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Cover:
Rain bucketed down on Perth’s ANZAC Day Parade but Vietnam veteran Doug Wyness – as ‘wet as a shag’ – wasn’t all deterred from honouring the fallen. Doug, who lives in Mandurah, did two tours of Vietnam with the 32 Small Ships Squadron, Royal Australian Engineers and says he saw worse weather in Vietnam. Doug was one of 6,000 taking part in the 100th parade through city streets which were lined with 30,000 people. The photo was taken by Leanne Scadden, a first-time volunteer on ANZAC Day.

The Listening Post has been swamped with news and reports from sub-branches and we have expanded this edition to cover them. If it gets repetitious, we apologise – but it is your magazine! We couldn’t fit every good story into the magazine so if yours missed out please let us know by emailing johna@rslwhq.org.au

This edition contains the final President’s Pen from Graham Edwards AM. Our September edition will welcome the new State President Peter Aspinall. Graham has been a driving force in switching The Listening Post to magazine format and in promoting the use of digital platforms such as the website, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. The RSLWAHQ Facebook Page now has more followers than any other RSL page in the country. Thank you for the kind feedback from our last edition and we hope you enjoy this one.

Previous Editions
Copies of The Listening Post published since February 2014 are available on our website http://www.rslwhq.org.au/News/Listening-Post.aspx


Publishing
Publishing of The Listening Post: Published 4 times a year and has a readership of over 25,000.

To all sub-branch Presidents and Secretaries: Send photographs and a short article on special activities at your sub-branch to The Listening Post.

Deadline for next edition: Friday August 19, 2016

If possible, submissions should be typed and double-spaced. The preferred method of receiving submissions is via email. Photographs should be attached separately and a minimum of 1Mb. This is your magazine and contributions are welcome.

Address to: The Editor, The Listening Post RSL, PO Box 3023 East Perth, WA 6892

Email: listeningpost@rslwhq.org.au

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We cannot accept Newspaper clippings for publication without express approval from the Newspaper Editor as we may infringe on Copyright Laws.
Passionate singer for Christmas in July

International entertainer Nicki Gillis is performing at this year’s Christmas in July at the ANZAC Club.

Don’t miss out on Friday July 8! It costs only $36 per person and includes a two-course meal and glass of bubbly. All are welcome. Please book with Sharon or Wendy on 9287 3799.

“Nicki has a broad repertoire and her voice is just amazing,” says Tracey Fickling, who has known Nicki for many years. “She’s a true-blue Ozzie girl and is so passionate and patriotic”.

Nicki Gillis has entertained worldwide including three tours to our troops overseas.

She is an entertainer, singer, songwriter and music teacher. Nicki has recorded many albums with top 10 singles on the country charts in Australia and in the UK, with a No. 1 in the UK with her own song ‘Be A Star’.

She has been heavily involved in entertaining current and former service personnel – and will talk about her experiences overseas to perform for Australian, US, British and NATO troops in Iraq, East Timor and the Solomon Islands.

Nicki’s music is essentially country and performances engage audiences from many different demographics and musical genres.

She donates significant time to charity work and is a strong supporter of returned Australian and UK servicemen and women. In 2010 she was granted honorary membership of the Blue Mountains Vietnam Veterans and Associated Forces Association. In 2011 she was made a member of the Australian Forces Entertainment Association and won the Australian Entertainment Industry’s highest award for a country performer.

The July function is one of many activities planned by the RSLWA’s Women’s Network, chaired by board member Gabby Ryan.

Another activity will see women participating in the Perth Royal Show from Saturday September 24 to Saturday October 1.

An exhibition is being developed entitled Women of the Empire and Unsung Heroes. It will be an evocative exhibition of original WWI era costumes staged by Dressing Australia – Museum of Costume. The collection includes compelling stories of the sacrifice and support women provided during the war, at home and abroad. A group of volunteers will provide an RSL presence at the show undertaking knitting and making slouch and nursing hats as well as advising people that they can join the RSL. The volunteers will comprise currently serving members, the RSL Poppy ladies and other women’s groups, such as the Returned Ex-Service Women’s Sub-Branch, to ensure as wide a variety of people as possible are there to represent the RSL.

The network has also agreed that the next RSLWA Women’s Forum should align with International Women’s Day and that there would be an ongoing commitment to schedule the forum to align with this date.

Subsequently it was agreed that the next forum be held on Sunday March 12, 2017. It was also agreed to hold the forum on a Sunday as this would be a more suitable time for working mothers.
It has been a privilege
by State President
Graham Edwards AM

As this is my final President’s Pen, I take the opportunity to thank various sub-branches and members for their trust and support since my election in 2012.

It has been a privilege to serve you as State President.

This position has been both rewarding and challenging in many aspects.

However, over the last three and a half years it has consumed my life in all respects and I now look forward to putting my feet up for a while.

It has been a unique honour to work with so many dedicated, committed and special people across our sub-branches and membership.

The RSL is an iconic organisation which draws its strength and character from the actions of its membership.

It is you the member who give it that character and the status of the pre-eminent ESO in Australia. An organisation which should rightly and proudly celebrate its Centenary this year.

It has also been my privilege to work with some dedicated staff. Phil Orchard is one such servant of the RSL. Phil and I have not always seen eye to eye, we have had good hard-headed debate on some issues.

This is how it should be in a robust organisation experiencing change and meeting new challenges.

Many thanks Phil and I will miss the banter.

I also take the opportunity to welcome Peter Aspinall to the position of State President. Peter will have my full support and I have offered my help in anyway possible into the future.

I will continue to be a part of the RSL and to support its aims, objectives and aspirations.

I wish each and every one of you good fortune, good health and peace of mind into the future.

Remember, the RSL is about mateship. Let’s continue to work together and support each other and also build towards the next Centenary.

Message from the National CEO

I first met Graham in my previous role of State CEO for South Australia, I admit to being a bit intimidated by him when I sat in his office in Perth and we talked about issues facing the RSL.

But his easy manner and keen intelligence soon put me at ease and it was from that conversation that the seeds of my own future were sown.

Since becoming the National CEO I have relied upon Graham to be the voice of reason in an organisation of opposing ideas and strong personalities, he has always found the middle ground and we have benefited immensely from his calm guiding hand.

I personally will miss Graham enormously and I believe he leaves the RSL in a much finer and more robust state than it otherwise would have been. Being an old salt I will part by saying to Graham and his family, I wish you all ‘fair winds and a following sea, BZ’.

Sam Jackman
CEO – RSL National
RSL has kept the faith for 100 years

Over the last 100 years the RSL has grown side by side with ANZAC Day. Indeed the keeper of the flame of remembrance on behalf of the people of the State is the RSL. Over the last 100 years ANZAC Day commemorations and the nurturing of the ANZAC spirit have fallen squarely on our shoulders. It was 100 years ago today that the first ANZAC Day parade was held in the streets of Perth. It is also 100 years ago today that the first ANZAC service was held in the Middle East by the men who had survived the carnage of Gallipoli. Diggers who wanted to remember their mates and perpetuate the memory of their sacrifice and courage.

It was the men who were drawn from those same ranks who 100 years ago formed the forerunner of what we know today as the RSL. These ANZAC diggers believed it was important to create an organisation which could speak with one common voice on behalf of the fallen, the wounded, the families and those still serving. These men had little or no trust that successive governments would honour the sacrifice of the fallen and their families, look after the returned and support those still serving.

Some things never change and it is just as important today to have a strong, credible and united voice advocating on behalf of our returned and serving men and women of the ADF. This year the RSL celebrates 100 years of such service to the Veteran community. In WA we have 130 sub-branches across the State. We are a volunteer organisation which holds dearly to the tenement of maintaining and keeping alive the spirit of the ANZACs. We believe it crucial to the character of our nation to keep alive the memories of our fallen and their values of courage, sacrifice, compassion and mateship. These qualities are as important today as they were 100 years ago.

However, keeping alive the spirit of the ANZACs and keeping the flame of remembrance burning with a bright and undiminished light is not our responsibility alone.

We work closely with other ex-service organisations and we acknowledge and appreciate their close kindred spirit and support.

But above all we acknowledge and show appreciation to the people of Western Australia who for 100 years have held true to a strong and enduring commemorative ANZAC spirit.

The RSL does not own ANZAC Day nor does it own the Flame of Remembrance. The spirit belongs to you the people of Australia and in faith with our fallen you have not let them down.

As we in the RSL celebrate 100 years of service this year we say thank you for that.

I again leave you with the words of Charles Bean, the father of the Australian War Memorial who said this:

"Many a man lying out there at Pozieres, or in the low scrub at Gallipoli, with his poor tired senses barely working through the fever of his brain, has thought in his last moments: ‘Well – well – it’s over; but in Australia they will be proud.’"

I say to the people of this great state that you have indeed done them proud and on behalf of the RSL I say thank you for that.

Lest We Forget

RSLWA Board appoints Mr Peter Aspinall

Please be advised that the RSLWA Board has appointed as interim State President Peter Aspinall, a current Board member and immediate past President of the Albany RSL Sub-Branch.

The period of his appointment is for the remainder of the current term which expires at our State Congress in 2017. As you are aware I will step down from the end of June. Peter will take over from July 1, 2016.

I congratulate Peter on this appointment by the Board and have also offered him my full support into the future.

Peter Aspinall has served on the Board since July 2008 and brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the position. Peter has completed nearly 30 years of military service in a variety of regimental, staff and training postings.

I also congratulate Julie Pope who has been appointed by the Board to complete the term left vacant by John McCourt in the Pilbara/Kimberley Region. John will also be stepping down from the Board at our 2016 Congress. He has represented the Pilbara/Kimberley Region on the Board since 2010.

Julie Pope is President of the Karratha and Districts RSL Sub-Branch and a former member and President of the Karratha and Districts Chamber of Commerce. Under her leadership the Karratha Sub-Branch has grown to more than 350 members.

Graham Edwards AM
State President

After nearly four years at the helm, Graham Edwards announced in December he was stepping aside as President of the Returned & Services League of WA. During his tenure, the unwieldy State Executive and Board structure was replaced with a streamlined board in October 2014; membership increased for the first time in years; 10 women became President of sub-branches; and the State Government agreed to hand over land on which ANZAC House sits to allow for a new high rise development. In his final ANZAC Day speech as State President, Graham reiterated his belief in the RSL and its future and the continuing need to look out for each other.
Light Horse nationals for Perth

Western Australia’s proud history of light horse will be reignited when it hosts the ‘Association Cup’ in October for the first time ever at Claremont Showgrounds.

The 10th Light Horse Bunbury Troop is organising this Australian Light Horse Association event. Participating troops include:

- Albany
- Bunbury
- Kelmisct/Pinjarra
- Northam
- Esperance (newly formed in early 2016)
- 3rd Light Horse Regiment (Naracoorte Troop) – SA

According to Bunbury-based Harry Ball, the WA representative on the Australian Light Horse Association, there could be eight riders from South Australia and possibly others from Queensland. He said the troops would commemorate the 99th anniversary of the Battle of Beersheba during the competition of eight events running over three days from October 27.

WA’s association with light horses dates back 100 years to WWI when tens of thousands of Light Horse men fought in Gallipoli and other famous battles.

The light horse was seen as the ‘national arm of Australia’s defence’ and young men flocked from around the country to join.

Albany-based Maxine Waterhouse is a mainstay of Albany Light Horse Troop and says it has a proud 25 year history of riding in the ANZAC Day Parade in Albany and has not had one single accident, hurt a member of public or insurance claim.

“More than 100,000 horses went away to WWI – possibly as many as 130,000 – and only one horse came home,” she said.

“When Australia joined the war against Germany in 1914 initially they sent four regiments of Light Horse (2,000 men) to fight the British cause. By the end of the war 16 Regiments would be in action.

“Everything the light horse trooper needed for living and fighting had to be carried by him and his horse. Fully loaded these horses carried between 130-150kgs.

They would carry these huge loads over long distances, searing heat, sometimes at a gallop, sometimes without water for periods of 60-70 hours at a time.

The bond between the men and their horses is unimaginable.”

More on 10th Light Horse
pages 28 and 29
Good news as medals returned

Some of the best news on ANZAC Day came when Milton ‘Snow’ Fairclough (96) revealed that thieves had returned his precious war medals. He was telling friends at the Commemorative Service on Langley Park that he was overwhelmed when medals stolen from his Victoria Park home in September were returned anonymously the week before. Snow said he discovered the medals on Wednesday.

“I found them and thought ‘Oh Christ’; when I went inside I had tears down the side of my face.”

In November last year Snow picked up his phone and was told by a lady ‘don’t you worry you’ll get your medals back’ before hanging up.

“I can’t get it out of my head that you know, [maybe] a mother found out her kids had them and said this is the time. I always had a bit of an idea, seeing it was school holidays, it might have been some of the youngsters that were a bit anxious to see what medals looked like or something, and whoever it is I'm glad he's got a heart, or she's got a heart.”

Snow is no ordinary digger, having survived as prisoner of the Japanese in Java in 1942 and forced to work on the infamous Thai-Burma railway for three-and-a-half years. He worked with surgeon Sir Edward ‘Weary’ Dunlop near the infamous Hellfire Pass on the Thai-Burma railway. Mr Fairclough endured terrible sickness, hunger and beatings in forced labour that killed more than 2,800 Australians.

Silver coin win for Mike

RSL member Mike Tkacz of Seville Grove is the lucky winner of the Perth Mint silver commemorative coin competition. Mike entered with the correct cost ($99) of the coin, which commemorates the 100th anniversary of the RSL. The competition was promoted in the last edition of The Listening Post and received dozens of entries by email and post.

RSL members can get a 15 per cent discount on the RSL Centenary gold and silver commemorative coins by contacting Perth Mint on 1800 098 817 or at www.perthmint.com.au/RSL100
by the CEO of RSLWA

Philip Orchard

In my last Listening Post column I whinged about the speed of which 2016 was passing by. The Easter eggs have well and truly disappeared from the shelves, ANZAC Day is behind us, National and State Congress is rapidly approaching, as is the Centenary Ball, and there are only a couple of hundred shopping days to Christmas.

After months of preparation, our Sunset Services and ANZAC Day events are over for another year. Our Sunset Services were again incredibly successful with a crowd of more than 1,000 on the final night.

ANZAC Day, despite the appalling weather, was a complete success although, as always, there were many lessons to be learnt and better ways of doing things. The execution this year involved a few new members in different roles and I compliment Sharon Harford and the Shani Wood Events team for the way this was managed and executed.

Good execution is a result of good planning. My thanks also go to BRIG. Duncan Warren and the Commemoration Committee who planned these events. As you are all very well aware, the detailed plan needs to be efficiently communicated, this was done via many mediums including the bumper edition of the last Listening Post and The Weekend West supplement. John Arthur worked tirelessly on this project, and others at the same time, to ensure we met the public’s needs. Well done John, great job. The RSLWA team at ANZAC House and all the volunteers who helped assist in the execution of the plan, should also take a firm pat on the back for a job well done.

While I have not read all of the reports from around the State, it appears that the overall majority enjoyed success on the day. In a similar vein State Branch and the CBD sub-branches, are also benefitting from feedback received from the general public. While all feedback is gratefully received some complaints are asking the impossible. We cannot move mountains and part the waves but thank you for even considering that we may have the ability to do so.

Timor-Leste Delegation

Following a flying, pre-ANZAC Day visit in 2015 the State President invited His Excellency Xanana Gusmão (HEXG) to attend the 2016 ANZAC Day events. HEXG accepted with great pleasure and, together with his delegation of 30, visited Perth between April 23-27 before heading East.

His visit included attending a mass at St Mary’s Catholic cathedral on the morning of April 24, followed by a speaking appointment at the final Sunset Service in Kings Park that evening. On ANZAC Day itself he laid a wreath at the Dawn Service. On completion he launched his book ‘Enduring Memories’ as a guest at the Highgate Sub-Branch Gunfire Breakfast.

Finally, enduring the pouring rain, he marched with the Commando Association (2nd/2nd) in the parade. His delegation marched with him and included HE Miguel Marques Manetelu, Vice Minister for Social Solidarity; Colonel Falur Rate Laek (Domingos Raul), Chief of Defence, F-FDTL; HE Abel Guterres, Timor-Leste Ambassador to Australia; Colonel Calisto Santos Coli, Defence Attaché, RDTL Embassy, Canberra and HE Francisco Guterres ‘Lu Olo’, Former President of Parliament, President of FRETILIN, Opposition plus six veterans.

HEXG conducted non-RSL visits during the remainder of his stay before heading off to Melbourne and Sydney. The veterans remained in Perth for a further day during which time they attended briefings from RSLWA staff on governance, membership, accountancy and commemoration to name but a few. DVA also provided the Federal perspective on how we do business. This was the third year that a group of veterans have visited RSLWA in an effort to gain insight into what would assist them in establishing a similar organization in Timor-Leste.
Advocacy

Where are we sitting since my last report?

The current team of Fergus Beer and David Faithfull are busy auditing the system and archiving as necessary, as well as ensuring completion of current cases in preparation for handover to DefenceCare on June 30, 2016. You may have noticed that DefenceCare recently advertised two permanent positions in The West Australian newspaper for a Manager Claims and Advocacy and a Claims Officer.

On appointment, the successful applicants will undertake training with DefenceCare in Sydney before returning to Perth to commence operations. They will be supported by the existing DefenceCare team as well as Fergus and a number of locally contracted consultants.

