diamonds flanking a raised, golden silhouette of the bomber, which gleams on the crown of the ring, soaring on an inlay of genuine black onyx. Completing the design are the engraved words "Dambusters" and "Operation Chastise" along with the date of the mission.

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AUSTRALIA'S AMBASSADOR OF JAPAN VISITS ANZAC HOUSE



The Highgate RSL Sub-Branch hosted the Ambassador of Japan to Australia His Excellency Mr Shingo Yamagami as guest speaker for its August lunch event at ANZAC House.

Highgate President and State War Memorial Deputy Warden Geoff Simpson OAM opened the event and introduced Mr Yamagami who was accompanied by his wife Kaoru.

The Ambassador gave a very thought-provoking speech about the importance of the Japanese/Australian relationship, a vision for free and open Indo-Pacific and a rules-based maritime order undertaken through the security dialogue known as QUAD, along with other defence related issues.

While in WA, the Ambassador and consular staff travelled to Broome to acknowledge the 80th Anniversary of the Japanese Air Raid of Broome, which was cancelled this year due COVID-19 border closures.

While in Broome Mr Yamagami visited the Broome RSL and the local Japanese cemetery.



(L-R) Highgate President Geoff Simpson OAM His Excellency Shingo Yamagami, his wife Kaoru Yamagami and Highgate Senior Vice President John Cleary.



(L-R) Consul General of Japan in Perth Toru Suzuki with Australia-Japan Society WA members David Wilson and Heather Glass.



Mount Hawthorn members at the luncheon.



CONGRESS 2022

RSLWA's Congress 2022 was well attended this year with some 200 people making up the largest representation of Sub-Bran­ches in many years.

Despite the showers, the annual event started on the Friday evening with a well-attended wreath-laying ceremony in the Court of Contemplation at ANZAC House in the Perth CBD.

Out-going RSLWA CEO John McCourt welcomed guests before wreaths were laid by WA State President Duncan Anderson, National President Maj Gen Greg Melick AO RFD SC, Victoria State President Dr Robert Webster OAM and SA State President Cheryl Cates.

Mr Anderson read the Ode before bugler, David Scott, played the Last Post followed by Rouse after a minute's silence.

The wreath-laying was followed by camaraderie and drinks at the ANZAC Club.

On Saturday, Congress got underway with the Colour Party leading in the State President, National President and Guest of Honour the outgoing WA Governor the Hon. Kim Beasley AC.

The morning sessions started with the Governor's address, before the awards presentations, including 10 Life Memberships, four 50-Year Certificates and one 60-Year Certificate.

Presentations for the day concluded with the National President Maj Gen Greg Melick and President State President Duncan Anderson presenting the outgoing Governor of WA with an Honorary Life Membership to RSL, acknowledging his ongoing support for RSLWA, which he was greatly honoured to receive.





LIFE MEMBERSHIP

Life Membership of the RSL is indeed an honour and reflects the League's admiration and respect for long, continued and outstanding service and were awarded to:

Mr Chris Bruce – Nollamara

Mr Reginald Lendrum Cream – Bedford-Morley

Mr Gregory Ronald Gough – North Beach

Mrs Margot Harness – Highgate

Mr Michael Robert Harness – Highgate

Mr Roy Edwin Jewell - Bellevue

Mr John Lewis – Nollamara

Mr Stephen Toon – City of Belmont

Mr Keith Vomiero – Broome

Mr Raymond Thomas Morgan – Three Springs Arrino (posthumous)



National President Maj Gen Greg Melick and President State President Duncan Anderson presenting the outgoing Governor of WA with an Honorary Life Membership to RSL





A Service or Life Member who has given no less than 50 and 60 years continuous service as a member of the League may be granted this Special Service Award by the National Board.

50 YEAR CERTIFICATES

- Wayne Gibson – Jurien Bay
- Peter Long – North Beach
- Alfred Mainstone – Bunbury
- Robert White – City of Mandurah

60 YEAR CERTIFICATE

- Mervyn J. Andre – Esperance



100TH ANNIVERSARY CERTIFICATES

Presented by the National RSL President, Greg Melick and State President, Duncan Anderson.

- Bencubbin Sub-Branch
- Boulder Sub-Branch
- Cottesloe Sub-Branch
- Darkan Sub-Branch
- Dumbleyung Sub-Branch
- Dwellingup Sub-Branch
- Kelmscott Roleystone Sub-Branch
- Pingelly Sub-Branch
- Port Hedland Sub-Branch
- Wyalkatchem Sub-Branch





SUB-BRANCH TROPHIES

Perpetual trophies were awarded to Sub-Branches based on ability to meet deadlines, location and size of membership with the Poppy and ANZAC Appeals.

The Brigadier Arnold Potts Cup – Bedford-Morley Sub-Branch

The Colonel Collett Trophy – Busselton

The Geraldton Shield – Three Springs Arrino Sub-Branch

The Mary Cornell Trophy – Quinns Rocks who retain the trophy

The LT COL Ken Bladen Recruiting Shield – Karratha Sub-Branch

The Anne Leach Trophy – Moora Sub-Branch

The Denis Connelly Recruiting Shield – Claremont Sub-Branch

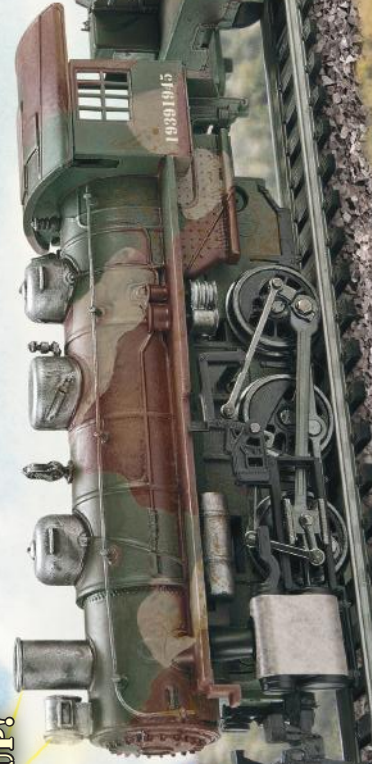


ALL ABOARD FOR VICTORY!

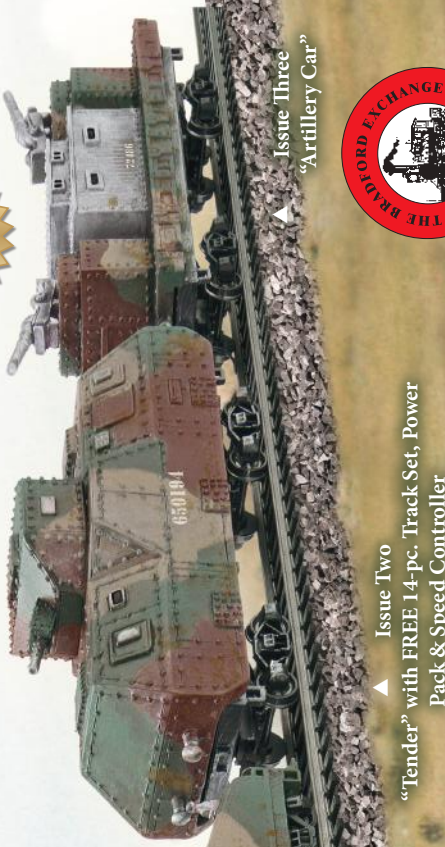
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FRIENDS FOR LIFE

Many veterans can attest to lifelong friendships that were formed from days of service, but one group of diners at the ANZAC Club have been catching up regularly for the past 54 years.