While I realise that the need to temporarily suspend our advocacy services may have caused some inconvenience to our membership, I am confident that the restructure we are undertaking will see significant improvements and an enhanced capacity to support the veteran community. We have employed Carl Ponnuthurai who previously worked with DVA, to ensure research and preparation for incomplete VRB cases in the hope that we can expedite these quickly. In the meantime we continue to work closely with DefenceCare and preparation for meeting the deadlines above.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 7 and 11</td>
<td>Job Advertisements placed for Manager/Claims Advisor and Claims Advisor in The West Australian &amp; SEEK</td>
<td>Job Descriptions to be sent to RSL WA by Friday 22/4 and changes back to DefenceCare by 29/4</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 30</td>
<td>Applications close for Positions</td>
<td>Selection of applicants to be interviewed commences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week Commencing June 20</td>
<td>Interviews for Positions and Applicants chosen</td>
<td>RSL WA to advise best dates for interviews - either before or after State Congress and to nominate interview panel member.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week Commencing June 20</td>
<td>Finalise reporting requirements for service.</td>
<td>To be discussed during the visit to RSL WA for State Congress and interviews. Both DefenceCare and RSL WA can bring to the discussions some potential ideas such as key data to be reported upon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week Commencing June 20</td>
<td>Finalise budget and reimbursement processes.</td>
<td>We may finish this earlier via email and phone.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Early July</td>
<td>Two staff members commence with DefenceCare WA.</td>
<td>Initial orientation day at RSL WA. Assumptions made about notice needing to be given in successful applicant's current jobs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mid July</td>
<td>Two staff members train in Sydney with DefenceCare</td>
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<tr>
<td>Late July</td>
<td>Two new staff members commence working in WA 25/7.</td>
<td>DefenceCare staff member spends four weeks in WA training and mentoring new staff.</td>
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Continued page 86
Foreseeing the future

Since I have been involved with RSL and held the position of President something special happens either leading up to or on ANZAC Day itself. This year was no different from any other year. As I was to welcome the community to our main service a young girl, who had just turned seven passed me an envelope. According to her mother she had locked herself into her room and had spent the morning doing up this letter.

I thanked the young girl and opened the envelope. In reading the letter my eyes welled with tears as did everyone that I showed the letter to after the service. I would like to share the letter with you all and just say one thing. Don’t worry about the future regarding the youth of today remembering veterans.

We are in good hands; the youth of today are quite capable in looking after us in the future.

Donna Prytulak
President – Northam RSL Sub-Branch
Thanks from family of a farm boy

On behalf of the extended Duperouzel Family, I would like to thank the RSLWA for the very moving Sunset Service held at Kings Park on April 21 2016 to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the Battle of Pozières and Mouquet Farm on the Western Front in France during World War 1.

Mrs Liz Hearden from the family spoke at the service about WA York farm boy James (Jim) Ross Duperouzel’s war service in the 51st Battalion and how he was killed in action between August 14-16, 1916 at Mouquet Farm. Several family members laid wreaths in honour of Jim’s sacrifice.

On the same day as the Sunset Service, 30 members of the family – 23 of them from WA – arrived at Villers Bretonneux in France to tour the battlefields where Jim fought. The RSLWA kindly published a story about the trip in the last edition of The Listening Post. In the trip the group viewed some of the cemeteries where Jim’s remains may lie (he has no known grave) and attended the 100th Anniversary ANZAC Day Dawn Service - a very humbling experience for us all.

The strategic importance of the Battle of Pozières and the dire attrition rate from it are often overshadowed by the Gallipoli campaign. Many people are unaware that more Australian servicemen died in six weeks at Pozières than in eight months at Gallipoli.

In recognition of the 100th anniversary year of the Battle of Pozières, our family would like to sincerely congratulate the RSLWA for its initiative in holding the special Sunset Services and for helping to increase people’s awareness of this important piece of Australian military history.

With kind regards to all involved.

Lyn Mitchell
Willetton

Congratulations to Channel Nine

I would like to convey a big thank you to Channel 9 for the production and broadcast of the commercial raising awareness of ANZAC Day and featuring school children from Belgium. Congratulations to all concerned at Channel 9 – well done.

These children came to Western Australia as part of their tour of Australia to thank the Australian community for its contribution toward defeating the Germans during WWI and supporting the Belgium people during this very troubling time in their history and securing their nation.

As a recent visitor to the Western Front in northern France/southern Belgium, the Australians are well respected and thanked for their contribution in this very bloody war. Charles Bean said of the Battle of Pozières in WWI, that the place “was more densely sown with Australian sacrifice than any other spot on earth”.

As I had an opportunity to host this group and speak with them I soon discovered and was very pleasantly surprised that they spoke excellent English, as English is a part of their studies at their college. This is but one of the many ways that the Belgium people through the generations have shown respect to Australians.

Denis Connelly
State Vice President

Please forward Letters for The Listening Post to: johna@rslwhq.org.au or write to ‘The Editor of The Listening Post’ at PO Box 3023, East Perth WA 6892.
Please try to keep letters to a maximum of 150 words.

Please note:
Next publication deadline for ‘Your Letters’ is Friday, August 19, 2016
The 2016 Sunset Services provided many heartfelt moments for those families whose relatives were commemorated. The themes for this year included the Battles of Pozières, Fromelles, Mouquet Farm and the Battle of Long Tan.

Wreath layers each evening included families – most of whom had not had the opportunity to lay wreaths before in commemoration of their loved ones. Many members of our community find it difficult to attend the Dawn Service on ANZAC Day and also have no formal opportunity to lay a wreath.

A big thank-you to the volunteers who helped out each evening, the researchers who helped us develop the content, the Westralian Great War Living History Association who provided an Honour Guard each evening and of course the Sub-Wardens who are there each evening rain or shine.

The RSLWA Women’s Network is developing new events for the year and we are delighted that Nicki Gillis, entertainer extraordinaire, will be our guest speaker at the RSLWA Women’s Network Christmas in July lunch being held on July 8. Our new Committee has agreed that in the future the Women’s Forum Day will be held to align with International Women’s Day and accordingly we won’t be holding the Forum this year. Our next Forum is now scheduled for Sunday March 12, 2017.

After a successful exhibition of the 10th Light Horse in 2015 at the Perth Royal Show, the Royal Agricultural Society Council is now developing an exhibition to be named Women of the Empire and Unsung Heroes. We are working with the Society in developing the exhibition and our Poppy ladies will be helping out again with activities for children and of course making their famous poppies.

For further information on any of these programs and to register your interest please contact RSLWA on 9287 3799.
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WA’s Number 1 Dealer!* 3 Years Running! 2013, 2014, 2015!!

*Applies to DEP program.
‘Between the Dances’

Between the Dances is an eclectic collection of short stories from 300 women who lived through World War II. One of them concerns Vera Fras (88) who now lives in a Morley retirement home.

Vera Fras (nee Walker), still an RSL member, has the extraordinary record of having served with the Women’s Auxiliary Australian Air Force (WAAAF), the New Zealand Army and the British Army.

Here’s an extract from the book, courtesy of author Jacqueline Dinan...

The school teacher in Lake Grace announced to Vera Fras’s class:

“Australia is at war.”

More than five years later, in April 1944, Vera joined the WAAAF, aged sixteen and a half, because her dad connived at changing her date of birth.

I could not wait to get away from the farm where my sister and I worked like men.

Their father secured an Italian POW to do the work – the two men keeping in touch after the war. Mum was a good-spirited countrywoman, volunteering for the Red Cross and the CWA.

Vera worked at the RAAF Technical Library, a part of the Air Armament and Gas School. The library, based at Nhill, produced and stored technical manuals for courses undertaken by members of the RAAF. Time was found for fun, and the many women there would go on the back of a truck to parties.

Amidst the merriment there were sad times too.

One of Vera’s officers lost her boyfriend when a plane he flew crashed.

I felt so sorry for her. The loss had such a profound effect on her that she never married.

Towards the end of 1945, Vera moved to the RAAF Education Centre in Collins Street Melbourne, as a clerk librarian.
Women must have an RSL voice

by Gabby Ryan

I am honoured to be the new Chair for the RSLWA Women’s Network, formerly the RSLWA Women’s Alliance.

I would like to thank Donna Prytulak and her committee for all their hard work in setting up the committee and getting the Women’s Forum off the ground.

Allow me to introduce myself: I am a service member having spent 34 years in Defence in both the Australian Regular Army and the Army Reserves.

I am married with two adult children and am currently a member of the RSLWA Board of Directors and one of the Vice Presidents of the City of Cockburn RSL Sub-Branch.

I also work full time as a senior client contact officer with DVA.

My intention moving forward with the network is to focus on the initiatives that have arisen as a result of our forums. We need to be relevant, strategic and approachable and have a voice about where we see the RSL heading into the future.

The RSL needs to be more inclusive of women and more family friendly in the way we operate.

This year’s 2016 Forum will be postponed until March 2017 to align with International Women’s week.

We have some fantastic events coming up in the next few months and I am looking forward to meeting as many of you as possible at all of these events.

I am excited about the way the group is progressing and if you have any ideas or suggestions please free to contact me gabby.ryan@live.com.au

Women's Network Group

The RSLWA Women’s Network (RSLWAWN) has been initiated by the Returned & Services League of Australia (WA Branch).

The purpose of the network is to seek input and policy direction from women and to support and encourage their greater participation in the veteran community.

The RSLWAWN is specifically designed to include ex-service, serving, reservists, affiliates, partners and mothers of serving members.

The group provides support and advice relating to:

- Overseeing the development of an annual forum of events and programs,
- Overseeing the development of strategies to encourage ongoing women’s participation in the RSLWA, and
- Advising the Board of Directors on issues and projects relating to our network.
An apology from *The West Australian* published soon after ANZAC Day highlighted an increasingly common problem for young women displaying service medals. The West had published a picture of two women – and reported that one was wearing the medals awarded to her ‘ancestors’. The apology came because *The West Australian* had assumed that Brooke Carmichael was too young to have served. In fact, Brooke has been deployed to Afghanistan twice and was wearing the medals on the correct (left-hand side) of her coat. This is her story.

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### It’s time for a change of attitude

![Good friends Renae Pearce (left) and Brooke Carmichael attend an ANZAC Day service with their service medals.](image)

*Women’s network*

**by Brooke Carmichael**

As a young veteran, I am often mistaken for wearing my grandfathers’ medals or for incorrectly wearing them on the wrong side.

Once corrected, people are often shocked to hear that I not only served in the Army, but that I am a veteran of two tours to Afghanistan. Perhaps it’s my age or the fact that I am a woman. Perhaps it’s because I don’t ‘look’ like a veteran.

I think the public image of a veteran does not portray this demographic accurately.

A veteran is a 35 year-old mother of two; a 25 year-old guy on your local footy team; a 50 year-old man standing next to you in the checkout line; a 40 year-old woman ordering a coffee with her girlfriends. I am a 31 year-old ambulance officer and I am a veteran.

Veterans are everyday people, going about their regular day-to-day business just like everybody else. But for one day of the year, these people get to stand out from the crowd. On ANZAC day, these people wear more than just the medals on their chest – they wear both the pride and burden of their service, and the legacy of those who have served before them.

On ANZAC day, these people get to stand up and say ‘I am a veteran’.

It’s important to be recognised as a veteran, because at some point in our lives we decided that the preservation of Australia’s freedom and way of life was more important than our own.

I personally don’t believe that kind of sacrifice should be ignored, forgotten or accidentally misinterpreted, simply because I don’t ‘look’ like a veteran.

I only get this one day to say who I really am and what I chose to do for my country – and I don’t think any veteran, young or old, should have that taken away from them.

RSLWA President Graham Edwards said, “The RSL recognises the service of young women and that’s why we have established a women’s network within the RSL to give their greater recognition and acknowledgement of their service. These young women have given great service to their nation. They are entitled to full acknowledgement for that service. The RSL recognises this although we understand that there are some in the community who are simply not aware of the extent of the service and the deployments so many young women have gone through. These women are entitled to their medals, they’ve earned them and they should be acknowledged with respect.”
WRAAC 65th anniversary celebrations

by Judy Welch

In February, about 420 former members of the Women’s Royal Australian Army Corps (WRAAC) celebrated in Canberra the 65th anniversary of the formation of the corps. Twenty travelled from WA, including some WRAAC Association WA and RSL members.

Corps Day on February 12 is commemorated annually as the official date of the formation of the corps, so it was fitting that on that date we attended the Last Post Ceremony at the Australian War Memorial. The story of Sister Mary Eleanor McGlade was read by WO1 Michelle Griffith. These two women met the criteria required by the AWM, in that the speaker is a serving soldier and the subject is listed on the Roll of Honour.

We arrived in style in a black Hummer limo complete with tiaras and gloves!

Following the Last Post ceremony, a meet and greet was held in the ANZAC Hall at the AWM. This was a time for everyone to catch up with old friends, make new friends and actually meet some Facebook friends face-to-face!

The powers of social media and the internet have played a huge part in reuniting so many former members of the corps and reacquainting many who met at the 60th reunion in Sydney five years ago. The camaraderie that existed during our service still exists today.

On Saturday February 13 more than 360 women gathered for the Sapphire Dinner at the QT Hotel. As part of the decor, various uniforms worn by WRAAC members throughout the years were hung from the ceiling. A certain group of West Aussies arrived in style in a black Hummer limo – complete with tiaras and gloves... oh! To be 19 again!

The next day an Ecumenical Church service was held in the ANZAC Memorial Chapel of St Paul at RMC Duntroon. The service was conducted by Chaplain Catic Inches-Odgen. WRAAC processional banners were marched in to the service to the rousing tune of ‘Soldiers of the Queen’.

Lunch at the RMC Golf Club and tours of RMC Duntroon followed and the visit would not have been complete without a visit to the Kathleen Best Memorial Gates which, in 1959, were originally installed at the entrance to WRAAC School at Georges Heights, Sydney, but now grace the entrance to the Commandant’s home at Duntroon.

Monday was the farewell luncheon at the National Portrait Gallery. An animated and informative presentation was given by gallery director Angus Trimble. Jenny McNamara (WA) addressed the audience and proposed a toast to the memory of the 21 Australian nurses who were massacred on Radji Beach at Bangka Island, Indonesia on February 16, 1942, with Vivian Bullwinkle being the only survivor.

Apart from the official functions, the West Aussies enjoyed hosting friends from other states, sightseeing, visiting friends and relatives who lived in Canberra and generally being tourists. All in all, an absolutely fantastic four days of mateship.

Sorry that we can’t share too many stories, but we have always adopted the motto ‘what happens in camp – stays in camp’! Now to save for the 70th...

Those left at home in WA held a ceremony at the Flame of Remembrance to commemorate Corps Day, followed by a luncheon at the Herdsman. The March general meeting of the WRAAC Association WA allowed time for the ‘cutting of the cake’ and for all to celebrate together in WA.

We are, and always will be - Soldiers of the Queen – Proud to have served.
Own a piece of Australian history

More than any other event in our history, the Gallipoli campaign of 1915 defines us as a nation. No other conflict before or after has brought out the best in us, in the face of overwhelming adversity. For when we are in our darkest hour, the human spirit shines at its brightest. On the 100th anniversary of this nation-defining event you can show your pride with the "Centenary of Gallipoli Men's Watch", a fine jewellery edition which shines with its own brilliance in honour of the men who made you who you are today.

As distinctive as it is handsome, the watch is expertly crafted by hand with a genuine gold-plated casing and strap. The metallic face showcases a raised relief Centenary of Gallipoli emblem specially created to mark this milestone in our nation's history. The case reverse has been etched with "Australia was born on the shores of Gallipoli", Prime Minister Williams Hughes' belief that out of the tragedy of Gallipoli, our nation realised its full potential and grew. One hundred years later, we stand proudly as one of the greatest nations on Earth.

Limited availability. Respond today.

Available only from The Bradford Exchange, the "Centenary of Gallipoli Men's Watch" can be yours for just 5 instalments of $39.99 or $199.95, plus $19.99 postage and handling, backed by our famous 120-day guarantee. But availability will be limited, so you must act today. Send no money now. Just return the coupon or go online today at www.bradford.com.au/gallipoli.

For quickest delivery, order online:

Quoting promotion code: 85368

"Australia was born on the shores of Gallipoli"

William Hughes, Prime Minister
1915 – 1923
The take-up of tickets for the Centenary Ball has been fantastic and we have sold out of the 550 seats we had available.

In order to help make the evening a very special occasion we put out the call for sponsorships and we gratefully acknowledge the following sponsors who will be there on the evening.

A big thank-you to George Jones’ Family Foundation, Bernie and Erin Stephens and Midas Plumbing our Gold Sponsors.

We also wish to acknowledge:

- Gerard Daniels
- Hollywood Hospital
- Defence Bank
- Havilah Legal
- Jackson McDonald
- Kingsize Menswear
- Military Bank
- Smartclub
- The Perth Mint for supplying the commemorative coins for the evening

We also want to say a big thank-you to Jason Pearce and his team from Media Junction and Type Express Advertising who designed the material for the ball on a complimentary basis.

We would also like to thank the following who have kindly donated auction items for the evening:

- Chris Martin
- Military Art
- Perth Concert Hall
- Fremantle Dockers
- Army Museum
- Aviation Heritage Museum
- Benara Nursery
- Lucy Papalia

Tickets to the Centenary Ball will be mailed out at the beginning of June. The special guest speaker for the evening will be The Hon. Brendan Nelson AO.

Music is being kindly provided by the Australian Army Band Perth.
Vietnam veterans will commemorate the comrades who never came home at services here and overseas in August.

The 50th anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan falls on August 18 and plans are well advanced for services in Western Australia and Long Tan itself.

“The reason Long Tan Day is important to me is to remember and honour the men who fought and died in that bloody battle,” said one of the survivors, Neil Bextrum. “They are the bravest men I have ever met. We will remember them.”

Eighteen Australians died as a result of the battle, although soldiers who returned will generally commemorate the 521 who died throughout the 1962-75 war. Sixty one were from WA.

Services will be held at North Beach, Mandurah, Albany, Bunbury, Broome, Canberra, Brisbane and Long Tan to name but a few.

You can see information about some of these services online at http://rslwahq.org.au/Commemoration/Vietnam-Veterans-Services.aspx

On Thursday, August 18:

Charles Riley Memorial Reserve, North Beach: This RSL service will start with a march at 10.45am from the North Beach Bowling Club to the Memorial Precinct and wreath laying. The service starts at 11.00am. All welcome and for further information please contact Chris Rampart on 0429 454 116 or crampart@gmail.com

Mandurah: The Mandurah Murray Vietnam Veterans Group combined with the Mandurah RSL Sub-Branch will conduct a formal parade and service. Form-up on the Eastern Foreshore in Mandurah City at 10.15am. The march heads over the Old Mandurah Bridge to the War Memorial led by a Naval Honour Guard and the Scotch College Pipes and Drums Band.

Albany RSL: March down York Street to start at 10.00 am and a Memorial Service will be held at ANZAC Peace Park in Princess Royal Drive and a BBQ at ‘The Forts’ on Mount Adelaide. For further information contact Laurie Fraser on 0400 446 954 or clanfraser09@bigpond.com

Bunbury: Bunbury RSL Sub-Branch, in combination with South West RSL sub-branches will have a Meet and Greet at the Bunbury RSL Hall on Saturday August 13 from 1pm until 6pm. The Commemoration of the Vietnam’s Remembrance Day will be conducted on Sunday August 14 at ANZAC Park, Bunbury. Timings are from up at the RSL Hall at 10.30am and march off at 11am. Guest speaker is BRIG. Duncan Warren (retd.), a Vietnam Veteran, will address the members and families from the South West Branches. Following the parade members and their families will be invited to the Hall for refreshments.
Smallest service in Australia?

Long Tan battle survivor Neil Bextrum and his partner Deb Lucas didn’t forget his mates on ANZAC Day when he placed a cross at Lake Indoon, 12 km west of Eneabba.

For Neil it was a planned operation to remember the 17 members of his unit that died 50 years ago in the Battle of Long Tan, now more commonly referred to as Vietnam Veterans Day.

Neil and Deb were having a break from their Perth home but took the white cross with them to ensure they remembered those left behind in Vietnam.

He reckons it was possibly the smallest service in Australia but he wasn’t about to forget the 17 members of D Company 6RAR who died. Nor would he forget the mateship he discovered at Long Tan, when after being wounded in the chest WO Jack Kirby threw him over a shoulder to carry him to a medivac area.

As Neil wrote in the last edition of The Listening Post, “For a man (like WO Kirby) to move around under heavy fire without showing any sign of fear was inspirational. He saved my life.”

Neil and the only other surviving member of D Company in WA, Harley Webb, will travel to Canberra for an official reception at Parliament House on August 17 and on August 18 – Long Tan Day – they will attend a ‘Stand To’ service at the Australian War Memorial.

A national Vietnam War commemorative service will be held later that morning at the Australian Vietnam Forces Memorial on ANZAC Parade in Canberra.

A special Long Tan commemorative service will be held at Gallipoli Barracks, Enoggera, Brisbane for veterans of the Battle of Long Tan and their families.

A commemorative dinner for the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan will be held on Friday, August 19 and the Vietnam War Commemorative Concert will be held on Sunday, August 21, both at the Brisbane Convention Centre.
John Heselwood is the Brisbane-based President of the Long Tan Veterans Association and is playing a leading role in organising 50th anniversary commemorations of the Battle of Long Tan. He was a member of D Company during the battle and explains what happened.

Bloody battle of Long Tan

by John Heselwood

On the afternoon of the August 18, 1966, 105 soldiers from D Company 6 RAR and three members of the New Zealand 161 Artillery Battery moved into a rubber plantation near the village of Long Tan. They were responding to a mortar and rocket attack on the Australian Task Force Base at Nui Dat early on the morning of August 17.

B Company 6 RAR had initially been sent out on August 17 to find the area where the attack had been launched from. They located the area and blood trails leading away indicating the Australian Artillery return fire had been effective. On August 18 D Company was ordered out to link up with B Company and follow up trails leading to the east.

6 RAR had been raised in Brisbane in June 1965 and in September of that same year they were brought up to full strength when National Servicemen from the first Conscription intake joined the regular soldiers in the battalion. Following nine months of intensive training the nashos and regular soldiers had bonded together so well it was impossible to tell them apart. On June 7 they arrived at Vung Tau for a week’s acclimatisation prior to moving to the Task Force Base at Nui Dat. One record shows the D Company strength as at August 18, 1966 to be 124, 63 Nashos and 61 regulars.

Two months later after leaving their base with the sounds of a concert at Nui Dat ringing in their ears they met up with B Company and after exchanging intelligence, the company stood on the edge of the rubber plantation preparing to move out.

Almost immediately, contact was made with a small group of enemy. Shots were exchanged and the enemy quickly withdrew. One weapon was found and a blood trail indicated at least one of them was wounded. 11 Platoon was ordered to move forward and follow up the enemy’s withdrawal. 11 Platoon moved forward in an extended line formation and were 500-600 metres into the rubber when they were hit with heavy machine gun and automatic rifle fire.

Six section on the left flank immediately took casualties from a heavy machine gun situated on Nui Dat 2, a small hill on their left. After a short period of confusion, orders were given and defensive positions were put in place. 2Lt Gordon Sharp reported his platoon had encountered a large enemy force and requested immediate artillery support.

New Zealand Forward Observation Officer Captain Maurie Stanley who was with the D Company Headquarters Group, co-ordinated artillery fire from the Kiwi 161 Battery and the Australian 203 and 205 Battery’s. Lt Sharp quickly adjusted the fall of the artillery fire inflicting heavy casualties to the advancing enemy troops. Large numbers of enemy could be seen in the distance and their uniforms indicated they were not local Viet Cong.

It was later established they were North Vietnamese regular troops from the 274 and 275 Regiments. They were supported by the local Viet Cong Unit D445. Intelligence sources later estimated D Company had encountered an enemy force in excess of 2,500.

LT Sharp was killed when he rose to his knees to obtain a better view and the Platoon Sergeant took over. Heavy monsoonal rain began falling.

The enemy continued to advance and artillery was called closer to the 11 Platoon position with shells sometimes falling within 50 metres of the diggers. This was however welcomed as they were now running short of ammunition and it was obvious they could not stay there much longer.
In the meantime 10 Platoon had been ordered up the left flank in an attempt to relieve 11 Platoon. However they encountered a group of enemy who were attempting to outflank 11 Platoon, which began taking casualties and was forced to return to the company position. 12 Platoon were then sent up the right flank but they too ran into enemy and also withdrew to the company position. A couple of 11 Platoon survivors managed to join 12 Platoon before they withdrew.

The 11 platoon position was now vulnerable as enemy attacks increased and ammunition was virtually expended. The Platoon Sergeant gave the order to withdraw and the survivors ran towards where they thought the company position was. Enemy fire was so heavy that they could only move 20-30 metres at a time.

They eventually got to the company and CSM Jack Kirby put them down in a position protecting the rear of the position. He then came around handing out ammunition which had been dropped by RAAF helicopters shortly beforehand. The helicopter crews dis obeyed orders to deliver the ammunition in conditions not suitable for operating, but as history shows their bravery allowed the company to defend its position. Unknown to the company, enemy forces were preparing to attack the rear of the their position which was only defended by five or six 11 platoon survivors. Fortunately the Armoured Personal Carriers loaded with A Company reinforcements attacked the enemy force and broke up the attack. By now it was still raining and pitch black. Under these conditions and with the arrival of the APC’s the enemy withdrew. The APC’S and A Company moved into the D Company and later the company moved to a position where helicopters could land and take out the wounded.

Next morning following a resupply of ammunition and equipment D Company moved back to the site of the battle to pick up their dead and complete a battlefield clearance. To everyone’s relief, two of the 11 platoon diggers were found alive after being wounded and laying there all night with enemy moving around them collecting their own dead.

During the next two days the company buried all the enemy dead and collected a large amount of weapons and equipment before moving back to Nui Dat. During the battle D Company lost 17 killed and 23 wounded. The APC Squadron lost one, killed. The enemy loss was officially put at 245 killed but it is readily acknowledged that many more were carried away that night and many of their wounded would have died over the following weeks.

The contributions from the supporting units cannot be underestimated. The initial fall of fire from the artillery prevented 11 Platoon from being overrun early in the battle and their continued accurate support enabled D Company to control their position. The RAAF ammunition resupply arrived at a critical time and allowed the company to continue defending their position. Finally the arrival of the APC’s with A Company aboard prevented an attack on the rear of the position which was probably the least defended D Company position.

There is no doubt that the courage shown by the soldiers of D Company prevented an attack on the Task Force at Nui Dat going ahead as the enemy Commanders realised they were no longer in a position to launch a surprise attack and were forced to withdraw.
Truck cycles home (10,000km)

One ex-SAS trooper who received a bravery award after a parachute incident is trying to make a difference by cycling from Hanoi to Canberra.

Laurie ‘Truck’ Sams is already making a good go of it, cheerfully downplaying truck rollovers and other incidents on the road on Facebook. He again looks likely to crush the odds.

His self-styled ‘Long Ride Home’ began on May 13 and is scheduled to reach the Australian War Memorial at 11am on Friday, November 11 to mark Remembrance Day. Then he plans to ride to Sydney and reach the steps of Sydney Opera House on Sunday, November 20.

Truck (67) is an unusual man. He is no shrinking violet – because his goal is to raise awareness and funds for ‘our wounded but not forgotten warriors’.

In 1995 he lost a leg below the knee when his tandem parachute failed to fully open during a jump from 5,000 feet in Queensland. Action taken by Laurie to bear the full force of the landing by shielding his tandem passenger resulted in him receiving a Star of Courage award.

A former Warrant Officer with the SAS Regiment, Laurie completed 21 years in the Australian Army, including a 12-month tour of Vietnam.

He reckons that up to last year he completed 14,000kms in total over six years of riding in just Vietnam alone. It was part of his ‘Vietnam Veterans Remembrance’ solo ride to remember the 521 Australians who died in that war.

The current ride will pass through the paddy fields and dense jungle of Vietnam to Ho Chi Minh City before striking west through Cambodia and Thailand and skirting the Gulf of Thailand south to Malaysia and Singapore, where the team will catch a flight to Perth for the arduous trans-Nullarbor ride to Adelaide then on to Melbourne, Canberra and Sydney.

“We’re hoping to really interact with locals along the route, especially in smaller communities like Katanning, Ravensthorpe and Esperance in the West, Port Augusta, Port Pirie and Murray Bridge in South Australia, Horsham, Ballarat and Wangaratta and Wodonga in Victoria and Albury, Goulburn and Bowral in NSW,” said Truck.

He can be followed on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/thelongridehomeaustralia

And on his website: www.thelongridehome.com.au

Support for Truck SAS Reunion at Long Tan: From Left – Shane Gibson, Dean Palmer (WA), John Remnyse, Truck Sams, Clint Palmer (WA), Robin McBride, Dave McCamley, Bart Mavrick (WA), Barry Lansdown, Ric Giblett (WA – President Serpentine-Jarrahdale RSL Sub-Branch) and Steve Rodgers.
‘Battle of Coral’ – Operation Toan Thang I

by Don Hunter

Over a two-week period in May 1968 the little known, largest and most costly battle by 1st Australian Task Force (1ATF) in South Vietnam (SVN) concluded with the loss of 25 Australian lives and 99 wounded.

The American military had asked 1ATF to occupy, disrupt and block the North Vietnamese Army’s (NVA) 7th Division from accessing their usual supply bunkers and travel route to attack Saigon.

These subsequent fighting actions collectively became known as the ‘Battle of Coral’ and took place 40 kms NE of Saigon in Binh Duong province.

On the aggressor’s side, the fighting desperation of the 7th Division NVA troops was driven by two separate aims; first to try again with a second May TET offensive, in an effort to arouse local people to an armed uprising against the SVN government and their allies, and second to disrupt the May US-N. Vietnamese Paris Peace talks.

On the battlefront, intelligence information had been poor and the commencement of action for 1RAR, 3RAR and their artillery support in 12th Field’s 102 Battery was occurring on the ground below before their helicopter transports landed.

The presence of a large focused NVA force estimated at 4,000 men (versus a third that number of Australians ) - provided an immediate opportunity for the NVA to hit hard on that first night when the lateness of the diggers arrival left them without properly dug pits, erected barbed wire defences, or lain claymore mines.

The NVA’s first attack was in the early hours of May 13 when they overran a section of the 102 Field Battery artillery position, capturing and damaging one of the artillery guns with gunner casualties. This set the pattern for the next two weeks for Coral FSB (Fire Support Base) on May 13, 16 and 22 and later in the month at Balmoral FSB on May 26 and 29, when the NVA repeated a similar pattern of mortar, rocket propelled grenades, and infantry attacks.

However, the diggers adapted to these tactics by repelling the NVA incursions and following up with patrols at daylight to pursue, clear and engage the enemy which they did very effectively and with great bravery, teamwork and skill. For the first time in the war, our infantry was aided by Centurion tanks which excelled especially in bunker attacks, and US gunships and jets (on request) to repel the NVA night attacks.

It was seen as a clear Australian victory with confirmed NVA losses of 267 KIA. Evacuation of FSB Coral was conducted on June 6 when diggers returned to Nui Dat to continue further successful Operations within IATF’s area of responsibility of Phuc Tuy province.

Charm and tragedy of Borneo

A WA-based tour operator is retracing the full length and scope of the Sandakan POW tragedy in Sabah, Labuan and Sarawak plus visiting the scenic and local people’s charms of Borneo.

These destinations, now part of Malaysia, have a rich military history well understood by Frank Taylor, an experienced tour operator who specialises in Australian military history and heritage destinations.

He educates his tour group about the little-known courageous Sabah uprising against the Japanese as well as the return of the Allied Forces to British North Borneo which commenced with the Second World War’s last Australian amphibious landings (opposed by Japanese forces) on Labuan Island.

The tour inspects the landing and the battle for the island and pays respects at the Labuan War Cemetery which includes the victims of the Sandakan atrocities with others of our war dead.

His tour ‘Sandakan and Beyond’ departs in October and will visit Tenom in southern Sabah where Esperance farmer Tom Starcevich won the VC and Japanese forces travelled by jungle railway to surrender to Australians.

“We travel that colonial era railway too!” says Frank, who served 38 years in the Australian Army Reserve and 31 years with the Western Australia Police. “Not only war stories in Tenom are of interest, but Tenom hides a world class botanic garden of amazing variety waiting to be discovered.

“Kuching in Sarawak is a charming laid-back state capital where you feel more a visitor than a tourist!”

Kuching is the location of the POW and internment camp where some servicemen from Sandakan were transferred after the discovery of an underground network operating under the noses of the Japanese.

The 11-day tour starts in Sandakan and ends in Kuching. For more information email kokoda@arach.net.au

Frank Taylor is also planning a 75th commemoration visit to PNG in 2017 for both the Kokoda Campaign and the Beach Battles (Gona, Buna, Sanananda) that followed to the end of the Papuan Campaign.

And following an initial first successful tour of the Myanmar section of the Thai-Burma Railway, Frank Taylor is planning another tour. In September, he will also lead a group to the Western Front.
‘The Listening Post’ – from the Archives

by Helen Starkie

In previous editions of RSLWA’s official journal The Listening Post, readers have been provided with a link to the archived, digitised editions of the journal, which range from 1921 to the present day.

Many researchers are now finding that as well as providing information about the history of RSL in WA, the digitised versions also provide so much more historical and social information.

Researchers and historians are advising that the issues are a valuable resource complementing and supplementing other sources of digitised information, such as newspapers on Trove (created and run by the National Library of Australia).

One such researcher Cheryl Rogers recently contacted me. She had been researching her family’s history, with emphasis on investigating details of soldier settlement in the Swan Valley of WA. After being provided with the link to the digitised, archived Listening Posts, Cheryl excitedly advised - “Remarkably, five minutes into the December 15, 1922 edition and have struck gold... so much rich history!”

Cheryl discovered in the 1922 issue, a reference to Lt Alfred Guy who was still recovering from horrific injuries received when serving with the 44th Battalion in 1917. Just days earlier (via Trove) Cheryl had been reading a 1942 Daily News article in which the then Prime Minister, John Curtin, described (Volunteer Defence Corps Captain) Guy as “expressing the true spirit of Australia” by marching proudly with his mates “despite a stiff leg and paralysis down one side.”

The article mentions that Captain Guy’s four younger children nearly jumped out of their chairs with surprise and delight when they heard the PM speak about their father.