The group all served together with 3 RAR in the mid-1960s and have met on a regular basis since their discharge, but recently visited the ANZAC Club for their regular mess lunch venue.

Group member Brian Jennings said it was always great catching up and maintaining the friendship and bond they have.

“We decided to meet at the ANZAC Club, as some of the group have not previously attended, as they live in the country – Toodyay and Denmark. All agreed that it was well worth it, and the ANZAC Club is highly recommended.”



(L-R around the table) Peter Johnston, Brian Jennings, Paul McGuinness, guest John Rolfe, Vic Bruce (centre), Michael Green, John McQueen, Michael Healy, Dave Chitty

Photographed recently, the group had invited North Beach RSL Sub-Branch President John Rolfe to join them.

The group from the Sub-Branch is planning a larger lunch that will enable more Members to experience the ANZAC Club and to join the fun.



The 2/16th Battalion AIF Association extends an open invitation to all Association members, families and friends to attend the

Commemorative Functions for the 80th Anniversary of Kokoda Campaign

Friday, 16 September

6.30pm

Brigadier Arnold Potts Oration
Perth Convention and
Exhibition Centre (PCEC)

Saturday, 17 September

2.30pm

Australian Army Band Perth
with Pipes and Drums
Afternoon Concert
Government House Ballroom

Sunday, 18 September

11am

Kokoda Commemorative
Service
Flame of Remembrance
Kings Park

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AMCHAM BUSINESS LUNCHEON

WA leaders in the defence industry were able to participate in a rare and unparalleled opportunity when The Hon Dr Brendan Nelson AO was keynote speaker at an AMCHAM luncheon held at ANZAC House in August.

Attendees heard how they can grow their business in Australia and internationally when Dr Nelson discussed the strength of the Australia-US Alliance, and opportunities for American and Australian businesses particularly following the AUKUS announcement.

RSLWA State President Duncan Anderson and CEO Vince Connelly attended the event, which was partnered by Defence West, along with their invited guests.





DR BRENDAN NELSON AO

Dr Nelson is president of Boeing Australia, New Zealand and South Pacific. He is the senior company leader in the Oceania region and is the chairman of the board for Boeing Australia Holdings.

In this role, Dr Nelson coordinates all Boeing activities, leads government relations and directs the implementation of Boeing's strategy to expand its local presence and grow the business.

Prior to joining Boeing, Nelson served as director of the Australian War Memorial for seven years. Prior to this, he was the Australian Ambassador to Belgium, Luxembourg, the European Union, and NATO (2010–12). Apart from overseeing a major transformation in Australia's relationships with the European Union and NATO, Dr Nelson forged deep links with the communities of Flanders, where almost 14,000 Australians lost their lives during the First World War.

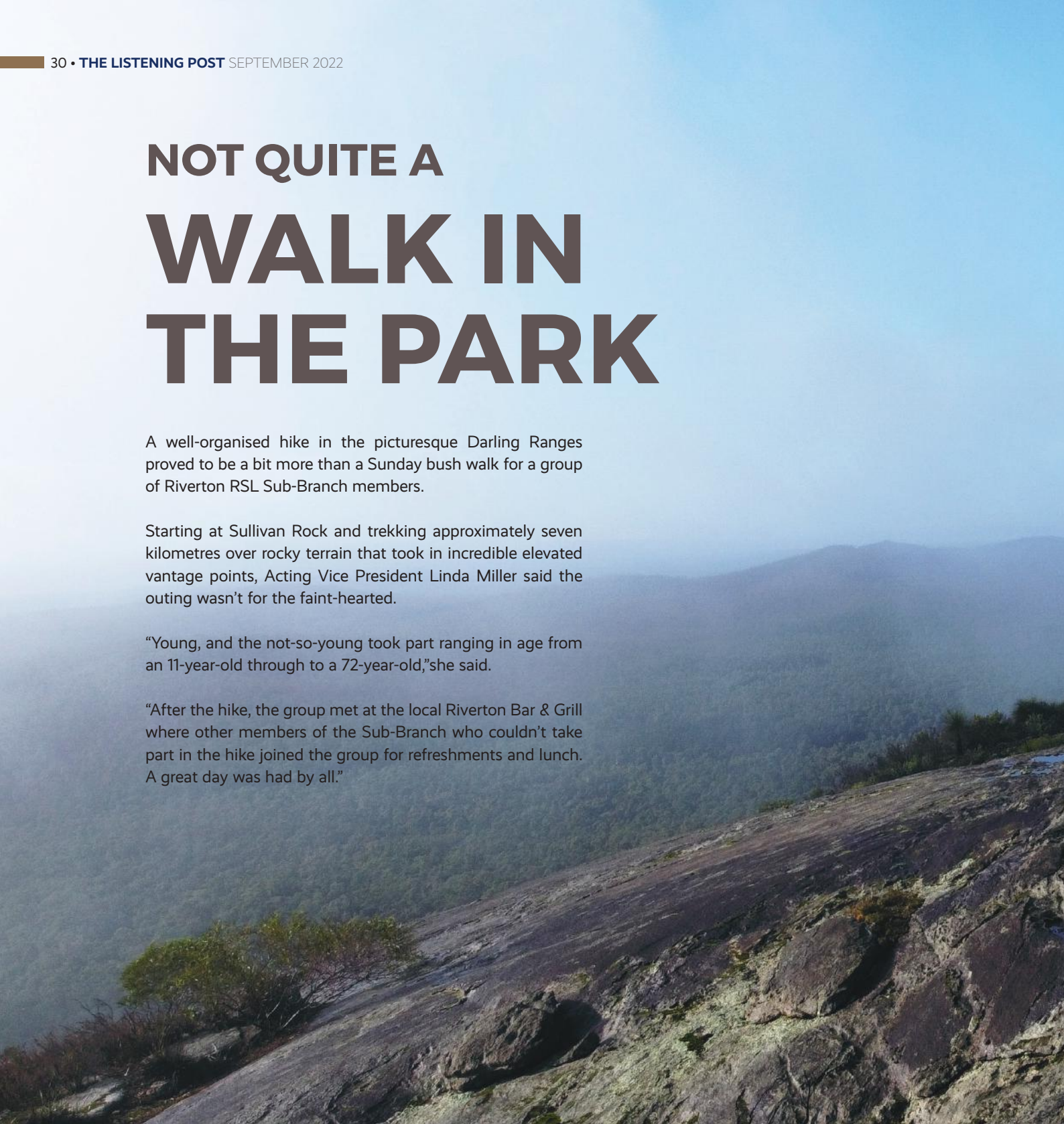
NOT QUITE A WALK IN THE PARK

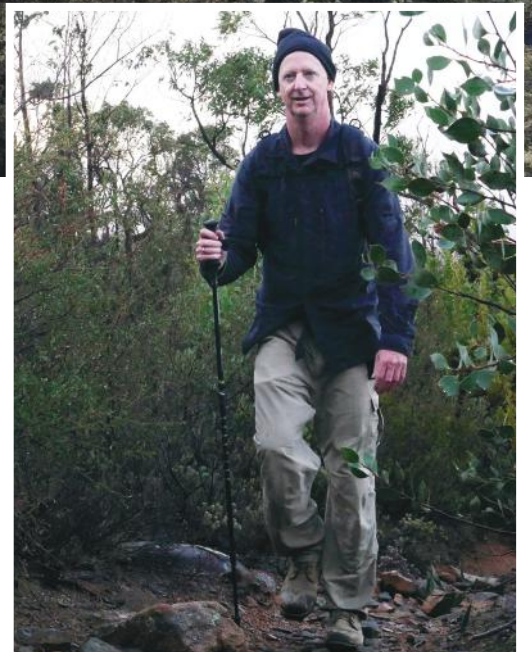
A well-organised hike in the picturesque Darling Ranges proved to be a bit more than a Sunday bush walk for a group of Riverton RSL Sub-Branch members.

Starting at Sullivan Rock and trekking approximately seven kilometres over rocky terrain that took in incredible elevated vantage points, Acting Vice President Linda Miller said the outing wasn't for the faint-hearted.

"Young, and the not-so-young took part ranging in age from an 11-year-old through to a 72-year-old," she said.

"After the hike, the group met at the local Riverton Bar & Grill where other members of the Sub-Branch who couldn't take part in the hike joined the group for refreshments and lunch. A great day was had by all."





When someone reaches 103 years of age you can be pretty certain that many and varied experiences were endured during such a long life. RSLWA Veteran Liaison Officer **John McPherson** discovered just that when he was invited to the Hillview Life Style Village in High Wycombe for a morning tea for Arthur Leggett, to honour and congratulate him on how he had lived his life in the service of others.



DON'T CRY FOR ME

ARTHUR LEGGETT



For the boy from Bingara in Northern New South Wales the road has not been easy but when it tested his mettle at different times from boyhood to adulthood he overcame it with a smile and a can-do attitude.

His book “Don’t Cry for Me” is a wonderful read for anyone who simply wants to be inspired by a life well lived. What I particularly liked was Arthur’s ability to share his life with us “through his eyes”; as in describing how a young boy would see a man in his 30s as an “old bloke”. The book is available at no cost through Kindle by typing in the name Arthur Leggett into Google and following the prompts. You will also find some wonderful video interviews with Arthur in this Google search.

Some of the anecdotes that came out at Arthur’s morning tea often related to his time with the Boy Scouts, his long association with the Masonic Lodge, and, of course, his four-and-a-half years as a prisoner of war in Germany after being captured on Crete.

As a 22-year-old, Arthur tells the story in a video interview of how he and his comrades were captured following the Battle of Crete.

“A German officer came down and told us he had trench mortars up there and machine guns up there (pointing in a couple of different directions) and if you want a fight you can have it, but I suggest you just come in quietly as prisoners of war and said he’d be back in an hour’s time.” They obviously took his advice.

Arthur also says in the interview: “There was a suspenseful period of time between when we handed ourselves in to be prisoners of war and when we arrived in Germany and were registered with the Red Cross.

“No-one knew where we were or anything and you could have simply been shot and listed as killed in action.”

After being liberated by the Americans in March 1945, Arthur returned to Fremantle and told his Mum: “Well Mum, I told you I’d be back but it just took a bit of time, that’s all!”

I’ve run into Arthur on a number of occasions, the first was at a commemoration for Prisoners of War at Kings Park, where Arthur graciously spoke about his four years in a German prisoner of war camp after being captured on Crete.

At the end of his speech Arthur said: “I hope to see you again next year”.

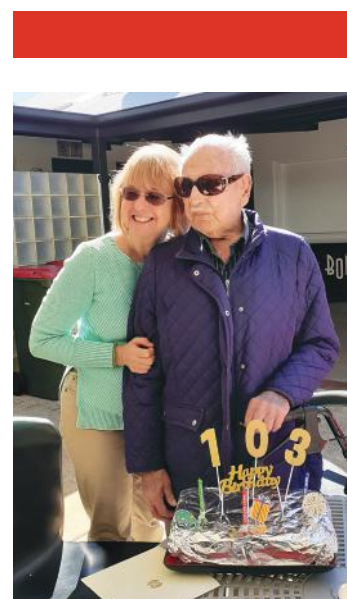


He’s shown he’s nothing if not a character with an iron constitution and a great sense of humour. I’ve known a few over the years but Arthur certainly stands at the top of the tree.

On another occasion Arthur and I crossed paths was at the unveiling of the design for the Battle of Crete Monument to be installed at Kings Park. This is a wonderful monument and there is no-one more qualified to be involved in this project than Arthur.

What comes across clearly is that Arthur Leggett is a man who never forgot his mates and who stood up for them whenever the situation warranted. At 103-years-of-age he has been inspirational in sharing his life experiences with anyone he believes could benefit from that knowledge.

Arthur most assuredly deserves all the accolades bestowed upon him, as well as the thanks of the President, Board and all the staff at RSLWA for the assistance he has given us over many years.





KOREAN WAR VETERANS' REMEMBRANCE SERVICE



The signing of the armistice which signalled the end of the Korean War and the recall of the Royal Australian Regiment WA and support personnel was recognised this year at the Flame of Remembrance at the State War Memorial in Kings Park.

The Commemorative Service on 27 July marked the 69th Anniversary Commemoration of the Korean War Armistice.

RSLWA State President and CEO attended the event which honoured the WA veterans who served.

Australia was one of 21 members of the United Nations to send military forces to fight in the Korean War, which formally ended on 27 July 1953 with the signing of the armistice.

Each of Australia's three defence services was involved. It was the first war for the newly formed Australian Regular Army and the first and only time a Royal Australian Navy aircraft carrier conducted wartime operations.

Almost 18,000 Navy, Army and Air Force personnel served in Korea and 340 lost their lives. More than 150 Australian nursing sisters served in Korea and Japan during the war.

Reference: ANZAC Portal, Department of Veterans Affairs




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Photos by Debbie Walsh

VIETNAM VETERANS DAY 2022 MARKS 56TH ANNIVERSARY

Commemorative Services for Vietnam Veterans Day in August marked the 56th Anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan, one of the fiercest battles Australian soldiers faced during the ten years Australia fought in the Vietnam War. RSLWA State President Duncan Anderson attended the Kings Park service and laid a wreath to pay respect to those who fought and those who didn't return.

The Kings Park service included a prayer reading by President, Republic of Vietnam Veterans Association of WA, Mr Thanh Van Nguyen, and reading of the Roll of Honour of Western Australian Vietnam Veterans Killed in Action. The official wreath laying concluded with guests invited to place a red poppy to pay their own respects.

The RSLWA CEO Vince Connelly and the State President Duncan Anderson both attended the Albany Vietnam Veteran's Day Commemorative Service, while Board Member Matt Moran attended a service at City of Cockburn.

The South West Vietnam Veterans Day Commemoration Service 2022 was hosted by the Greenbushes RSL Sub-Branch and attracted some 200 people.

The Parade was led by a group of classic and vintage cars from Donnybrook and Bridgetown carrying the non-marching veterans followed by drummers from the Busselton Brass Band followed by the HMAS Navy platoon ahead of the marching veterans. The 515 ACU carried out the Catafalque and flag minding duties.

WO2 Ewen Downes and Sgt Richard Edwards of the 11th 28 Battalion of the Royal WA Regiment received the Parade.

The Greenbushes Primary school sung the "Wanjoo" welcoming song and the Jubilee singers, led by Suzanne Bottomley, sang songs and hymns, including the

"Veterans Alleluia". Karon J Austin led the commemoration prayer and Shire President Jenny Mountford read a moving poem which moved a few veterans to tears.