It also turns out that Alf Guy convinced Cheryl’s grandparents to install an air-raid shelter in the backyard on this Swan Valley property. When the war finished, the hole was filled and Cheryl’s mother, 21 then and now 92, planted a Hellenor Camellia (it cost 4/6d) where the shelter had been. Every year since it has bloomed from May to November.

Noting the original price of the Camelia, the July 1923 edition of The Listening Post, p. 13, also provides further interesting price comparisons for everyday grocery items – for example, Butter 2/2 lb (2 shillings, 2 pence per pound weight).


...and see who and what you may find.
In August 1915, there were 10 regiments of Light Horse at Gallipoli. The 3rd brigade (which included the Western Australian Regiment – the 10th Light Horse) took part in four charges across a narrow ridge known as The Nek on August 7, 1915. Nearly half of the 600 men went to their deaths.

“The men of the light horse endured hardships scarcely imaginable to us today. They lived for weeks, sometimes months at a time with a litre of water a day, tough army biscuits and tinned bully beef that melted into a mass of grease in the heat.

“Weeks without washing, bodies crawling with lice, sleeping on blankets covered in horse sweat (used as saddle blankets too). They saw their buddies die in terrible circumstances as well as their beloved horses.”

Albany is associated with the Desert Mounted Corps because the mounted troops and the rest of the first detachment of the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) and the New Zealand Expeditionary Force (later known collectively as the ANZACS) left King George Sound in a convoy of ships in November 1914 to join WWI.

The statue on Mount Clarence depicts an Australian mounted soldier assisting a New Zealand soldier whose horse had been wounded.

Esperance has established a new 10th Light Horse Troop and we are compelled to share these magnificent images.

The troop formed on Saturday, April 9, when Maxine Waterhouse and Sandy Forbes from 10th Light Horse – Albany Troop travelled the 500kms to Esperance to assist local riders to start a new troop.

These photographs were all taken by Lex Porebski from Gasgaslex Images in Albany and indicate they succeeded admirably.

Nine riders and their horses attended the afternoon. They practiced basic formation riding and then marched with vintage cars and a brass band. Sonja Andrews from the Entrenchment Group and LT (AAC) Trudy Giles from 503 Esperance Army Cadet Unit fitted six of the riders out with uniforms borrowed from the Australian Army Museum of Western Australia in Fremantle.

All nine riders and their horses passed the tryouts with six of the members marching in the Esperance RSL Sub-Branch ANZAC Day parade.

Special thanks to Maxine Waterhouse, Sandy Forbes, Esperance RSL Sub-Branch, Australian Army Museum of Western Australia, Shire of Esperance, all the riders, family and supporters, Esperance Express, Lex Porebski, Caitlyn Edwards and Karen Miller photography and interviews, Esperance Soccer Club, Gibson Soak Water, Esperance Vintage Car Club, Members of the Esperance Anglican Community School Brass Band, Annika Stone Scaddan Primary School, Paul Russell and Nona Vine, 503 Esperance Army Cadet Unit & Members of the Entrenchment Group.

Congratulations to all concerned.
Troop for Esperance

Captivating Esperance turned it on for ANZAC Day with the traditional Dawn Service at the Esperance Cenotaph, after a march along the main street by the members of the sub-branch.

The service was very well received, with more than 1,000 people attending.

The ANZAC Memorial Service was also held at the Cenotaph following a march through town.

The parade was led by the Esperance Brass Band, followed by sub-branch members and veterans, members of the Western Australian Police Service, Western Australian Emergency Services Volunteers, the New Zealand ex-pats of Esperance, representatives of all schools in the region and a group of six horsemen in the uniform of the 10th Light Horse Brigade.

Ceremonial duties were conducted by Army Cadets in a very professional manner.

More than 2,000 people lined the streets and attended the Service.

Following the Service the Esperance Shire President, Mrs Victoria Brown, unveiled a mural depicting the 10th Light Horse charge at Beersheba. The mural will remain in place for some years to come.

Under the watchful eye of veterans, school children lay wreaths at the Cenotaph.

Esperance RSL President George Starcevich addresses the crowd during Esperance’s ANZAC Day service. This proud seaside town has a rich history of service that has been nurtured by the local sub-branch.
For the four RSL Cadet of the Year finalists, ANZAC Day was a huge event! But somewhere in between a 0230 wake up, attending the Dawn Service and marching the length of ANZAC Parade, the cadets got an unexpected surprise when CPL Ben Roberts-Smith VC dropped by Poppy’s Café for a brew! The cadets took the opportunity to say hello and even got a photo with the smiling giant.

He was a wonderful, down to earth guy who congratulated the cadets on their awards and had a brief chat before meeting with the next members of the public who came by.

On the Saturday evening, the cadets took part in the Last Post ceremony at the Australian War Memorial – being ANZAC weekend, the AWM was a hive of visitors and the cadets stood tall and did themselves proud with their simple tribute of a wreath on behalf of the WA RSL Cadet of the Year Contingent.

CDT LS Bronwyn Crawcour laid the wreath accompanied by CDT WO1 Bodhi Power, CDT CPO Richard Thomas and CDT LCPL Ben Tinley.

Over the course of the time we were in Canberra we visited the National Library, Australian War Memorial, ADFA, Parliament House and the Royal Australian Mint.

SBLT ANC Melanie Hayward
Commanding Officer
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Long Tan and Yarloop fury collide

Vietnam veteran Leslie Owen Taylor was finally laid to rest on May 13 – four months after falling victim of the Yarloop fires. ‘Squizzy’ was farewelled at a Fremantle Cemetery service attended by his family, fellow Gunners from the Vietnam War and members of the Returned & Services League. His coffin was draped in an Australian flag and covered with a native floral wreath and a Digger’s hat. It was carried into the chapel at Fremantle cemetery to the strains of John Williamson’s anthem True Blue.

Mr Taylor served in Malaya and on two tours of duty in Vietnam, including seeing action with the artillery in the battle of Long Tan. He was injured on his second tour and told later how he had been in camp when it was sprayed with the defoliant Agent Orange.

In her eulogy, celebrant Julie Goor said Les’s sister Ena Mays recalled Les telling her he was in his camp a couple of times when the Americans sprayed the area with Agent Orange, soaking his camp on the ground with no warning. “With limited access to water a few times, he said it burnt your skin and eyes,” she told the service. “He showed her (Ena) slides which showed Agent Orange pouring out of an aircraft. “And so, he took part in a huge legal case for compensation for the effects that Agent Orange had on Veterans’ health. “They won the case, but such was the amount of the compensation offered that each of the recipients refused to accept it.”

Les was a member of 103 Field Battery, 1st Field Regiment, Royal Australian Artillery during its Vietnam deployment May 66 to May 67.
Inspiring ANZACs of the Year

Two inspiring Western Australians have been named 2016 ANZACs of the Year by RSL National.

Geoff McClements and Claire Hunt are refreshingly self-effacing and yet extremely active in their own ways. Geoff is 93 years young and difficult to catch at home. He is always out and about grabbing a coffee, selling poppies, reciting the Ode or making some other contribution to the veteran community. He is the mainstay of the proud Claremont RSL Sub-Branch which was chartered on September 16, 1916. He became President in 1983 when there were 189 financial members. Now, regrettably and despite his time and effort to reinvigorate the membership, there are only eight.

“I feel very humble,” he told The Listening Post. “I don’t think I did very much out of the ordinary, except go to war and come home again.”

Claire Hunt, the Defence ‘kids’ mentor at Comet Bay College in Safety Bay, is similarly humble about being named as an ANZAC of the Year.

“I have to admit I didn’t know much about the award and when I found out that’s when it really hit,” she said. “I felt worthy with all those fabulous people who have won this award. I am very appreciative of the support from the RSL and the Defence community.”

Claire, as the Defence Transition Mentor at the college, is a driving force in numerous activities – from poppy production to creating an impressive new Military History Museum at the school.

The Defence Transition Mentor Program provides support to secondary students of Australian Defence Force (ADF) members and their families, particularly during their transition into and out of a school on posting or during parental absences due to deployment, exercises or courses.

Defence families can change location sometimes up to every two to three years and due to differences in curriculum, subject selections and intake age requirements there can be considerable differences in their educational program from one school to the next and particularly from one state to another.

For the Centenary of the departure of the first fleet from Albany, Claire embraced the RSL poppy project and worked with volunteers and school students to create in excess of 7,000 poppies. It was these poppies that were used to create the giant 100 that was used for the Giants, The Sunset Services and ANZAC Day 2015, in addition to being used throughout Albany.

Claire also works with her local RSL and at local services, such as Remembrance Day and Vietnam Veterans Day, is always there to give a helping hand.
The Listening Post JUNE 2016

WWII POW and veteran John Gilmore, who later became a world champion runner, proudly leads the 2/4th Machine Gun Bn.

Gerry Bampton, President of the Australian SAS Association (WA), leads the SAS veterans in their march on ANZAC Day. LCPL Bampton was one of the survivors of the Black Hawk disaster on June 12, 1996 and will be taking part in commemorations on that date in Townsville. Fifteen SAS soldiers and three airmen died when the helicopters collided.

Vietnamese ladies say thank-you to the 61,000 Australians who fought in the Vietnam War (1962-75). Of those 521 Australians died.

There’s no keeping down the Kiwis! Wet weather or not they were out in Maori costume to keep the NZ in ANZAC prominent.

Jeff Keen has been taking photos of ANZAC Day services for years and these images capture the atmosphere and unusually wet conditions of the 2016 parade through Perth. We thank him for them.

WWII POW and veteran John Gilmore, who later became a world champion runner, proudly leads the 2/4th Machine Gun Bn.
Centenary of Battle of Delville Wood

This year marks the Centenary of South Africa’s equivalent of Gallipoli, the Battle of Delville Wood - one of the bloodiest battles of World War One.

The battle formed part of the Battle of the Somme, and commenced on July 14 1916, when the 1st South African Brigade, comprising four Regiments, 1st SAI (Cape Province), 2nd SAI (Natal and the Orange Free State) 3rd SAI (Transvaal & Rhodesia) and the 4th SAI (South African Scottish Regiments) under the command of Brigadier General H.T. Lukin were ordered to: “Attack, occupy and hold the wood at all costs.”

The casualties sustained by this brigade were of catastrophic proportions, yet they managed to hold the Wood as ordered. This feat has been described as ‘... the bloodiest battle hell of 1916’.

An extract from the official history reads as follows:

‘The six days and five nights during which the South African Brigade held the most difficult post on the British front – a corner of death on which the enemy fire was concentrated at all hours from three sides, and into which fresh German troops, vastly superior in number to the defence, made periodic incursions only to be driven back - constitute an epoch of terror and glory scarcely equalled in the campaign.

The South Africans measured their strength against the flower of the German army.

There were positions as difficult, but they were not held so long; there were cases of as protracted a defence; but the assault was not so violent and continuous. The high value the enemy set upon Delville Wood is proved by the fact that he used his best troops against it ... The South Africans measured their strength against the flower of the German army, and did not draw back from the challenge.

As a feat of human daring and fortitude the fight is worthy of eternal remembrance by South Africa and Britain. At midnight on July 14, when General Lukin received his orders, the Brigade numbered 121 officers and 3,032 men. When Lt Col Thackeray marched out on the 20th, he had a remnant of 143, and the total ultimately assembled was about 750.’

To place their actions in perspective. At the time any brigade that lost 30 per cent of their strength would be considered as unable to continue to fight. The South African brigade lost over 80 per cent of their numbers and they carried on fighting, won and held their position.

The fighting at stages was reduced to hand to hand combat and the South Africans were virtually surrounded on a number of occasions by the enemy. Enemy shelling at one point reached over 400 shells per minute. (That is 6.7 shells per second) After the battle only one tree remained standing in the wood, and this tree is still standing today.

This battle was also the first time that a South African soldier was awarded the Victoria Cross, the recipient being PTE William Frederick Faulds.

Australians and South Africans have much in common – both their ancestors having come from Europe, both having Christian values, both exceptional horsemen, sharp shooters and independently minded. Both loved the veld and the outback and had made new life’s in distant lands, with their own unique character, which they called home.

Both are extremely competitive by nature and play to win.

These are probably some of the reasons why South Africans assimilate so easily into the ‘Australian way of life’ and why Australia is now a country that former South African soldiers now also proudly call home.

Garth Pienaar
Regional Chairman WA
SAMVOA (South African Military Veterans Organisation of Australasia)
Super sleuth finds medal’s home

The discovery of an alien medal in her father’s WWI war medals collection set Bayswater’s Annette Ramsay off on an extraordinary six-month search for the rightful owner.

She was successful only after searching and researching on the Internet, checking death notices, inquiring at local councils, the RSL and even inspecting a grave in Manjimup.

At 76, Mrs Ramsay surely deserves a medal herself.

The saga began last year when she had the medals belonging to her father and his brother professionally mounted. On close inspection, there was one medal that didn’t belong. On the edge was engraved: H. Scott Gnr. R.F.A. 775182. The reverse side of the medal was inscribed – Territorial Forces War Medal for Voluntary Services Overseas 1914-1918.

Why an Englishman’s medal would be in my father’s possession was a mystery

“It then became my quest to search for descendants of the medal owner’s family and have it returned to them,” Mrs Ramsay explained to The Listening Post.

“Research revealed this to be a medal awarded in the United Kingdom. I was able to access WWI Medal Index cards (UK) which led me to the Harry Scott I was looking for but the information was limited to the medal itself. Due to restraints on searches of Births, Marriages and Deaths records, it became obvious I needed to look elsewhere.

“Why an Englishman’s medal would be in my father’s possession was a mystery.

“I assumed Harry Scott travelled to Australia after the war and at a later stage met my father who lived in the Williams area, WA. My next point of research was shipping passenger lists and it was here I found an H Scott arriving at Fremantle in 1922. I then had a very lucky strike whilst examining the WA Marriage Indexes by discovering Harry Scott married a Millicent Fletcher who lived only five miles from my father’s farm.

“I spent some time researching family trees published on ancestry.com and I was fortunate in discovering Harry’s death record which revealed that he was buried at the Old Manjimup Cemetery.

“Also, the record showed that his wife had remarried. It was at this point my husband and I decided to visit Manjimup and view the grave.

“With the assistance of the local council, we were able to locate the grave and note other family names appearing on the headstone.”

However, Mrs Ramsay seemed to hit a brick wall when checking name plaques at the cemetery. One of them was for the death of Harry’s son (George Henry Scott), in 2009. The plaque had been placed by George’s sister Freda, which led Mrs Ramsay to reasonably believe George (Harry Scott’s son), had no direct surviving family members. Still, she didn’t give up. After returning home she searched the Internet under the surname of Harry’s wife’s second marriage (Kitson). This time she discovered Harry’s daughter was still alive and had also married a Kitson and that there were a number of grandchildren.

“With the assistance of the telephone directory I found an address in the South West and sent a letter to the eldest grandson explaining why I was writing and asking him to make contact with me.

“During December 2015 at the request of Harry’s daughter, a family member collected the medal from me. None of the family was aware Harry Scott had a medal and I understand he never spoke about the war. It was lovely to meet Harry’s descendants and to chat about the past.

“As to why my father was holding Harry’s medal I will never really know but I like to think my father was either minding it as Harry was working in a timber mill in Hakea and possibly he didn’t think the medal was safe there. Perhaps he asked my father for a loan to buy a ring or other things for his future wife and had given the medal as security and after moving away had forgotten about retrieving it.”

The Kitsons now live in Pemberton and Harry’s grandson Wayne said they were glad to receive the medal – although they had no idea it existed.
Perth’s first ANZAC Day in 1916

by Neville Green AM

For more than 110 years the Perth Esplanade was the parade ground where successive Governors farewelled troops bound for battlefields overseas. Thus it was well suited for the first ANZAC Day ceremony on Wednesday April 25, 1916.

The focus was Gallipoli and the organisers showed little interest in other veterans and even the Perth Town Hall luncheon to follow the parade was initially restricted to those who landed at Gallipoli on April 25 1915.

They reluctantly yielded to the public protests and the Church of England St George’s Hall catered for all other veterans.

The editor of The West Australian noted: “It is with mixed feelings that the Nation is facing to-day, the first anniversary of a magnificent achievement. ANZAC Day is surely a unique celebration – something that touches national sentiment infinitely more closely than any day Australia has ever kept before. It is a memorial and will, we hope, be observed everlasting as a memorial to those who have fallen, and it is an occasion for honour to those who have safely returned.

It is no holiday in the accustomed sense. There is none of the carnival spirit abroad, reflected for instance in hilarious street scenes.

Our rejoicing cannot but be tinged with sorrow for the loss of those brave souls who have fought their last fight and our pride mingled with reverent memories of the gallantry, courage, endurance and self-sacrifice that have won for all ANZACs an immortal fame… And in our mourning for those who sleep on the lonely shores of Gallipoli our hearts are surely as full of pride as the grief.

It is heartbreaking to recall the list of killed and to remember the men, whose names come to mind as last one saw them.”

Wednesday was a sunny day and although not yet a public holiday, more than 50,000 people, one sixth of the metropolitan population, packed the morning trains and trams heading into the city, many to line the streets and show their support for the veterans.

Leading the parade was the newly formed Blackboy Hill band followed by the Gallipoli veterans and veterans of the South African Boer War of 1899-1902.

The men recruited into the 10th Light Horse were resplendent with their emu plumed slouch hats, rifles, ammunition belts and bandoliers.

The parade included hundreds of soldiers from metropolitan camps where they were preparing for war and bringing up the rear were the senior Army cadets not yet old enough to enlist.

It proved impossible to prevent spectators pushing onto the road to touch the men or hold back the ladies wanting to embrace their heroes.

Continued page 59
Perth soldier returns home

A full military funeral being held in Perth for former 3RAR and SASR trooper Ron Carroll will help bring to a close an important chapter in his daughter Joanne Carroll’s life. SGT Ron Carroll was killed in action in Bien Hoa Province on August 4, 1968 while serving with D Company 3 RAR.

SGT Carroll was buried at Terendak, Malaysia, and is one of 33 Australian service personnel and dependents, many of whom were casualties of the Vietnam War, repatriated from cemeteries in Malaysia and Singapore.

He served with the Special Air Services Regiment from November 17 1957 to June 23 1960.

The ceremony for SGT Carroll is being conducted on Tuesday June 7 at the Perth War Cemetery in Smythe Road, Nedlands.

A burial party from 3RAR in Townsville will take part along with former military buddies from Vietnam and the Eastern States.

For his Terendak-born daughter Joanne Carroll, who now lives in Warnbro, the service will be helpful in closing an important chapter in her life.

“I have been waiting a long time for this to happen,” she told The Listening Post.

“I still remember the last time I saw him in Adelaide when he was packing his Army kit to go away. He was a very serious man; dedicated to the Army.

“He was someone I looked up to and he was definitely my hero. I think about him every day. It will be helpful (having him interred at the Perth War Cemetery). He’ll be here and I’ll be able to go and see him.”

Joanne was only four years of age when she last saw her Dad, but she has a clear memory of him. Her mother, Jenny, heard of his death in Adelaide but didn’t have the financial resources to bring his body home. She later remarried and died in 1990 in Colombo.

SGT Carroll had two girls and three boys with Jenny – one of the brothers died in New Zealand in May and two others live in England. The fifth child is Joanne’s younger brother David, who was only a few weeks old when his father was killed. Joanne, her partner Darrell and brother Peter will travel to Sydney when SGT Carroll is repatriated.

Two Royal Australian Air Force C-17 Globemaster aircraft were scheduled to arrive at RAAF Richmond in Sydney on June 2 for a formal military repatriation ceremony involving 33 hearses bearing the returning Australians.

Perth War Cemetery was established by the Army in 1942. The cemetery was taken over by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission in February 1949 and contains 475 Commonwealth burials of the Second World War as well as 16 of the First World War and four from the Vietnam War.
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WA’s young hero never forgotten

Doug Cosson travelled from a place called Eldorado to honour a man for whom his family grieved quietly and admired immensely.

Eldorado, near Wangaratta in Victoria, is a long way from the State War Memorial in Kings Park but Mr Cosson (68) said it was tremendously worthwhile to attend the second of five Sunset Services held at the memorial before ANZAC Day.

Five Sunset Services were held at the memorial to honour individuals who fought in battles of 50 and 100 years ago. They were the Battle of Pozières (July 13, 1916), Battle of Mouquet Farm (August 8, 1916), Battle of Romani (August 4, 1916) and Battle of Magdhaba (December 23, 1916), Battle of Fromelles (July 19, 1916) and the Battle of Long Tan (August 18, 1966).

Mr Cosson attended the service for the Battle of Mouquet Farm – an extension of the Pozières conflict – in which his grandfather, LT John (Jack) George Cosson was killed. By all accounts, LT Cosson DCM was an extraordinary Western Australian.

He was killed instantly by shellfire on August 7, 1916 while the 48th Battalion were sustaining a German counter attack. A Private D.B. Green wrote to Jack’s brother that

“I don’t think there is an officer in the Australian Army loved better by his men or more game. I believe his mates say that he did not know what fear was, and most of those fellows belonging to his battalion did not know him before. You can tell his wife and children that he was a soldier.”

Doug Cosson, who runs a caravan park in his semi-retirement, brought his grandfather’s 100 year-old diary to Perth. Parts of it graphically describe his experiences at Gallipoli – where he did two stints after being wounded once. He was one of the last evacuated after the failed nine-month campaign.

His diary on November 28 says:

We are certainly having the test of winter put on us now. Tonight we go into trenches for our shift of 48 hours. It is sure to be very trying. I have got all the socks and clothes on. Why don’t the Bally Turks give in and let us go home to dear old Australia.

Fremantle-based Jack Cosson enlisted in May 1915 and told the medical officer who examined him that he was 44. He was actually 49 - four years over the recruiting limit. He had enjoyed a colourful life – a tobacconist in Fremantle, he earlier promoted boxing fights in Boulder and was involved in horse racing.

Jack was assigned to the 7th Reinforcements to the 16th Battalion AIF and due to his gallant work at Gallipoli was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal. He then went to Egypt where the 16th Battalion was split and Jack was assigned to the new 48th Battalion.

His death, like many of the 61,000 Australians killed in WWI, reverberated through the family.

His wife Elizabeth moved to Victoria with their four children.

“I know my father Donald Walker Cosson would have been thankful (for the Sunset Service) and moved had he still been alive and I daresay John George Cosson would also be quietly thankful that we have remembered him one hundred years on from his untimely death.

“May he rest in peace.”
It began with a wave from 76 year-old **Gloria Taylor** of Victoria Park and culminated with a service spiced by the presence of His Excellency Xanana Gusmão.

Five beautiful Sunset Services, held in the lead-up to ANZAC Day at the State War Memorial, gave families, friends and well-wishers the opportunity to commemorate and honour fallen heroes of past battles.

### Sun Sets on WA’s heroes

For Gloria Taylor the first daily service on April 20 was a special moment because the soldier, Private Charles You, was her great uncle and one of three Chinese brothers from Perth who served in WWI. Her family wanted their war service acknowledged.

PTE You was killed at Pozières between July 22-23 1916 – 100 years ago. Like many in the battle, his body was never found. The following evening three descendants of York farm boy Jim Duperouzel, who was one of 46,000 Australians killed at the Western Front, honoured him at another 30-minute service in Kings Park. WA soldiers Private George Walter and Lieutenant John George Cosson were also honoured and relatives laid wreaths at the service recalling the Battle of Mouquet Farm.

The third Sunset Service commemorated the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan. A WA man wounded in the famous battle, Harley Webb, was guest speaker. Private Harley Webb was seriously wounded in the battle in which 18 Australians, including two West Australians, were killed after they encountered a force of 2,500 Viet Cong in South Vietnam on August 18, 1966.

Other family members of the two men who fought and died in Long Tan attended the service and laid wreaths. Of the two Western Australians who lost their lives serving in the battle was Private Richard Alfred Aldersea, killed by a single shot from a sniper.

The other Western Australian who died as a result of the battle was Temporary Corporal Peter Edward Clements, now buried at Moora. On the night of August 18 Peter was the crew commander of 23 Alpha, the leading APC in 3 Troop when he was fatally wounded and died nine days later at the 36th Evacuation Hospital, Vung Tau. He was 21.

The fourth Sunset Service commemorated the Battles of Romani and Magdhaba. After exiting Gallipoli, the Australian Infantry Force went to Egypt where part of the AIF engaged in the Battles of Romani and Magdhaba 100 years ago.

Amongst them was Private John James Harrison, one of three brothers who enlisted in WWI and fought in the Battle of Romani. Later, in the Battle of Magdhaba, three farmers from WA – one married – were killed as members of the 10th Light Horse they repeatedly charged across desert. A fourth man, Sergeant Spencer Gwynne from Woodanilling, was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal – second only to the Victoria Cross – for gallantry during the same charges.

Direct descendants of the soldiers attended, proving the amazing ripple effect of battles fought 100 years ago which took the lives of 61,000 Australians.

Finally the Battle of Fromelles - the first major battle fought by Australian troops on the Western Front – was recalled on the evening before ANZAC Day 2016. The service was attended by the former President and Prime Minister of East Timor, His Excellency Xanana Gusmão, now Minister for Planning and Strategic Investment and leader of a visit by Timor-Leste Veterans to Australia.

His Excellency spoke during the service, which had the highest attendance figures of all Sunset Services to date.

At Fromelles, the Australian 5th Division suffered a disastrous defeat in the first major operation on the Western Front. This was a war of at times unspeakable horror and Australia experienced its worst day in history with 5,533 casualties (including around 2,000 dead) in just 24 hours.

WA’s Adolf Knable was one of those tragically killed at Fromelles. After the battle Adolf was initially listed as missing and a POW. It was not until 2014 – 98 years later - that his remains were identified through DNA.

As with all of the five services, family and descendants of those named at the services attended.
Sub-wardens of the memorial get together with the organiser of the Sunset Services, Sharon Harford, for a picture.

Family and descendants with a picture of CPL Victor Sewell Taylor, killed in the Battle of Magdhaba.
Services
Kings Park Perth

• The family and descendants of CPL Peter Clements, who died after the Battle of Long Tan, gather around his portrait.

• His Excellency Xanana Gusmão pictured with the family and descendants of PTE Adolf Knable, whose remains were only identified two years ago. He died at the Western Front in 1916.
ANZAC Day presents a massive challenge each year for the 10,000 RSL members in Western Australia and cannot happen without the generosity and support of sponsors. Towering over these sponsors is Lotterywest, which has for years supported the entire community by ensuring that ANZAC Day events happen smoothly and safely. We thank Lotterywest and all of our supporters of this most significant national day.

In every regional centre there are sponsors and supporters not mentioned below to whom we say: Thank you. ANZAC Day is truly above politics and sectional interests. It is a day when we remember all those who have served and those 102,000 who have made the ultimate sacrifice for this country.

**Lotterywest**

Lotterywest provides funding for services at more than 110 locations throughout Western Australia. In Perth, alone, this funding supports a host of volunteers and infrastructure – from audio visual facilities and screens through to fencing and security – at the Dawn Service, March and Commemorative Service. RSLWA works closely with Lotterywest to ensure its objectives are met and branding across the event is in line with requirements.

**City of Perth**

City of Perth provides funding to support the city-based events and this covered reserve hire fees, parking bay fees, street banner hire fees and other costs associated with the production of the events.

**BGPA**

BGPA provides the use of Kings Park for the Dawn Service. They also provide human resources to support the Event Management Team and assistance in the set-up of the infrastructure.

**Channel 9**

Channel 9 is the Host Broadcaster of the Dawn Service and works closely with the Event Management Team in the delivery of the broadcast of the event.

**Transperth**

Transperth provided the 72 free shuttle buses from Elizabeth Quay Bus Station to Kings Park and the eight shuttles within Kings Park to the Vietnam Veterans memorial.

**ABC TV**

ABC is the Host Broadcaster of the March and Commemorative Service. ABC works closely with the Event Management Team in the delivery of the broadcast of the events.

**The West Australian**

The West Australian provides editorial support in the publication of the official RSL Souvenir Guide containing all ANZAC Day services and Commemorative Events in WA as well as intense coverage of issues involving veterans.

The Guide this year was published in The Weekend West on April 16 and 50,000 copies were distributed into schools and a further 7,000 copies by the RSL.
ANZAC spirit – for all to see

Something of the genuine ANZAC spirit emerges once a year in the craggy faces of veterans, in the wonderment of children and the sheer intense effort of hundreds of volunteers throughout the State to honour the fallen.

This spirit is particularly apparent in times of adversity – and this year that came in the heavy rain that disrupted most services, though not all, throughout the State.

In Perth CBD, the rain came as the parade was about to get underway at the intersection of St Georges Terrace and Barrack Street.

Look closely and you’ll see WWII nurse Anne Leach, sitting patiently in a jeep under a transparent plastic sheet, waiting for the city parade to start. It is bucketing down with rain. She is not complaining. She is 101.

And over there – in a wheelchair – is Eric Roediger, another WWII veteran taking part in the Perth march despite the sopping rain. He’s 106.

Marching without assistance and with their separate units – Rat of Tobruk JJ Wade (98), Kokoda Lieutenant Bill Grayden (95), Changi to world athletic champion Johnny Gilmour (98) and proudly showing off his retrieved medals Snow Fairclough (96).

But it’s not just the old people. Last year, tiny six year-old Blaire Cowie led the Perth Metro Pipe Band through city streets not once, but twice, and drew applause. And she was back again this year.

So were the people. Despite the threatening weather, 40,000 people got out of bed early to attend the largely silent Dawn Service. Thirty thousand stood and got sopping wet to cheer on the marchers. In other centres, crowds of up to 15,000 attended services to demonstrate yet again that West Australians are amongst the most patriotic in the country.

In Perth, the parade arrived at a new venue, Langley Park, for the Commemorative Service.

Here, businessman and philanthropist George Jones spoke of the Vietnam and First World Wars.

“When you remember those Australian service personnel who risked their lives to allow Australia to become the country we live in, you are not glorifying war,” the guest speaker told the crowd. “You are showing respect, compassion, and even love for those who have suffered by losing their lives or suffering injuries defending Australia.

“Wear that Australian flag they all fought under with pride and pass on this spirit to all our young Australians.”

The Governor Her Excellency Kerry Sanderson, Patron of the RSL in WA, summed it up beautifully: “We are not suffering that much we are, in a little rain, when you think of what they suffered at that time.”
Former Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão walked again with Keith Hayes, the last surviving Australian veteran that fought in Timor in 1942 as a part of the 2nd/2nd Commandos. Keith was presented with the flag of FALINTIL to express appreciation for a lifetime of kindness toward Timor-Leste.

As a commando, Keith Hayes was shot and bayoneted, and left for dead by the Japanese. A Timorese woman, Berta Martins, hid and cared for him, applying traditional medicine to his wounds.

Mr Gusmão marched in Perth with Mr Hayes and said later, “I had the privilege of walking behind this honourable and remarkable man, in the ANZAC parade in Perth.”
ANZAC DAY 2016
ANZAC DAY

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ROSS SWANBOROUGH
New Memorial for Applecross

The Applecross RSL and the City of Melville welcomed a crowd of 800 people to the ANZAC Commemorative and Dedication Service held on April 24 at the new City of Melville War Memorial located at Wireless Hill Park, in Ardross.

The original memorial, the dedicated Clock Tower, will be absorbed by the imminent expansion of Garden City Shopping Centre. The new memorial has been two years in the planning, with input from Applecross RSL membership, local high Schools, local community and professional designers. Wireless Hill has a military history as it was taken over as a strategic ship-to-shore communication site by the navy in both World War I and II.

The new memorial consists of nine blades with a side A and B. When viewed from a distance the individual blades of side ‘A’ come together to form a single scene; a panoramic photograph taken on the Western Front. Side ‘B’ depicts 9 life-size silhouettes of individuals in uniforms dating from WWI to the present day. Each silhouette is formed by a pattern of words which have been submitted by the RSL and community members.

A short march took participants past the dais where Lt Col Andrew Dunjey, CO WA University Regiment, took the salute. He later gave the dedication address. Those attending included the City of Melville Mayor, Mr Russell Aubrey, Dr Denis Jennsen MP, Federal member for Tangney, The Hon. Dean Nalder, Member for Alfred Cove, Mr Denis Connelly, President, Applecross RSL Sub-Branch, Mr Graham Edwards AM, President RSLWA, Ex Service Organisations, 703 Sqn Aust Air Force Cadets, Red Cross, Schools, youth groups, One Achord Choir, Town of Victoria Park Brass Band and Fremantle Sailing Club Pipes and Drums.

Many wreaths were laid and following the Last Post and silence, a trio of vintage planes flew over the memorial.

Helen Pickering
Secretary - Applecross RSL Sub-Branch
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5,000 at Armadale’s parade

The Dawn Service at Armadale Memorial Park was very well attended despite the threat of showers and a possible storm.

A crowd of approximately 5,000 watched the parade, led by a contingent of RAN Submariners from HMAS Stirling base followed by service and ex-service members, police, fire services, youth groups and the general public.

Army Cadet Unit 52 provided the Catafalque Party.

The Police Rangers and a group of Scouts maintained an all-night vigil which commenced at 4pm the previous day.

Sub-Branch President Ken Hepburn gave the ANZAC Address and asked the crowd to “strive to be worthy of the memory of those we honour today”.

He said all veterans should hold their heads up high.

“You have served your country well,” he said. “...To the young, remember that this world is being passed in to your hands, use it well and always remember the sacrifices of the ANZACs”.

In keeping with the aim of the sub-branch to give back support to the community and to thank the Police Rangers who have maintained the all night vigil for a number of years, a presentation was made by Ken Hepburn to Unit Leader Ben Boekholt of a cheque for $2,000 to enable the Rangers to purchase much needed equipment.

The money was raised in part through raffles held at the RSL.

Tom Rynn
Hon Secretary

Armadale Sub-Branch President Ken Hepburn presents a cheque for $2,000 to Police Rangers Unit Leader Ben Boekholt.

Future generations in front of the wreaths at Armadale’s Cenotaph in Memorial Park.
Belmont holds three big services

The City of Belmont RSL Sub-Branch had an ‘ANZAC fortnight.’

Three meaningful and extremely respectful services were held -

April 5 - The Belmont Combined Schools ANZAC service with 11 schools, involving more than 1,000 students, teaching staff family and friends.

April 17 - The City of Belmont ANZAC Service, with City of Belmont Mayor, councillors and local members of State government, along with an estimated 900 members of the public attending.

April 25 - The City of Belmont RSL Sub-Branch dawn service. With City of Belmont Mayor, councillors, Royal Australian Navy and local members of State government, along with an estimated 900 members of the public attending. This year HMAS Stirling provided the catafalque party for the Dawn Service which attracted about 2,000 people. Bethany Hurst recited the Ode and Belmont RSL provided the eight-person flag party.