Former Australian SAS Vietnam Veteran and Rhodesian SAS veteran, Ian Stiles OAM, delivered the key note address recounting which highlighted the day as a commemoration of all Veterans post WWII. The Last Post and Rouse was played by Tim Streeter, followed by the Australian and New Zealand national anthems.

A three-course lunch, prepared by the local Shamrock Hotel and sponsored by Talison Lithium, was enjoyed by all while some of the refreshments were provided by Spinifex Brewing Co. The Greenbushes Acoustic provided the entertainment and a series of raffles offered generous prizes donated by local business.

RSL Sub-Branches of Boyup Brook, Bridgetown, Bunbury, Busselton, Capel, Collie-Cardiff, Donnybrook, Greenbushes, Karridale-Augusta and Manjimup were represented.

Trevor Bottomley, the Greenbushes RSL President said it was a very moving ceremony which hopefully paid due respect to all Veterans, living and deceased, their Families and loved ones all impacted by their service to our country.

Vietnam Day Commemorative Services were held around the State by:

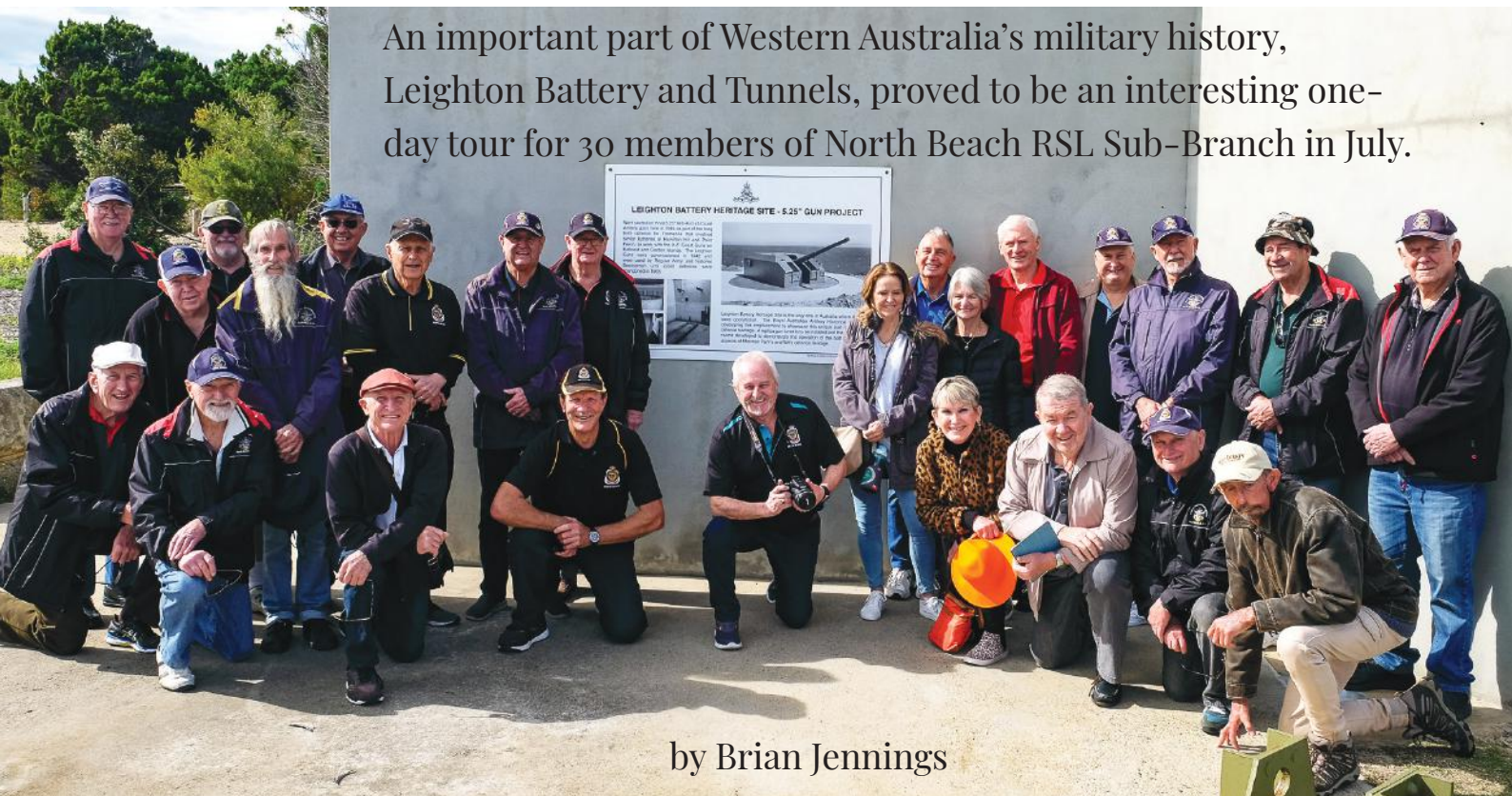
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Morawa RSL
Toodyay RSL
Kalamunda RSL
Moora RSL
Mandurah RSL
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OUR
MILITARY
HISTORY

LEIGHTON BATTERY AND TUNNELS

An important part of Western Australia's military history, Leighton Battery and Tunnels, proved to be an interesting one-day tour for 30 members of North Beach RSL Sub-Branch in July.



by Brian Jennings



Coastal defences, known as "Fortress Fremantle", protected the harbour at Fremantle since the first battery was installed at Arthur's Head in 1906. This was expanded in the 1930s and WWII, and stretched along the coast from Cape Peron, Garden Island, Rottnest, Leighton and Swanbourne. During WWII this was particularly important as Fremantle, following the fall of Singapore, was home to the largest submarine base in the Southern Hemisphere.

President John Rolfe said it was important to understand our military history, particularly the roles played by those men and women involved at the time.

In 1942, the 6-inch guns at Arthur's Head were moved to Buckland Hill, Leighton, and it became known as the Leighton Battery, where its prime task of monitoring shipping as an "Examination Battery" could be fulfilled more effectively. The guns were placed on temporary mountings as it was planned to upgrade the site with more modern weapons as soon as they became available from the United Kingdom.



More than 300 metres of tunnels were excavated to house ammunition, technical equipment, rest areas, communications and observation posts. For the rest of the war, service men and women monitored the movement of ships in and out of Fremantle Harbour. An anti-aircraft battery was also located nearby. In 1945, the two 6-inch guns were replaced by three more modern 5.25-inch gun and the tunnels were closed.

The Commonwealth Government had planned to have eight major Australian ports protected by dual-use 5.25-inch guns, but the Leighton Battery became the only one to be fully operational.

The guns remained operational after the war for training purposes of regular defence and the Citizens Military Force. In the early 1960s advances in air power and weaponry made coastal defences ineffective and the guns at Leighton were sold as scrap. When the adjacent area was developed for housing, the Royal Australian Artillery Historical Society of Western Australia Inc. reopened the tunnels.

The Sub-Branch members praised the benefits of the tour and highly recommended it to other Sub-Branches.



The President thanked the R.A.A. Historical Society tour leaders, including Sub-Branch member Roy Smith, for their comprehensive knowledge of the site and for making the visit very rewarding.

Following the tour, the members travelled to a “mystery lunch” at Fremantle Port where they enjoyed camaraderie and debriefed on the day before returning to their departure base at Hillarys Marina.



100 YEARS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE RECOGNISED



Bencubbin RSL Sub-Branch President, Len Cargeeg (left), being presented with the Sub-Branch's 100-Year Commemoration Certificate by former RAAF Armourer, Chris Wasson, on behalf of RSLWA

RSL National has recognised Bencubbin RSL Sub-Branch's long contribution to the local community by awarding a framed 100-Year Commemorative Certificate.