The service provided a couple of magical moments with the Naval catafalque party under Chief Petty Officer Todd Grieve marching on in slow time, emerging from the dark shadows with their white uniforms catching the rays of light, then taking up their positions at the corners of the war memorial. The New Zealand and Australian national anthems were sung a cappella by Tegan Reder and Leah Worsom.

Following the dawn service around 300 people moved to the RSL clubrooms for a gunfire breakfast, including the naval party and their families. Late morning, we were spontaneously entertained by Royal New Zealand Navy veterans performing the Haka along with Phil Hema Hema on the guitar and Tegan and Leah singing many well-known songs. In the afternoon we were entertained by the well know Perth band ‘Second Chance.’ The daytime activities were streamed live by SKY news and Channel 10 news also recorded interviews. In the words above I cannot totally explain the unmeasurable respect, commitment given and the greater understanding gained of the word ‘veteran’ and what an RSL sub-branch is today.

Steve Toon

HMAS Stirling provided the Catafalque Party for the Dawn Service which attracted about 2,000 people.

Spontaneous entertainment at the Belmont RSL was a highlight of ANZAC Day activities.
Albany’s ‘Salute to Youth’

Albany’s march past was conducted by the Albany RSL with their unique ‘Salute to Youth’ with youth contingents moving through their ranks, symbolising passing on the ANZAC traditions.

The march past was led by the Albany 10th Light Horse Troop, outfitted in their new WW1 uniforms, military vehicles, carrying the ‘Old and Bold’, Service & Ex-service contingents.

This year’s ANZAC Dawn Service at Mt Clarence, notwithstanding the inclement weather, again attracted a maximum crowd of 4,000 with micro links to the Albany Entertainment Centre, ANZAC Peace Park and the Town Square.

This was followed by the well-attended Gunfire Breakfast held at the forecourt of the Albany Entertainment Centre.

The ANZAC Day Parade down York Street drew large crowds of onlookers and special guests in this year’s parade, included an honour guard from crew of submarine, HMAS Dechaineux, under command LCDR Justen Cloney RAN and a large contingent from HQ Company 1 ALSG commemorating their 50th Anniversary. This contingent was ably lead by MAJGEN Arthur Fittock AO (Ret’d).

The ANZAC memorial service was held at the ANZAC Peace Park with approximately 5,000 to 6,000 attending. The keynote address was given by Captain Malcolm Wright RANR with the City of Albany Band, under the direction of band master, Colin French and the Albany Choral Society under the direction of Ms Judy Parish.

The only disappointment was for the first time in over 10 years we did not have the RAAF flypast - fortunately the local Sports Aircraft Association of Australia was able to fill this slot.

800 plus at Bicton

Bicton-Palmyra RSL Sub-Branch had an excellent attendance of more than 800 people for our Dawn Service.

TS Perth Officers and cadets provided the guard of honour and local cubs and scouts participated as well.

Year 11 students from Santa Maria College and the Mayor of Melville spoke at the service. The branch volunteers provided breakfast at the completion of the dawn service.

The band ‘Twice Shy’ entertained a lively crowd throughout the afternoon and they mixed with old and new friends. In all it was a very successful day.’

Steve Grady
Vice President

Part of the parade through Albany on ANZAC Day. Photo courtesy of Lex Porebski from GasgasLex Images.

Recently the Bicton-Palmyra Sub-Branch hosted the Year 6 students from Bicton Primary School. The President, Secretary and committee explained the sub-branch memorabilia to students and took questions. The RSL and local schools have a strong relationship, with Bicton Primary and Santa Maria College participating in ANZAC projects. Seen here are Bicton Primary School principal Stephen Doherty and students with sub-branch Secretary Kevin Hastie.
What was World War II like?

York is lucky to have three WWII veterans living in town and to mark ANZAC Day 2016 Matthew Hutchinson (12) interviewed one of them.

Our veterans are Stewart Thorn, Nigel Fleay and Keith Gurner. Stewart Thorn was in the RAAF in Borneo.

Matthew asked many questions of Mr Thorn. Here are a few:

Q. What was your health like during this time?
A. Good. I was coughing up phlegm and the doctor said “I know what is wrong with you old boy... nicotine poisoning; you will have to give up smoking.” We used to get cigarettes from the Americans.

Q. What did you treasure most during your time?
A. Letters from home. My mum would send me birthday cake that we would share with the boys in the tent.

Q. During the war, were there any exciting moments?
A. Plenty of them! We would have to watch out for the Japanese jumping out of trees. If you did not have your window up, your throat would be cut with a samurai sword.

One night we were unloading bombs and there was a commotion in the trees. We thought it was the Japanese mimicking the monkeys, but I looked up through the moonlight and saw a monkey and the guns were lined up. I put the truck light up into the trees and said “Oh you silly buggers, we thought you were Japanese”. It was only monkeys. We almost shot them; there were about 60 of them. Mr Thorn was 18 when he enlisted and served for three years. He is now 91.

Val Menezes
Secretary – York RSL Sub-Branch

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Aboriginals honoured at Boyup Brook

The morning darkness and drizzling rain added to the sombre occasion of the Dawn Service held at the Boyup Brook War Memorial, attended by approximately 80 people.

Under a brighter sky the morning parade was led by a vintage Morris Minor 1000, the flag bearer, Boyup Brook District High School Student Councillor Patrick Reilly and piper Peter Dearden.

President of the Boyup Brook RSL Sub-Branch Colin Hales in his address led the crowd of around 220 through the major battles of time that Australian armed forces have been involved in.

The 2016 Shire of Boyup Brook Citizen of the Year, Ginny Mitchell, focused on the contributions made by the Aborigines to the war efforts and the consequent injustices of not recognising and the lack of acknowledgement of their involvement.

The Aborigines were taken to the Boer War as horse handlers and trackers. While they were good at what they did their names did not appear on any shipping manifest and there were even groups that were left behind.

Many were rejected when they tried to enlist and then arrested for moving from their homelands.

Many had to hide their aboriginality to sign up. Others went off to war only to come home to find their homelands divided up for war settlement blocks for returned soldiers – but not for them.

From a 1942 Daily News article Ginny retold the story of how a Dutch plane, bombed by the Japanese, crash landed near Broome.

An Aboriginal man, Jerrie Dardan of the Bardi tribe, saved most of the survivors by giving them his meagre rations and water. After guiding them to permanent water Jerrie made all speed to a native mission 40 miles away and joined in the rescue party which brought all the survivors to safety.

Both the Dutch authorities and the West Australian Government rewarded him for what he did.

This story brought back memories for a Boyup Brook person whose mother’s first husband died from his injuries in this very accident.

Ginny said, “It is disappointing and a real tragedy that all Governments have been neglectful in addressing the war effort made by Aborigines earlier and leaving the Aborigines to cope and defend for themselves.”

To complete the ceremony bush poet Ron Evans recited ‘The Poem of Remembrance’ and the choir sang ‘Going Home’.

Afterwards a simple wreath laying ceremony was held at the Upper Blackwood Soldiers’ Memorial Hospital.
Bullsbrook pulls out all stops

Grandstands were erected and two large marquees required as shelter for ANZAC Day 2016 at the Bullsbrook & District’s RSL Sub-Branch for another memorable day for the entire community.

The crowd was estimated at around 1500, with attendees gathered along the road, well beyond either side of the hall. There was a short street march comprising RAAF Personnel, the Royal Singapore Air Force Squadron, past and serving members, club members, descendants of veterans and local community groups.

The music for the march was provided by piper Mr Norm de Grussa OAM.

The MC for the Dawn Service was Mr Mel Regeling, who introduced the address which was presented by the President, Ms Debbie Jacks.

Mrs Shauna Alban read the address prepared by her husband, Mr Frank Alban MLA, who was unable to attend.

After prayers, wreaths were laid, and the Last Post and Reveille was played by Mr Thomas Woodford. The playing of the Australian National Anthem was followed by the playing of the New Zealand National Anthem.

The service concluded with a spectacular flypast. Around 500 stayed for the Gunfire Breakfast which was cooked by ‘West Chef’ and served by volunteers. Members of the local history group put up a large display depicting the many years the RAAF Base Pearce has been operating at Bullsbrook. Traditional ANZAC Day fellowship continued throughout the day, which included lunch and card games and of course, catching up with mates. The organisation and presentation of this event provided a truly memorable and respectful day, which was very much appreciated by all who attended.

Our grateful thanks go to the many volunteers who helped in all preparations before and on the day and the businesses and organisations who donated their products to help make the day such a success.

Penny de Grussa
Secretary
Bunbury RSL member Terry Barker, a Vietnam Veteran, is all smiles as he leads veterans during the Bunbury march.

Drizzly rain restricts Bunbury crowd

A crowd of between 6,000 and 7,000 people attended the Dawn Service at ANZAC Park and the later Commemorative Service at the Bricknell Music Shell.

It was down on last year’s 10,000 – but drizzly rain early in the morning probably had something to do with it.

All events went off smoothly, despite a group of Kiwis performing an unscheduled Haka during the dawn service. Our special guest at both services was LCDR David Oliver, the first captain of HMAS Bunbury which visited the city in 1985. David, who lives in Fremantle, spoke well about the continuing ANZAC spirit of our ADF flowing through to today’s veterans and serving personnel.

The crowd saw a large parade of veterans and service members of the Volunteer Fire & Rescue Services, State Emergency Services, WA Police, Naval Cadets, Airforce Cadets, Army Cadets, and primary and secondary students marching.

John Gelmi
President
Young bugler stars at Bakers Hill

2016 ANZAC DAY SERVICES

Eleven year-old bugle player Jordan Egan of Gidgegannup was a star of the Bakers Hill RSL Sub-Branch service.

He was brilliant, using a bugle which dates back to the 1950s and was a gift from WWII Bomber Command veteran Cliff Byfield.

Jordan was the youngest bugler at ANZAC Day services in WA and played the Last Post and Rouse.

RAAF FSGT Brent Marshall from 79SQN gave an excellent speech on this overcast and slightly drizzly day and we all expected a lot smaller turnout than in previous years.

The RAAF advised at 9.30am they could not take off from Pearce and fly over, due to the weather and the lack of fuel, the inclement weather allowed them to carry. So, everyone expected a small attendance at the ceremony, and for it to be a ‘quiet’ affair.

We were wrong.

While not as large a turnout as the 2015 ANZAC Day ceremony, it was almost as good, and in fact only 50 or so people less in attendance.

More than 200 people attended and stood in the slight drizzle for the ceremony. Considering the population of Bakers Hill, that is a high percentage of the local people.

Overall, the ceremony was very well supported by the local people and clearly reinforced the fact people do respect and remember the sacrifices made by our Service personnel.

A large number of people who attended the ceremony, returned to the Golf Club, where fellowship and displays were enjoyed.

Luckily, the heavy rain came just as everyone reached the Golf Club.

We were very lucky with the weather after all, and the attendance at the Ceremony exceeded all expectations.

Lin Booth
Secretary/Treasurer

Perth’s first ANZAC Day in 1916

from page 37

Such was the enthusiasm that mounted police had to clear a passage for the veterans to march onto the Esplanade through a magnificent arch emblazoned with the single word ANZAC and decorated with the flags of many nations. The parade formed a hollow square and a line of open top motor cars behind the saluting dais carried those recovering from their wounds; some still in bandages.

The Governor, Major General Sir Harry Barron addressed the assembly: “On the far-flung battlefronts men are performing every day, countless deeds of valour. But in the minds of the Australian people, ANZAC Day stands out in bold relief. It reflects the heroism of their own men; and it has given to the Commonwealth a long roll of national young worthies.”

At the conclusion, the Gallipoli veterans marched to the Perth Town Hall where luncheon was organised by the Soldiers Welcome Committee. As the Governor gave the toast - ‘To the ANZAC heroes’ a young soldier quietly entered the hall unseen by most and recognised by few but Premier Jack Scadden knew him as the son of a former Premier and announced his presence: “Gentlemen, I give way to Lieutenant Hugo Throssell - Victoria Cross”... and the Town Hall shook with the deafening cheers and applause.

Hugo Throssell was Western Australia’s second Victoria Cross recipient and the first of 10 Western Australians so honoured in the Great War. Eight months earlier, with others the 10th Light Horse, he took part in the assault on Hill 60 known as the slaughterhouse of Gallipoli and he was still recovering from his wounds when the week before ANZAC Day he arrived at Fremantle.

The day ended with memorial services for the fallen held at every city church and the ANZAC tradition continues.

Lest We Forget
A very wet morning did not deter a good crowd from attending Busselton’s Dawn service.

During the service students from the local schools read out the names of young men from the Busselton district who died in WWI.

CAPT Lilijana Bradley RAN spoke about the ANZAC’s both past and those currently deployed. Busselton Mayor Councillor Grant Henley was the MC.

A traditional ‘Gunfire Breakfast’ was provided by the Busselton Football Club.

The morning service commenced with RSL members, veterans, Navy contingent, police, emergency services, schools and clubs from the Busselton area marching under the command of RSL secretary Glenn Woodward.

Vintage Army jeeps carried members unable to walk headed off down the main street followed by the Busselton Brass Band, and the rest of the marching groups.

The salute was taken by the parade reviewing Officer, CAPT Lilijana Bradley, along with Cr Henley and Busselton Police OIC Senior Sergeant Jason van der ENDE.

The service commenced in bright sunshine with the welcome from the MC for the service, Busselton RSL Treasurer, Mr Rick Winch. Mr Winch welcomed the official guests including a special guest in Mr Reg Thorpe, a POW survivor from the Burma Thai Railway.

The Busselton Choral Society sang ‘Great War Medley’ songs, followed by The Prayer of Remembrance read by CAPT Jason Dannock of the Salvation Army.

Busselton RSL President Mr Bob Wood OAM presented a very moving address, firstly recognising the traditional land owners and the young indigenous men who went away to war. He provided statistics of the men who died along with the many casualties from the Busselton.

Mike Wilkinson, a local artist, sang ‘And The Band played Waltzing Matilda’. RSL President Bob Wood OAM recited the Ode.

This year the RAAF were unable to provide a fly over for the service during the minute silence so the RSL had arranged for an historic ‘Tiger Moth’ bi-plane to complete a fly over. It flew in over the memorial, circled, and flew off, a very touching moment. Continuing on with the service two local school members, Flynn Pasamini and Maddie Hair performed the song ‘The ANZACs’.

Last year the Busselton RSL received an ANZAC Centenary grant to purchase 170 brass plaques naming all of the names on the Busselton Memorial who served in WWI. A total of 36 soldiers from the area died in WWI. It was decided that to start with, each year we will unveil plaques with the names of those soldiers who had died. Last ANZAC Day we unveiled eight plaques of men who died in 1915, this year we unveiled 11 more plaques of men who died in 1916 and each year further plaques will be unveiled.

CAPT Bradley, Mayor Henley, Mr Bob Wood and, Mr Winch officiated. Army Cadets from the Busselton Army Cadets assisted in the wreath-laying and were standard bearers for the NZ and Australian national flags. Approximately 30 wreaths were laid.

Mr Winch acknowledged individuals, local organisations, Army cadets and clubs for their support this year.

Special mention was made of the City of Busselton for the preparation of parks / lawns and road closure for the march, Busselton Police for traffic support and the Busselton Football club for their efforts in providing the Gunfire breakfast.

Mr Winch then invited all back to the RSL for morning tea and drinks was followed by the traditional ‘two up’.

As in previous years all commission proceeds from the ‘two up’ will go to the Legacy Camp for kids in Busselton. The total this year is about. $1400, a great effort and thanks to all who contributed.

Glenn Woodward
Secretary
Capel’s second Dawn Service

The atmosphere was just right for the occasion at Peppermint Grove Beach, Capel.

Dark, dismal, a slight misty rain enhanced by the sound of the waves crashing on the beach, the lone Piper, Bugler and a choir of 25 kept the 400 witnesses in sombre mood.

The Gunfire Breakfast was attended by 196 cold and hungry visitors of all ages. Peppy Beach Community Group did themselves proud again this year.

Our march was watched by more than 300 people lining both sides of the main street. Vice President Daryl Stevens carried the flag with pride.

The main service was presented by sub-branch President Duncan Anderson. Once again the piper piped, the singers sang and the bugler played.

The people of Capel feasted on the lunch that the wonderful volunteers supplied and served.

It was a truly wonderful day.

Mike McMahon
Secretary

Armadale Primary shows how

An ANZAC Memorial Service was held at Armadale Primary School on Friday April 8 prior to the school holidays. It was very well organised and attended by students, staff, parents and guests. Armadale RSL Secretary Tom Rynn spoke and laid a wreath on behalf of the sub-branch. This picture shows the beautiful memorial area. Unfortunately a bell attached to the memorial was stolen quite some time ago and never found. Well done to students and staff for an excellent service and a well prepared memorial area with a sea of red poppies upon the green grass.
Dalwallinu’s newly completed ANZAC Centenary Memorial ‘The Forces and Their Horses’ was an impressive backdrop for this year’s ANZAC Day service. Several visitors expressed their appreciation of the precinct.

Dalwallinu’s memorial impresses

A group of about 80 people gathered at the cenotaph for our 6am service. At 5.58 am the parade was called to order and the service was opened with a prayer by Councillor Ian Hyde the RSL then laid a wreath.

This was followed by the Ode, Last Post, two minutes silence and Reveille. The service was completed by the playing of both the New Zealand and Australian National Anthems.