RSLWA Financial Services Officer, Catriona Wasson, and husband Chris hand-delivered the Commemorative Certificate when they visited Bencubbin in June as part of a Wheatbelt Way Tourist adventure.

Chris, a Veteran and a former RAAF Armourer, learnt from the current Sub-Branch President, Len Cargeeg, that there had been three RAAF Armourers and one Fleet Air Arm Armourer in the area before him.

"They were former Flight Sergeant Eric Probert, Flight Sergeant George Bailey, Sergeant Arthur Hammond and, for the Fleet Air Arm, Chief Petty Officer John Cashmore," Len said.

Knowing they would be in the area and visiting Bencubbin, Catriona offered to deliver the certificate.

Chris and Catriona were thoroughly impressed with the new War Memorial and the history of the Bencubbin RSL Sub-Branch which has evolved from the original Mt Marshall Sub-Branch that was formed on Christmas Eve, 1921.



The original President was Robert Francis (Frank) Breakell from the 10th Light Horse with Frank LeCras as Secretary. The name was changed in 1946 to the Bencubbin Sub-Branch.

"George Bailey won the 1945 Sandover Medal while based at RAAF Cunderdin and also ran the Bencubbin Hotel for a while when he coached the Bencubbin Football Club," Len explained.

The 100th Anniversary Certificate now hangs on the wall in the Bencubbin Community Resource Centre.

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MOUNT HAWTHORN ACKNOWLEDGES LOCAL SUPPORT

Ongoing fundraising support by local businesses, schools and sporting clubs was acknowledged with a sundowner event hosted by Mt Hawthorn RSL Sub-Branch a few months ago.

“Over the years, our Sub-Branch has received generous assistance from local schools, businesses and other organisations with events like ANZAC Day, the annual Poppy Day Appeal and other fundraising efforts,” said Sub-Branch President, Trevor Stiles. “This was our turn to thank them for all their ongoing help over the years.”

Appreciation Plaques acknowledging the support were awarded to 13 local recipients. Those recognised included City of Vincent, Westfield Innaloo Shopping Centre, Mt Hawthorn Primary School, Meat@TheMezz butchers, The Re Store – Leederville, Innaloo Sportsmen’s Club, Scouts WA and Aranmore Catholic College. Others recognised who were unable to attend due to illness or other commitments were Hawaiian The Mezz – Mt Hawthorn, former owner of The Paddington Ale House – Neil Randall, The Good Grocer IGA, Leederville, BWS, Woolworths Supermarket Mt Hawthorn.



(Left to right): Front row: Mayor of Vincent, Emma Cole; Felicity Barker, on behalf of Westfield Innaloo Shopping Centre. Back row: George Gifford, Re Store, Leederville; Declan Tanham, Principal of Aranmore Catholic College; Roy Boulay, President, Innaloo Sportsmen’s Club; Leon Wilson, Principal, Mt Hawthorn Primary School; and Terry Gaston, who till recently owned the Meat@TheMezz butcher shop in Mt Hawthorn.

Trevor said the event was a ‘first’ for Mt Hawthorn Sub-Branch. “Attended by about 50 people, the event brought together local Members of Parliament, local business owners, schools, and community leaders along with our RSL members and was very well-received,” he said. Special guests attending included the Mayor of Vincent, Emma Cole; Hon Tjorn Sibma MLC; Hon Dan Caddy MLC and Vincent Councillor, Suzanne Worner.

DO YOU HAVE ANY WRENS IN YOUR FAMILY?



RSLWA has received a call for help from the United Kingdom to see if we can assist them in locating members of the British Women’s Royal Naval Service. Specifically, ladies who joined up between February 1946 and July 1981 and did their basic training at Burghfield near Reading which was known consecutively as Training Depot Burghfield, HMTE Burghfield, HMTE Dauntless and finally HMS Dauntless.

WRNS Burghfield-Dauntless Divisional Photos Project 46-81 is a nationwide project, in collaboration with the Association of Wrens, to gather divisional photographs and memories from those training days for a Burghfield-Dauntless archive and even reunite ladies with old friends, share anecdotes and relive Naval adventures.

So if you, your mum, granny, aunt, sister, godmother or even next door neighbour donned a blue suit and aimed for a life near the ocean wave, please get in touch with the Project Coordinator, Mandy Powell, on ddpwrens@gmail.com because she really needs to hear from you.

BRIDGETOWN SUB-BRANCH SHOUT OUT FOR 'TREASURE' JUDY MAY

Every country town has its 'Community Treasures' who are the life-blood of local organisations and Bridgetown RSL Sub-Branch is among them. Treasurer Jackie Wright has raised a shout out for their special support base in Judy May, who has readily given her time to community organisations and helping people in need for almost three decades.





Jackie said that when Judy moved to Bridgetown in 1994 she never could have imagined how well she would fit into the tight-knit community or what wonderful friends she would make – she is just the nicest person you'll ever meet.

A familiar and much-loved face to many around Bridgetown, Judy May was born on August 21, 1948 in Perth.

Judy grew up in Mt Hawthorn and Bedford Park with her older sister Clare (ex. WRAAF) and two younger brothers, Chris and Ken.

Judy loved visiting her Aunt Edna and Uncle Jack who was a member and Commodore of the Royal Perth Yacht Club. They would go out to sea on his launch, Seafarer, to Rottnest Island.

Judy also has fond memories of visiting the Morowa farm of another Aunt, Enid and Uncle Joe. Judy would catch the WA Government Railways bus in the August school holidays with her sister and they would have a great fun with their cousins, helping on the farm.

At 16, Judy started work as a nursing assistant at a hospital in Mt Lawley, before working as a clerk for Atkins WA. While at Atkins WA, she saved for her first guitar and took herself to Perth Music School to learn to play. Judy also plays the Piano Accordion.

She then joined the WRAAF in March 1968, finishing her rookie stint at Edinburgh, South Australia in April 1968. Her first posting was to the Central Photographic Establishment as an Air Photo Plotter at the RAAF base in Laverton Victoria.

She shared a mission hut with three others and enjoyed collecting the money at the cinema on base. Her little dog "Poncho" was a very popular addition to the base and others would take him out for walks and play while Judy was working.

Judy stayed in Laverton for eight years, as Plotters could not be posted to other bases, but they could get attachments. Her favorite attachments were spending nine weeks in Townsville working for the American Navy and a week in Darwin where there wasn't much flying, but a lot of sightseeing and fun.

When Judy retired from the Air Force on the October 22, 1975, she was a Senior Sergeant, the highest ranking possible for her position. Her then husband was posted to Edinburgh in SA where Judy had her three children, son Gary, and twins, Tracy and Denis. The next posting was to Pearce in WA, which was great for Judy as she was back in her home state and able to see her family again.

When her marriage came to an end, she moved to Bunbury on the advice of her eldest brother Chris, which was where he lived with his family. He said it was better for bringing up children and Judy said "He was right!"

When Judy's children were older, she started doing some voluntary work and joined the Bunbury Sub-Branch and worked as a cleaner next door for WM Barrett & Sons, which she really enjoyed. Judy later volunteered at Australia Post which led to a permanent position.

She volunteered for the Bunbury RSL as the Membership Officer and for Meals on Wheels located nearby.

Judy's second marriage took her to Bridgetown in 1994, where she started at the local Post Office a few months later. Judy retired for medical reasons in 2007, but has kept herself busy in retirement.