Special mention must be made of the Daily Cafe which opened at 5am for those people who needed a coffee; the Dalwallinu Shire which put on a Gunfire Breakfast ably cooked by Shire CEO Mr Tony Doust and his deputy Keith Jones. Thanks very much for that fellas.

About 90-100 attended the 11am service at the ANZAC Centenary ‘The Forces and their Horses’ precinct.

Marchers at the 11am Service were led by three Dalwallinu students, followed by ex-servicemen Rod Donnes, Geoff and Greg Johnson, Glenn Darrah (from New Zealand), a visitor from the south-west wearing his grandfather’s, father’s and his own medals, Fire and Rescue members in uniform and Bill Dinnie wearing his father’s and his own medals. They were welcomed with applause.

The service was prepared and led by Barbara Dinnie, who also ‘introduced’ General Sir John Monash (via his imposing photograph) whose leadership skills in Gallipoli and then in France, helped save many lives and claim ultimate victory. The photo was purchased by the Dalwallinu Road Board after the war because so many of the local men served under him and owed their lives to his leadership.

The detailed Address given by Bill Dinnie had a focus on the ANZAC Spirit and the value of silence in all walks of life and especially in the evacuation from Gallipoli.

The names of the 74 WW1 Servicemen from the Dalwallinu District were read by Bill Dinnie, Rod Donnes and Charles Hyde, after which Bill and Rod read the names of the 13 men who were killed in action, while Marty Leahy and Charles laid poppies in remembrance of them. Both had a family member killed out of the three from each family who served.

Wreaths were laid and everyone stood for the Last Post, Ode, Silence, Reveille and the two national anthems. It was all very impressive with the newly completed ANZAC Centenary Memorial ‘The Forces and Their Horses’ as the backdrop.

Several visitors expressed their appreciation for the Service at such an impressive precinct and the magnificent memorial to the Forces and their valuable friends, the Horses.
RSLWA online for ANZAC Day

A two-month social media push in the lead up to ANZAC Day resulted in significant increases in engagement and Likes across Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, creating new audiences for RSLWA's communications.

In this period the RSLWA Facebook page had an increase of 1117 likes, which means we were regularly communicating with more than 4,600 people via our page.

Our most engaging posts reached more than 70,000 people! In the lead up to ANZAC Day we promoted our individual events and activities, and this year we particularly focussed on commemorative services and events being held by sub-branches across the state.

The RSLWA Facebook page proved to be a great asset, allowing the organisation to post a range of ANZAC Day content including pictures, news articles, events, and status updates to potentially thousands of users. A total of 185 posts were made during the two-month period and they played a pivotal role in the increase of page likes.

In order to advertise local and regional ANZAC Day events, RSLWA posted on shire and council pages with details of events being held in their area. To accompany this, we created Facebook events targeting more than 23 locations.

Twitter was an excellent avenue for RSLWA to engage with individuals, organisations and communities upholding the ANZAC spirit. In this time we wrote 118 tweets, had conversations with 14 different organisations, almost 20 local towns, and a number of individuals about ANZAC Day.

RSLWA shared 43 images on Instagram during March and April, which resulted in an increase of 77 followers. The most popular images received up to 52 likes and were either posted on ANZAC Day or in the week leading up to it.

To connect with the RSLWA on social media:
Like RSLWA Facebook: www.facebook.com/rslwhq/?fref=ts
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3,500 at Ellenbrook Dawn Service

In cloudy, dark conditions the families of Ellenbrook and surrounding suburbs gathered at the Ellenbrook District Open Space (EDOS), buoyed by the smell of the cooking of the Gunfire Breakfast. We estimated a crowd of 3,500 people.

At 5.30am Sing Australia Swan Valley, and the Swan City Youth Choir sang a medley of songs to set the scene for the Dawn Service. Then 701 Squadron Air Cadets accompanied by about 30 veterans opened the service with a coordinated march-on.

The sub-branch President, Stephen O’Neil spoke eloquently about the sacrifices made by the Australian troops that have allowed us to live in peace and prosperity; prayers were offered by Craig and Kate Anderson and Taylor Racey and Louise Van Der Vyver - two outstanding junior school students from Swan Valley Anglican Community School spoke about their views of war.

The brilliant Andrea Taylor sang ‘And the Band Played Waltzing Matilda’ and Ellenbrook Secondary College’s Hannah Fooks moved the New Zealanders with her singing of the national anthem in Maori. The Ellenbrook Secondary College band, choir and bugler gave this service a high degree of polish. Right on time an RAAF jet flew past at 6.27 as the wreaths were laid, and soon every one decamped for breakfast and a chat.

We were very grateful for the strong support of the Swan City Council and our sub-branch Facebook page indicates very strong community support for our Dawn Service at the new location.

Dr Neil MacNeill
Secretary

Schools honour ANZACs

Every year the 10 schools in Ellenbrook undertake school and suburb level ANZAC services.

This strong support is due in no small part to a strong sub-branch activity and the fact that many of the community members either served, or have relations who served in the armed forces.

This year Veterans Minister Joe Francis was the guest speaker at the Ellenbrook Combined Schools’ ANZAC service at the Memorial Amphitheatre and then again at Ellenbrook Secondary College.

In an excellent speech Mr Francis told the students about the sacrifices and ages of the volunteers who served at Gallipoli. The Minister was very impressed by the quality of both ceremonies.

Dr Neil MacNeill
Head Master
Ellenbrook Primary School

Veterans Minister Joe Francis lays a wreath at Ellenbrook Secondary College.
Greenbushes matron served in WWI

World War One nurse Charlotte Despard, who was the matron at the Greenbushes Hospital before joining the Australian Army Nursing Services in 1915 and sailing for Egypt, was remembered in the ANZAC Day address at Greenbushes.

For Nurse Despard there was a happy ending. She did return home to continue her service in nursing in regional Western Australia, but not before she suffered a shipwreck off the coast of India when her ship, ‘The Mongolia’, struck a mine while returning to Australia after the war.

Shire President John Nicholas remembered her in his address which focussed on the battles of 1916 on the Western Front including the Battle of the Somme, the Battles of Fromelles and Pozières and the charge of the Light Horse Brigade at Beersheba known as the Palestine Campaign.

Heavy rain did not deter the crowds from attending. The ceremony was relocated from the Cenotaph to the District Hall which was full to capacity, with some people having to cluster under umbrellas on the steps outside. The march from the RSL Hall to the Cenotaph and adjacent hall was led by members of the 10th Light Horse Memorial Troop. After the ANZAC Service 200 members of the community joined the Greenbushes RSL for a Gunfire Breakfast.

Debbie Walsh

2,500 attend Gosnells Dawn Service

A crowd of about 2,500 people attended Gosnells RSL Sub-Branch Dawn Service.

Veterans and others marched from Coles, over the bridge to the memorial site. The rain had held off during the service and Gosnells Rotary Club provided breakfast. Photos were taken by Bob McGuire.
Kulin’s ANZAC spirit comes to life!

For the three nights leading up to ANZAC Day, Kulin’s outdoor war memorial came alive as more than 260 people from across WA experienced the stories of men and women from Kulin, who found themselves coming to terms with the outbreak of World War One.

The original theatre experience ‘And tell Mum...’ was the creation of Perth-based Scooplight Theatre, which in partnership with the Shire of Kulin, retold the impact WWI had on their lives and their newly established farming community.

The experience was based on official and personal historical records and recollections of the people who were living in and around Kulin before, during and immediately after the war. Thank you to those who donated personal mementos and shared their stories, community members who attended the research workshop and those who have assisted in research.

This is the third time the Shire of Kulin has partnered with Scooplight Theatre. In 2013 and 2014, Kulin delivered the highly successful ‘Kulin Open Doors’ and ‘Kulin by Night’ heritage theatre experiences, which were named Winner of the 2014 WA Heritage Award for Outstanding Heritage Tourism Product. It was during these shows that the idea for ‘And tell Mum...’ came about.

In ‘Kulin by Night’ there was a touching scene where local boy Stan Bull and postman, Fred Johnson crossed paths in Kulin’s street. Stan only realised in this scene that he in fact did not physically make it back from the war, and that Fred is on his way to deliver the dreaded telegram to his family.

We discovered more stories that had a direct connection to WWI and although we were able to only briefly touch on one of these in ‘Kulin by Night’, a wealth of other stories and characters had been put aside. There was Jack Magee the teenage farm-boy determined to enlist even though he is under-age; the local German storekeeper Mr Hessen who overnight became an enemy alien; the postman Fred Johnson who delivered the telegrams with the news no-one wanted to hear; the women who took on the work of the men; Stan Bull the young soldier who never returned but left behind a deeply personal journal of his experience, and the mother who lost her son Irven McIness plus many more!

The show was also filmed by Black Cyclone and DVD copies of the performance will be available for purchase from the Shire of Kulin over the coming months.

‘And Tell Mum...’ was proudly supported by Lotterywest, Western Australian History Foundation, Kulin Bush Races, Kulin RSL, Kulin Community Bank and Black Cyclone Film and Production. The production was also part of the 2016 National Trust Heritage Festival Discovery and Rediscoveries, a national celebration of heritage.

Gen Whisson

Dawesville nets 2,000

About 2,000 people attended the Dawesville Memorial, including Sea Cadets and Scouts.

A Gunfire Breakfast was served to 350 people at the Port Bouvard Recreation and Sports Club. Light lunch was enjoyed by 50 members and volunteers.

A selection of memorabilia was also placed on display to the public in the sub-branch room at the club.

RSL members also attended services at eight local schools.
Kununurra claims early service

It was one of the earliest services in the country with a 4.30am start on ‘ANZAC Hill’ just out of Kununurra - and this year’s Dawn Service saw strong crowds turning out to pay their respects.

The NORFORCE unit (Kimberley Squadron) provided a Catafalque party attended by Army personnel in service dress.

Students from the Kununurra District High School Choir and Band prepared songs for the service including the national anthem in Maori.

Guest speakers Lieutenant Commander Stacy Craigie and Warrant Officer (Class One) Lance Graham from the Royal New Zealand Navy spoke of their military experiences and the ‘mateship’ formed in the military.

Following a Gunfire Breakfast on ANZAC Hill, the Town March featured old and new G–Wagons including a Willy military jeep in which Mr James ‘Jimbo’ Robinson rode. It had been more than 35 years since he had ridden in one.

Mr Robinson served two tours of Vietnam with the 108 Signals, before returning to Australia and settling in the Kimberley in 1971. He is one of the few remaining veterans living in Kununurra. It was his 77th birthday on ANZAC Day!

“My great uncle won a medal at Gallipoli and I spent about 15 years in the military myself,” Mr Robinson told the Kimberley Echo. “It’s important to remember the sacrifices that were made.”

The town service included Mr Damian Mareko and wife Rosie, who recited the Ode and also sang the New Zealand national anthem in their native tongue.

The Last Post, Reveille and Rouse was played local bugler, Mrs Fiona Kuiper.

NORFORCE opened their depot to the community and hosted a family day as a fundraising event. The ANZAC Appeal and the two-up were well supported by the fantastic local community.

ANZAC Day commemorations took place in Wyndham on top of the Bastion lookout, at Lake Argyle on the dam wall and in Halls Creek at the town’s war memorial.

Deborah Hamilton-Smith
Treasurer and Acting Secretary
Port pride: Fremantle

Fremantle, as a proud port town, has a strong and long standing connection to the nation’s war history and this was reflected on ANZAC Day 2016.

From the Dawn Service at the Fremantle War Memorial on Monument Hill to the closing parade at the Esplanade Reserve, thousands of people witnessed the commemoration of the fallen. We thank photographer Bob Sommerville for these photos. It is with great pride that the City of Fremantle works with the greater Fremantle community as well as the Fremantle RSL to host a number of ANZAC Centenary commemorations and to have the opportunity to honour and pay respect to those who have and are serving our nation.

A commemorative exhibition was also held at the Fremantle Town Hall, with the display bringing together artefacts and stories from the Fremantle History Centre's collection, descendants of World War I servicemen, the Australian War Memorial and Fremantle Army Museum.
The Dawn Service was well attended and the attendees didn’t seem to mind that some very light rain began to fall, but not for very long. A short address was delivered to the crowd extolling the bravery of carrier pigeons during both WWI and WWII and also the dogs of all wars.

The main service commenced with the march stepping of at 10.30 which proceeded past the Saluting dais at the City chambers, the local mayor, in his full regalia, and Lt Colonel Padre Michael Morrissey taking the salute.

The parade then continued to Birdwood House to a smaller crowd than the Dawn Service but still several thousand, the rain fell again but not for long.

The main address was delivered by Lt Colonel Michael Morrissey and it concerned his early days in the military at Kapooka. The Ode was recited by William Handbury, a young Afghan Veteran.

The cenotaph guard and colour party was once again provided the local 11th Battalion living history unit in their WWI uniforms. As usual this was a crowd pleaser.

Dongara RSL praise

The Dongara RSL ANZAC Day services and gathering won praise from community members for their quality and inclusiveness.

“The service was excellent with more personal touches than other years – like the inclusion of the NZ flags and national anthem, local people talking, singing and the live playing of the bugle,” Sandy Kubaj said.

The RSL conducted the Dawn Service, Gunfire Breakfast and 11am march, and provided a luncheon and refreshments at the club. At the afternoon gathering there was two-up being played and live music from a local guitarist and a saxophonist, which added an extra dimension to the occasion.

“I have had so many people comment on what a wonderful day it was and so many good comments about the great job the Dongara RSL members have done,” Sandy said.
Vietnam veterans feature at Northam

The Dawn Service was conducted at the Northam War Memorial in threatening weather.

The President welcomed the large crowd in attendance. The Ode was read by RSL Life Member and sub-branch Treasurer Geoff Scarterfield, 2 Battalion, RAR, Vietnam 1970/71.

The Last Post and Reveille was played by Bugler Luis Lim and a Prayer of Remembrance was read by Reverend Corina Van Oostende representing the Northam Christian Ministers Association.

The Dawn Service was also broadcast by Radiowest throughout the Wheatbelt to enable those not able to attend a service in person to commemorate the Dawn Service at home. The community enjoyed the Gunfire Breakfast which was prepared by the RSL Auxiliary and the Northam Apex Club.

At 10:20am the main street of Northam was empty and with the march ready to step off at 10:40 it looked as though the dark clouds looming were going to keep people away. By 10:30 the crowds were appearing and although smaller then the past few years a very good crowd did attend.

The parade was reviewed by Mr Peter McMillan, 110 Signal Sqn, Vietnam, 1968, with the parade consisting of Two Light Horseman from the Avon Valley 10th Light Horse Memorial Troop, the Combined Districts Concert Band, restored military vehicles carrying some of the older veterans, and current and former service personnel and other service and community groups.

Vietnam veterans had pride of place at the front of the parade. Cadets from 519ACU provided the Flag Party for the march and the Catafalque Party at the War Memorial.

The Commemorative Service commenced at 11am once the parade had formed up in front of the Memorial Hall. The ANZAC address was delivered by George Pearson, 2 Battalion, RAR, Vietnam 1970/71 and the Ode of Remembrance was read by Jim Donovan, sub-branch Warden and Citizen of the Year for the Shire of Northam.

The Last Post and Reveille was played by Bugler Luis Lim. Music was played by the Combined Districts Concert Band for hymns and anthems with the Anthems of both Australia and New Zealand sung by Don Moore. Prayers were read during the service by Father George and Reverend Corina Van Oostende.

Around 20 wreaths were laid during the service and members of the general public laid many floral tributes at the conclusion of the service.

At the conclusion of the service white peace doves were released by Allan Lawrence.

This year due to the unstable weather conditions the RAAF fly past was not able to happen but advance notice from the squadron gave plenty of notice to the organisers.

Local pilot and former RAAF pilot Mr David Kerr did provide a fly past in his restored ex RAAF training aircraft. Mr Kerr had previous active service in Somalia and Rwanda. Not long after the service had finished the heavens opened and the rain came down.

Reg Stevens
Secretary
Lancelin gravitates to service

This magnificent picture of Lancelin's Dawn Service was taken by the multi-talented Kym Illman of kymillman.com.

Cars, walkers, bike riders - the whole town seems to be moving slowly towards the memorial, barely visible in the dim light before dawn.

The moon was hidden behind thick cloud and there were occasional light showers of rain.

Nothing was deterring people from coming to the Dawn Service it seemed.

At 6am the service started in front of this huge crowd of, it had been estimated, more than 1,000.

Once again the music after the Last Post and Reveille - which included Amazing Grace and My Grandfather’s Hat - caused many a tear to be shed.

Bagpipe music was played while a large number of wreaths were laid.

Children were invited to place a poppy onto the memorial and it was heart warming to see the many children with parents, line up to take part. All were so quiet and respectful. After this very meaningful service, marchers were brought to order with civilians joining in and the march commenced along Gingin Road to the Endeavour Tavern for the traditional Gunfire Breakfast. The rain had held off for the whole service and the moon had come out from behind the clouds to create a wonderful atmosphere for the commemoration.

Norm Pearce
Secretary - Lancelin RSL

Huge team effort for Rockingham

Thousands turned out for the Dawn Service, main parade and Commemorative Service on ANZAC Day in Rockingham.

From newborn to the oldest veteran they came to remember and honour, our past and present serving members.

About 15,000 people turned out for Dawn Service in Rockingham and more than 10,000 people turned out for the parade and main service at 11am.