A keen lawn bowler, Judy has won the 2009-2010 season Blackwood League Perpetual Trophy, and also volunteers for the Club catering for functions. She volunteers as a Licenced Lay Minister with Bridgetown's St Paul's Anglican Church, is an active member of the Bridgetown RSL and most importantly, a grandmother to four girls and twin boys.

Judy now lives in independent living in Bridgetown's Geegeelup Village and says she is blessed with many wonderful friends.

**WE THINK WE ARE BLESSED
TO HAVE HAD JUDY AS PART
OF OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY
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SURVEYOR - PRINTER BEHIND THE LINES

The memories of Lt Col Edward “Peter” Constantine were revisited when his daughter, Margaret Constantine, launched a book about his time as the Major in charge of his Survey Troop at Nui Dat, South Vietnam (now Vietnam) in 1969.

Veteran Liaison Officer, John McPherson, who represented RSLWA at the launch of ‘Surveyor – Printer, Behind The Lines’, said the book and the time it represented held personal significance to him as he worked in the building beside the Survey Depot at Nui Dat with the 1st Psychological Operations Unit.

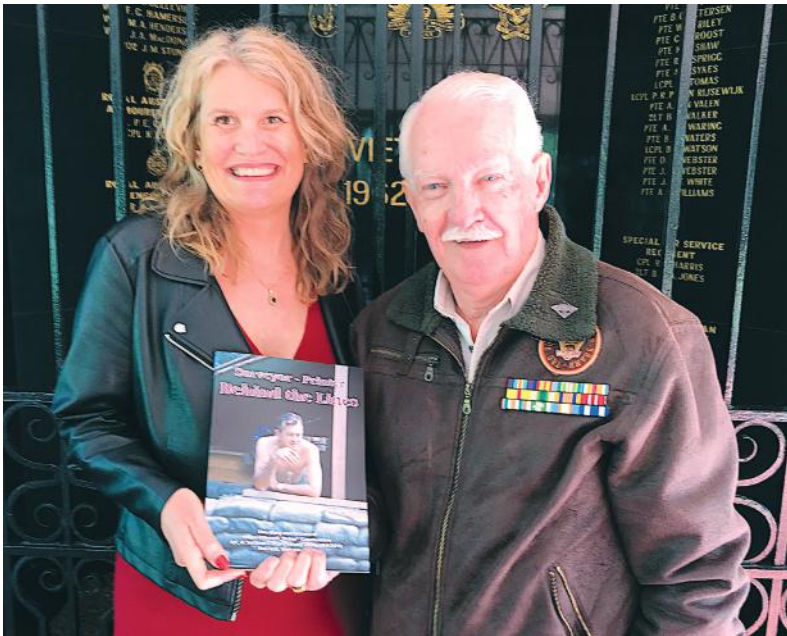
Margaret said the book, launched earlier this year, provides a first-person account of what daily life was like for Peter during that period where he kept a diary and wrote regularly to his family back home.

“It’s a fascinating insight into how important the survey section was to Australia’s involvement in the Vietnam War,” she said.

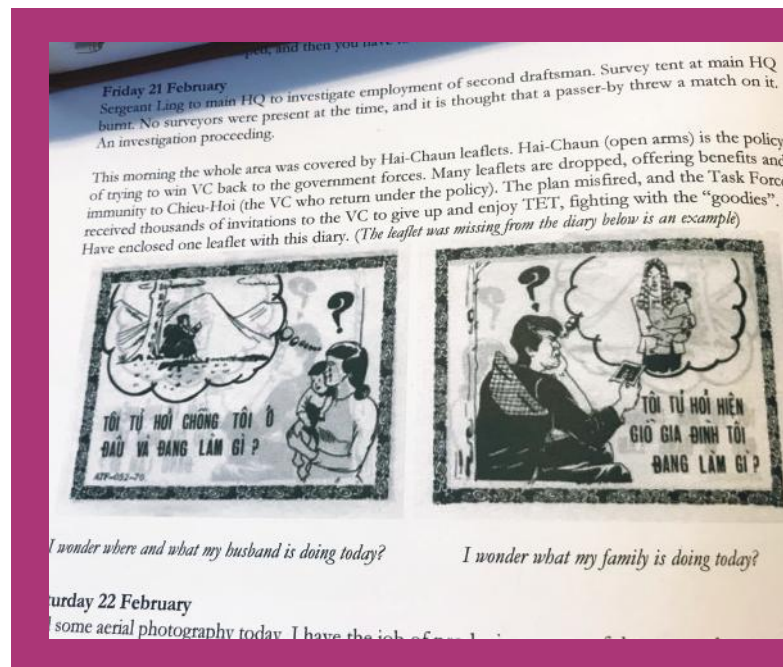
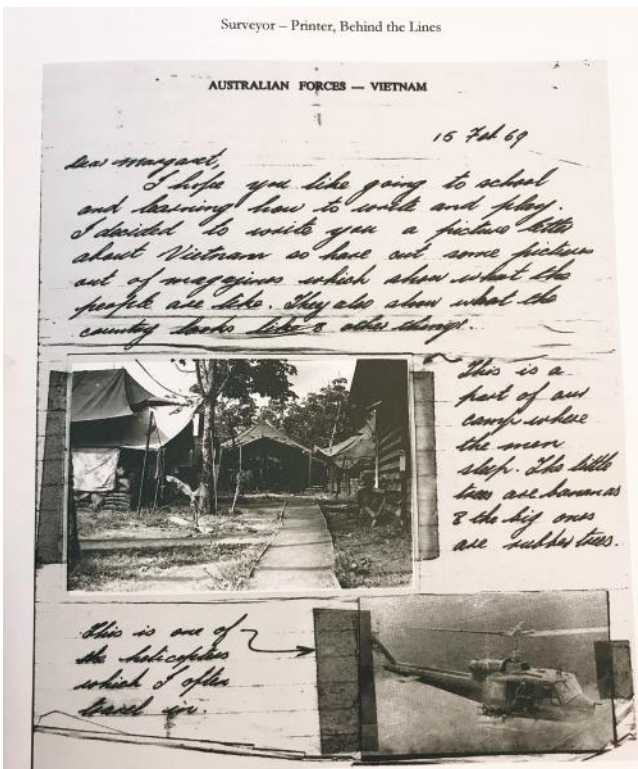
“But, just as importantly, it represents how he maintained contact with his five daughters and family, back home in Australia.”

Proceeds from the book are being donated to PTSD Dogs Australia.

In her foreword for the book, Margaret highlights that she has not changed any part of her father’s diary.



Surveyor – Printer, Behind the Lines



THE SCRAP IRON FLOTILLA

by MIKE CARLTON

When war broke out in the Northern Hemisphere in 1939, the British called on their Australian allies for support. The Australian government responded by sending five navy destroyers - HMAS Stuart, Vendetta, Vampire, Voyager and Waterhen.

These were old ships, built for battle in WWI and discharged from official duty in peacetime to see out their old age on Australian shores.

But despite the sneers by Nazi propaganda minister, Joseph Goebbels, that they were “a consignment of junk,” a load of “scrap iron”, these ships were tough and well built, each with a 150 strong crew of seafaring men.

As France fell to the Nazis in June 1940 and in the face of a powerful Italian enemy fleet, the British Mediterranean Fleet and these five Australian destroyers found themselves in a David vs Goliath situation. Yet, the flotilla remained fearless. They escorted troops and supply convoys, hunted for submarines and bombarded enemy coasts.

Cemented in Australian naval legend, The Scrap Iron Flotilla is a captivating retelling of this valiant contribution to the war. At its centre it is a story of human bravery and defiance, brought to life by Carlton’s exceptional storytelling and passion.

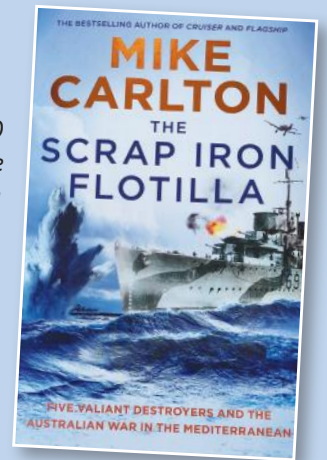
Mike has an ineffable skill at describing a battle and life on the destroyers. The story is told with humanity and verve, depicting the remarkably stoic, tough, enduring men on board these ships, and his rigorously research provides a richness to Mike’s writing.

We have one copy of The Scrap Iron Flotilla to give away, to be in the draw email marketing@rslwa.org.au

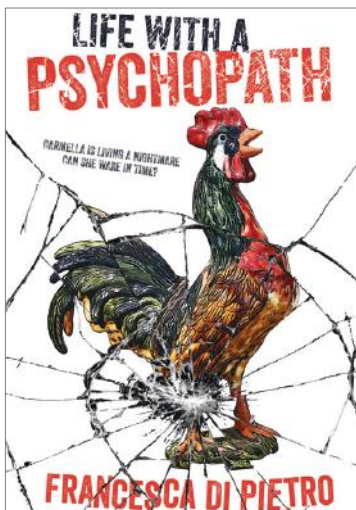
THE AUTHOR

In a working life of more than 50 years, Mike Carlton became one of Australia’s best-known media figures.

He has been a radio and television news and current affairs reporter, foreign correspondent, radio host and newspaper columnist.



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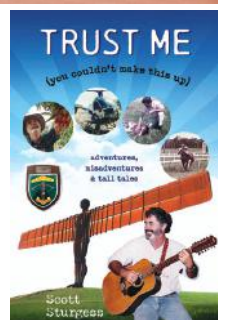
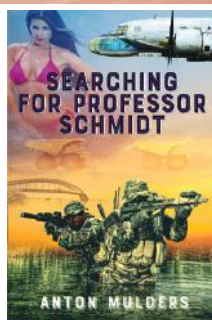
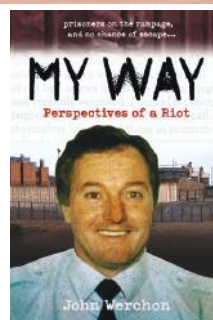
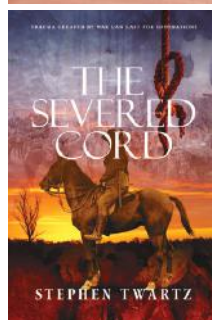
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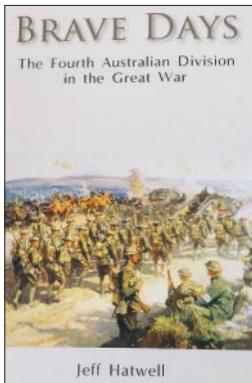
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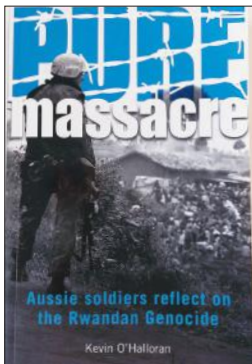


Brave Days: The Fourth Australian Division in the Great War, by Jeff Hatwell

Brave Days: The Fourth Australian Division in the Great War is the first full history of the Fourth Division. The book presents a detailed narrative telling the Division's story from its formation after Gallipoli right through to a period rarely covered in Australian military history - the final weeks of the 1914-18 war and the first weeks of peace.

The book ties together the history of not only the Division's infantry, but also of the artillerymen, machine gunners, engineers, medical personnel and headquarters staff, showing how the various elements worked together through adversity to achieve the triumphs of 1918. Brave Days is both an essential reference and a compelling story of heroism and tragedy on the Western Front.

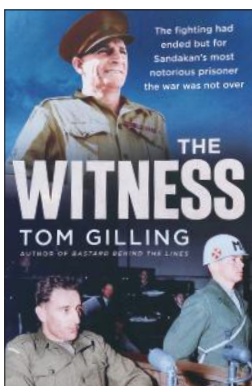
Jeff Hatwell is a proud member of the RSL Scarborough Sub-Branch



Pure Massacre by Kevin O'Halloran

Pure Massacre is a record of what happened during this peacekeeping mission. Kevin "Irish" O'Halloran, a Platoon Sergeant at the time, stresses the weaknesses of the UN charter and what happens when "good men do nothing". He pulls together the perspectives of the Australian personnel who served in Rwanda at this time. *Pure Massacre* gives a new and personal voice to the Kibeho Massacre. It took a special brand of bravery, discipline, compassion and nerve to do what they did. And while no Australian died during and immediately after the massacre at Kibeho their service was not without cost as *Pure Massacre* testifies, the suffering and tragedy is embedded in their memories.

Kevin 'Irish' O'Halloran joined the Army and has served on four operational tours of duty, all in the Royal Australian Infantry Corps (RAInf); two with the 1st Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment (1 RAR) and two with the 2nd Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment (2 RAR). He retired from the Army in 2011 after 30 years' service.



The Witness by Tom Gilling

The fighting had ended but for Sandakan's most notorious prisoner the war was not over.

'That bastard's still alive? I'm going to kill him with my bare hands.' POW Bill Moxham

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

During his three years in the infamous Sandakan POW camp, Sticpewich had seen hundreds of fellow prisoners die of starvation, sickness and overwork. Others were shot or bayoneted to death by Japanese guards on forced marches through the Borneo jungle. Of more than 2400 Allied prisoners at Sandakan at the start of 1945, only six survived. It was Sticpewich's meticulous evidence that sent Sandakan's commandant and his murderous henchmen to the gallows.

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

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



PLAYERS WANTED FOR RSLWA BOWLS SECTION

The RSLWA Bowls Section is a Lawn Bowls Club which consists of serving, ex-serving and direct family members of those veterans. Members must meet these criteria to be eligible for membership, along with being a current member of a Bowling Club recognised by Bowls WA and a current financial member of the RSL or sub-Branch.

Currently we are based at the Yokine Bowls Club where we generally meet once a month on a Friday, our season will kick off this year in September and generally runs for six months.

The RSLWA Bowls Section also play in various carnivals and bowls events throughout the Perth metropolitan area, typically on Fridays with some night games held mid-week for those members interested in playing. In April - May 2023, we are also hosting the 54th National RSL Bowls Carnival.

This will see all States participate in a week-long event, with plenty of prizes and raffles to be held at the Manning Memorial Bowls Club. Members of the RSLWA Bowls Section who are selected to play in this event will represent Western Australia.

New memberships are \$20, with an annual renewal of \$10 per year. Family members (affiliates) are \$10.

FIND US ON FACEBOOK – RSLWA BOWLS SECTION
OR contact the Secretary on the details below.

PRESIDENT: David Gurr
Email: david.gurr@defence.gov.au
SECRETARY: Bill Taylor
Email: diverandwife@gmail.com
TREASURER: Marcus Sear
Email: marcusjsear@aapt.net.au



RATS OF TOBRUK

A meeting is being organised for the descendant families of the Rats of Tobruk and others to form a local social group with the object of preserving the memory of their heroic effort in WW2. With the original Rats of Tobruk associations being disbanded in nearly all States decades ago, a new vibrant group emerged – the Descendants of the Rats of Tobruk Association of Australia (Inc). It is keen to give its members a local focus and has arranged for Anne LeFevre, daughter of the ROTA's State Secretary in 1971, Doug LeFevre to convene the meeting. A video of a colour film depicting the dedication of the Rats' new memorial at Kings Park in 1971 will also be screened.

Those interested are invited to the Meg Olive room at the RAAFA Bull Creek estate on Saturday, 17 September at 2pm.

For more information please contact Anne on 0435 048 256 or by email annemlefevre@gmail.com



THE LAST POPPY

JUNE 2022 – AUGUST 2022

ARMY

Anderson, Roy L 5410982
Busselton

Andrew, Jeffrey K 523030
Esperance

Austin, Michael L 5411638
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Bland, Eric K 5716203
Nollamara

Burns, Donald H 12604
Bunbury

Carson, Robert VX130789
Central

Carter, Alec J 22408027
Port Kennedy

Clements, James A 54113
Riverton

Duffy, Leo E WX41584
Mt Lawley-Inglewood

Exten, Ronald K 5701044
Geraldton City

Fitzpatrick, Robert C 518053
Albany

Gfeller, Fritz F 53240
North Beach

Gorman, Ronald T 5706309
Mt Lawley-Inglewood

Harper-Nelson, John 245310
Gascoyne

Herbert, Les R5714514
Highgate

Hill, Lewis O 39232
Bunbury

Hindmarsh, Clifford M T 55855
City of Belmont

Holmes, Stuart 547575
Gosnells

Hunter, Ross WX15442
Bedford-Morley

Johnson, Frederick W5/701967
Bunbury

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King, Donald 41452
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Kruger, Raymond C WX23232
Bicton-Palmyra

Langridge, Irwin J 1410127
North Beach

Lucas John 23411629
Albany

McMiles, Phyllis E WF15725
Mt Lawley-Inglewood

Mears, Peter C 548601
Bicton-Palmyra

Nguyen, Van Phuoc 54/600406
Vietnam Services

Norman, Richard K 54433
Nollamara

Osborne, William O 53796
Albany

Rosenberg, Peta A F51309
City of Belmont

Sheppard, Denis R 2787597
City of Cockburn

Sher, Abraham S 72889
Highgate

Shom, George B WX15053
City of Mandurah

Slyns, Kim E 5713951
Chidlow

Tran, Quy-Trong 50-119056
Vietnamese Services

Tomlin, Peter J 615613
Scarborough

Udinga, Hermanus 290108019
Bedford-Morley

Walkenmeyer, Otto 5/705712
City of Belmont

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Bicton-Palmyra

Keddie, James D R106522
Dawesville

Privilege, Ronald J C R45872
Wanneroo

Southey, Ian N PM7254
City of Mandurah

Thurstans OAM, Graham G 057205
Central

Trouchet, Bevin A R38755
Quinns Rocks

UNKNOWN

Bradshaw, Poppy 113447
Bedford-Morley

If you have recently lost a loved one who was a veteran and would like to have them honoured here, please let us know by emailing membership@rslwa.org.au

UNIT AND KINDRED FINANCIAL MEMBERS

102 Coral Field Battery	0402 329 457	kgf1942@gmail.com
1st Armored Regiment Association	0419 331 401	secretary@paratus.org.au
161 (Indep) Recce Flight	0409 683 868	ddo92797@bigpond.net.au
2/11th Battalion Group	9383 2282	cjj.cott@drewj.com
2/16th Battalion AIF Assn Inc	0409 085 987	mary.goldthorpe@yahoo.com.au
2/28th Battalion and 24th Anti-Tank Company Association Inc	0419 916 362	duncan.warren13@gmail.com
2/4th Machine Gun Battalion (AIF) Ex Members Assn	0432 442 574	2nd4thmgbsecretary@gmail.com
2/43rd Battalion Association WA Branch	0488 799 079	barrymaher9@yahoo.com.au
3 Telecommunication Unit Association (RAAF)	0421 365 046	3tuassociation@gmail.com
American Returned Military Services	0405 024 995	joe.ritacca59@gmail.com
Australian Intelligence Corps Group WA	9378 3276	janelsonw1@bigpond.com
Australian Peacekeeper & Peacemaker Veterans Assn Inc	0408 002 892	mike.romalis@peacekeepers.asn.au
Combined Defence Force Support Assn of WA Inc	9437 4186	haydn.lss@bigpond.com
Defensively Equipped Merchant Ships Association	0438 397 671	thesailor@bigpond.com
HMS Ganges Association WA Division	0400 204 801	james.sharkey@bigpond.com
Indian Veterans Association	0477 161 601	rkmittal54@yahoo.com
Mandurah Murray Vietnam & Veterans Group	0427 659 858	cathyebrown57@gmail.com
N Class Destroyers Assn WA Branch Inc	0468 311 204	nclassdestroyerswa@gmail.com
National Servicemen's Assn of Australia (Mandurah-Murray Sub Branch)	0408 090 474	nsaam.m@hotmail.com
National Servicemen's Assn of Australia (WA Branch Inc.)	0456 107 542	stuwf@gmail.com
Naval Assn of Australia WA Section	0477 160 097	iholthouse@hotmail.com
No.25 (City of Perth) Squadron Branch	0450 606 858	etectech@msn.com.au
North American Veterans Unit	0478 669 882	navu.perth@gmail.com
RAAF Vietnam Veterans Assn of WA Inc	0410 089 145	brich@aapt.net.au
Remembering HMAS Armidale Association Inc	0418 367 869	rhaainc@gmail.com
Rhodesian Services Assn of WA Inc	0412 771 523	anaconda.pag@optusnet.com.au
Royal Australian Armoured Corps Assn WA Branch	0419 694 549	jadanne14@gmail.com
Royal Australian Army Ordnance Corps Assn WA Inc	0412 672 103	j.arco@bigpond.com
Royal Australian Electrical & Mechanical Engineers Assn	0488 932 179	secretary@wa.raeme.org.au
Royal Australian Engineers Assn of WA Inc	9371 1290	raeAssoc.wasec2017@gmail.com
Royal Australian Navy Clearance Divers Association	0447 838 930	wachapter@ranca.com
Royal Australian Navy Communications Branch Assn WA	0407 726 994	kowandi205@outlook.com
Royal Australian Signals Assn WA	0467 609 993	kevin.byrne@telstra.com
South African Military Veterans Organisation of Australasia	0477 999 715	stevensonwd@gmail.com
Submariners Association of UK Australia Branch	0458 773 985	barry_grace@hotmail.com
Submarines Association Australia WA Branch Inc	0414 407 067	wa.secretary@submarinesaustralia.com
The British Ex-Services Assn Inc.	0428 317 652	british.ex@bigpond.com
Tingira Australia Association	0403 402 496	tingirawa@gmail.com
Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 12163 Inc	0424 555 107	cmd@vfw12163.org
WA Branch of the Partners of Veterans' Assn of Australia Inc	0409 088 905	ager@iinet.net.au
WRAAC Assn WA Inc	0437 489 638	wraac_wa@hotmail.com
WRAAF Branch of RAAF Assn WA Div.	0407 850 090	glb3au@hotmail.com

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