Standing out among the crowd in their Gallipoli shirts were three young girls Mikayla and Isabella Mauger and Kaity Douven collecting donations for the ANZAC Appeal.

It was good to see so many young people coming to both services.

Numbers seem to be increasing every year in Rockingham. Thousands of people lined the streets to cheer and applaud serving members, both past and present. Rockingham RSL President Ian Brook was very happy with how the day went especially seeing many young children had attended the Dawn Service. He said, “They don’t want to get out of bed to go to school but they will get out of bed to go to Dawn Service.”

Jennifer Sciortino
Secretary
Australia’s awesome effort in WWI

Businessman and philanthropist George Jones AM has visited the Western Front eight times and says he realises how little he knows about Australia’s contribution to World War One.

Addressing the 2016 Commemorative Service at Langley Park, Mr Jones said Australia’s population in WWI was approaching 5 million and yet a total of 420,000 Australians enlisted – not far short of 10 per cent of the entire population. All were volunteers.

“More than 60,000 died and 156,000 were wounded, gassed, or taken prisoner,” he said. “At 64.8 per cent, the Australian casualty rate (proportionate to total embarkations) was among the highest of the war.

“I urge you to visit the Western Front – it is an unforgettable experience

“Hardly a single family or community in Australia was not affected in a conflict that I now believe had a significant impact on the shaping of the uniquely Australian character as we know it today.

“On visits to the Western Front you cannot help being amazed at the endless military cemeteries maintained in beautiful condition by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

“The countless headstones, most inscribed with the names of those lost, many to mark bodies found but not identified and inscribed ‘Known unto God’. There is a memorial at Menin Gate, Ypres, with 58,000 names of Allied soldiers missing where no identifiable trace has been found.

“We (with his wife Penny) visited similar memorials at Tyne Cot with 70,000 names listed and Thiepval – a further 70,000 names.

“If you have never visited the Western Front I urge you to do so because it is an unforgettable experience.”

Mr Jones financed a team which carried out the investigations at Fromelles. This led to the uncovering of 200 Australians buried by the Germans in several large pits. As a result, a new military cemetery has been established.

It is the first new military cemetery on the Western Front since 1928.

“It will be my privilege to be laying a wreath on behalf of the RSLWA at both Fromelles and Pozières in July,” Mr Jones said.

Mr Jones said he volunteered to join the Australian Army in 1965 at the start of the Vietnam War.

“To this day I have never regretted the experience and the opportunity to serve my country; something I continue to try to do almost every day in the community generally.”

He paid tribute to the 120 members of D Company, 6 Royal Australian Regiment who fought in the Battle of Long Tan 50 years ago against an overwhelming enemy force. Eighteen Australians died as a result.

“Overnight they defended their positions with artillery support from the base at Nui Dat and the battle continued until the next day. The North Vietnamese had to withdraw after suffering devastating losses against a brave force.

“Indeed, Australians have displayed bravery in all conflicts in which they have been involved.

So please everyone on August 18 this year, pause to give a thought to those loyal Australians at Long Tan.”
Veterans turn out at Manjimup

Like many regions in the southern half, the dawn service was marred by rain but that did not deter many people from attending and the usual family groups were well represented.

A special guest on the day was RAN Warrant officer Sean Ellerton who entertained the crowd at both services with a very interesting and moving account of the actions of several service members in the time of conflict.

The gunfire breakfast proved to be a popular choice for many to partake of and our appreciation to all the volunteers who pitched in to help and included the local scout / guides troop who cleared tables and washed the dishes.

The day cleared somewhat in time for the 11am service and was also well attended by marchers and onlookers.

Rex Brown made special mention for WWII veteran Ernie Burton of Northcliffe who also attended the service. Ernie recently turned 100 years of age and seemed to thoroughly enjoy himself in company with his son and grandson.

Rex also spoke of a local soldier Richard (Dick) Aldersea who lost his life during the battle of Long Tan. The Aldersea family were well represented at the service and also laid a wreath.

The APC has created quite a talking point among the locals many of whom turned out to witness its arrival and placement onto the slab as its final position. RSL members especially those of us who rode in them during the Vietnam War are very pleased to have it in place. An amazing story comes from sub-branch President Rex Brown who came up with a photo he took while serving in Vietnam and the identification number on this APC is identical to the one in his photo.

He also knows the commander and driver of the unit as he himself was an APC commander. It can really be a very small world.

Garth Macpherson

Mt Barker enjoys skirl of pipes

A fine crowd of hardy souls faced the elements to gather at the Mount Barker War Memorial for the commemoration of ANZAC Day and fortunately the rain held off.

Locals know there is no more stirring sight than the column of marchers wheeling left into sight off Lowood Road to march up to the Cenotaph, borne along by the skirl of the bagpipes and the sounds of marching.

The marchers were led by a rider from the 10th Light Horse Association followed by the swirling skirted Albany Caledonian Pipe Band with the veterans behind and the magnificent turn out of local schools, organisations and service clubs who support the march so well: St John, FESA, SES, Police, Guides and Scouts marched as well as a very large contingent of MBCC students flanked by student councillors, a student group from Great Southern Grammar and numerous staff.

A solemn wreath laying service led by Chris Lill ensued. Inside the District Hall, Brian Bunker welcomed the large crowd with Shire President Ken Clements providing a thought provoking address, quoting statistics to make the point that the cost of war is horrifying. There were three speakers - all Vietnam Veterans who told of their experiences in the war zone and the effect wrought upon their lives.

Many thanks to Bob Olson, Mal Greenhalgh and Brian Bunker for telling it like it was and describing their very personal war legacies to a spellbound audience.

The mood was lifted as the College Band struck up the opening bars to the Glee Club's performance of a stirring, evocative song: ‘Do You Hear Our Heroes Marching?’ with vocals by a young student. It was wonderful!

Ours is a community which generously gives of its time to honour such ceremonies of remembrance - thank you to all who ignored the weather to join us in commemoration.

Judy Lill
Secretary/Treasurer
The Dawn Service was held at Lawley Masonic Village in conjunction with the Mt. Lawley-Inglewood Sub-Branch and was held indoors with a very good attendance.

Wreaths were laid by sub-branch President Mr Oliver Lovelle JP, LTCOL Hazel Donald (Ret’d), representing the War Widows Guild, Mr Michael Sutherland MLA and Mrs Joan Bennet on behalf of the village residents. Several private families also showed their respects.

Many people were then transported by special coaches to the Mt Lawley Cenotaph in preparation for the sub-branch wreath laying ceremony witnessed by 1,700 people.

A welcoming address was given by the President Oliver Lovelle JP about the RSL’s formation and its centenary this year.

The special message he relayed was that RSL means welfare and advocacy in today’s language.

He then related an account of a great uncle who landed at Gallipoli on April 25, 1915 and after a matter of only a few months of heavy action was withdrawn to Alexandria, suffering with shellshock and later boarding a hospital ship to Australia.

The illness led to a complete rejection of his loved mother and siblings as he would not and could not be contacted by any family member.

Hence the need for an organisation such as the RSL to care and maintain support for the invalid and family members rather than rely on the invalid or deceased service pension for their livelihood.

After the bugle sounded ‘Stand Fast’ wreaths were laid by Mr Lovelle followed by LTCOL Hazel Donald (Ret’d).

Wreaths were also laid by representatives for MPs Michael Keenan and Alannah MacTiernan, Mr Michael Sutherland MLA, four councillors from the City of Stirling, members of the 57 Army Cadet Unit Morley, Mt. Lawley High School, Perth College; followed by the primary schools of Coolbinia, Inglewood, Mt. Lawley, Perth College, Sacred Heart, St. Pauls, St. Peters and Sutherland as well as Dianella and Yokine Scouts.

Dr Michael Tayler then presented an address about courage and perseverance; the ANZAC requiem was presented by Perth College Student Chelsea Lazar, while messages from the Troops were read by Meleva Thorn, also from Perth College.

All then joined in to sing the Hymn – ‘Abide with Me’ – and the Salvation Army Bugler played the Last Post.

Mr Lovelle recited The Ode; Dr Michael Tayler gave a Prayer of Remembrance and Service and this was followed by the New Zealand and Australian national anthems.

All of this culminated in a very damp but successful Ceremony, with many thanks to all the hard working volunteers and events organiser.

Oliver Lovelle JP
President
Commemorative dinner for Nannup

Nannup commemorations began on ANZAC Day eve with a Commemorative dinner at the Nannup RSL Hall where the members hosted the leaders and members of the local community. Convivial fellowship was enjoyed over a sumptuous meal prepared by the members of the Nannup CWA.

More than 80 people endured the misting rain the following morning to witness the Dawn Service which was followed by a Gunfire Breakfast at the Nannup RSL Hall put on by the Nannup Lions Club.

The sun broke through just prior to the 11am service but unfortunately it was too late for the planned fly past by the RAAF which had to be cancelled due to the weather over RAAF Pearce.

Whilst disappointing, it was completely understandable.

Like the Dawn Service, this service was very well attended by young and old alike. Veterans, ex-service men and women and relatives of those who could no longer be with us formed up for the march along the main street to the War Memorial led by Kevin Waddington on a whaler, the breed of horse that went off to the Great War.

The students of Nannup District High School played a significant part in the main Service, reading the ANZAC Requiem, the ANZAC Prayer and a Prayer for Peace. The Service culminated with the RSL contingent doing a march past of the Memorial, then it was back to the RSL hall for more convivial fellowship.

Charlie Ferguson
Secretary

Former Narrogin CEO leads service

With the rising of the sun Narrogin gathered in the early hours before dawn to honour servicemen and women throughout history in the ANZAC Day Dawn Service.

Former Narrogin Shire chief executive Geoff McKeown led the service, having been invited to do so by Narrogin RSL president Ries Chattillon who was attending an ANZAC Service in Borneo. Reverend Lynda Myres read a prayer and Emily Ballantyne played the Last Post and Reveille. Servicemen, family and community members laid wreaths on the memorial in memory of those that gave their lives for Australia.

Led by the bagpipes and the Narrogin Cadet Unit the ANZAC Day march went down Federal Street before turning up Egerton Street towards Memorial Park.

To the defiant wail of the pipes also marched the Narrogin RSL, Narrogin Fire and Rescue, Narrogin Police, St John's Ambulance volunteers, the Salvation Army and family of servicemen and women.

Master of Ceremonies for the service was Kay Weaver of the Narrogin Toastmasters and Grant Froome represented the Narrogin RSL.

Gwenda Savage read the ANZAC Day address on behalf of the Narrogin Girl Guides speaking of the deeds of the guides during both world wars as messengers and even members of the resistance.

Renee Sieber of Narrogin Senior High School spoke of her trip to Gallipoli for ANZAC Day last year on the centenary, as a member of the Premier’s ANZAC Tour. Wreaths were laid by organisations and family members despite a sudden torrent of rain. After a sprouting of umbrellas Mr Froome recited the Ode and Ms Ballantyne played the Last Post.

After a minute’s silence and the Reveille, the catafalque party were dismissed. Following the ceremony a morning tea was held in the RSL Hall.

David Charlesworth
- Narrogin Observer

Bagpipes led Narrogin’s parade to Memorial Park.

Kevin Waddington, who breeds whalers, leads the march at Nannup.
Nedlands honours Gallipoli nurses

The Nedlands RSL Sub-Branch, in cooperation with the City of Nedlands, held its ANZAC Day Service at the Nedlands War Memorial, Birdwood Parade Dalkeith.

Drenching rain commenced as the service began and continued throughout the morning. Despite this, approximately 200 members of the Nedlands community attended the service and the rather damp refreshments that followed.

Those attending were addressed by Ms Katie Dunkley, RSL Affiliate, Nedlands community member and president of the Victoria League. Katie’s address paid tribute to the Australian Army Nurses of 3rd Australian General Hospital who supported the Gallipoli landing from the island of Lemnos. An Honour Guard was provided by 502 Army Cadet Unit and wreaths were laid on behalf of the Hon. Bill Marmion, The City of Nedlands, Nedlands RSL Sub-Branch and by a number of community members.

Barry Nunn
Secretary

Mates gather at North Beach

North Beach RSL Sub-Branch conducted a very successful ANZAC Day Dawn Service between showers of rain on Charles Riley Memorial Reserve.

The ANZAC Day address was presented by the Vice President David Singer, a younger veteran who saw service in Afghanistan.

Following the Dawn Service, at the Gunfire Breakfast held at North Beach Bowling Club, David joined a large group of younger Afghanistan and Iraq veterans who we hope will consider joining the RSL and attending future commemorative services.

Rob Sweet
Secretary
HMAS Stirling was well represented during ANZAC Day commemorations at Pingelly this year, which began with a special service at the ANZAC-eve footy match between Pingelly and Boddington and continued on ANZAC Day with a Dawn Service, Gunfire Breakfast and

Commemorative Service. An all-night vigil was conducted by the Fire Brigade before the Dawn Service.


Guest Speaker Commodore Simon Ottaviano RAN paid tribute to the tens of thousands of men and women who have served Australia in all theatres of war.

“We are all their heirs and we are in their debt, their legacy to us is our lifelong liberty,” he told a crowd of 2,000 to 2,500 people.

Commodore Ottaviano took the salute in Port Hedland with WWII veteran Mervyn Stanton.

A Gunfire Breakfast hosted by the Port Hedland Yacht Club followed the Dawn Service.

Members and their guests then attended a social day at the new ANZAC House in South Hedland.

Robyn Middleton
Secretary

WWII veteran Mervyn Stanton and guest speaker Commodore Simon Ottaviano RAN took the salute in Port Hedland.
I wonder if you’ll ever think of me tonight,
As I tuck you into bed, so warm, snuggly and tight.
Of all the laughs we shared together, all throughout the day
Of exciting and new adventures, and the times we had to play.

But I need to tell you a story, of a century ago
you see, our great nation back then, we had a foe.
Young men were called up, from all around the land,
To defend the points of freedom, from where we
Australians stand.

A great adventure would be sought, and even some would say
to fight the Turks on their land was one’s pride to display.
Trains were loaded, horses packed and ships filled to the core
And young men just like your Daddy, were sent far away
to war.

The finest of them all, so strong and yet so proud
Given their marching orders, they’re faces in the crowd.
Those young men didn’t know, just what would happen
to them,
They had joined for King and Country, their honour to defend.

I sit here now and wonder, just what it must have been like,
For a soldier to bid farewell, in the middle of the night.
To not just all his family, his Father or his Mum,
But to bid farewell forever to his lovely little son.

The horrors he was still to face, wouldn’t yet be real,
But the heartache that he must have felt that night,
I can only but try and feel.
So my son please forgive me, if I sneak back to your bed
And give your little lips a kiss, and stroke your angel head.

Because today wouldn’t have happened, our happiness
wouldn’t be rife,
If once before young men like your Daddy, hadn’t laid
down their life.
The sacrifice that those Daddy’s made, as they scrambled
up Suvla Bay,
Were done so people like you and me, could play like we
did today.

So you see my son on this ANZAC Day, like many around
us do,
We will get up nice and early, your Mum and me and you.
Daddy will polish up his medals, and Mum will keep
you warm,
and we will march right up that Monument Hill, to see
the break of dawn.

And we will stand together in silence, and you’ll hear
the stories told,
Of bravery and courage, and strength so true and bold,
You’ll learn of all the men who fought, and how as a nation
we have grown,
But you’ll also hear of all those Daddys, who never made
it home.

They stood there just like you will one day, faces in the
cold air,
Thinking of their families, those who loved them dear.
But we come here to remember, and sometimes to regret,
But please don’t be unsure, and please don’t ever forget…

That proud young men like Daddy, left everything behind,
So you and me and Mummy, could live a better life.
And when you hear the bugle, playing that solemn
Last Post tune,
Think of all those Daddys, who sacrificed their life for you.

So my son as I tuck you in, and wish you a good night,
I’ll give you a little hug, and lower down the light.
And one day when you’re older, I’ll tell you something more,
of how your own Daddy, survived being sent to off to war.

But that’s another story, of which I’m yet to tell,
Because I need you to remember, all the Daddys who fell.
My son, ANZAC Day is special; to all of us it’s true
So sleep well today, because those ANZACs, they died
for me and you.

- Says Rob: “I encourage all ex and current service
personnel, their families and people who want to become
social members to step up and join their local RSL. The
RSL provides benefits to the community as a whole. Service
personnel have a whole mix of skills and abilities that
benefit the community and those skills can be benefited
by the RSL. Some people, serving or not, think they are
only a veteran if they serve in a campaign overseas. I don’t
see it that way. I think if you’ve signed at some point to say
that you are willing to make the ultimate sacrifice for your
country, then you are a veteran. And you are welcome at the
RSL. I encourage the younger generation to act, belong and
commit to an RSL sub-branch.”

Rob Cashman served with SASR in Afghanistan in 2001/2002 and decided
recently to have a go at some poetry to try to explain to his toddler Owen why
ANZAC Day is important. We posted it on Facebook and it quickly was read by
60,000 people who left 66 comments and shared it more than 500 times.

The Fremantle City RSL Vice President wrote this:
Aboriginals honoured by South Perth

The prospect of rain did not deter a very large crowd from gathering in Memorial Gardens on the corner of South Terrace and Sandgate Street for the ANZAC Day Service in 2016.

Sub-branch President Kevin Trent welcomed the crowd of over 750 and the dignitaries and thanked them for attending to pay their respects to our fallen.

As in past years members of the 3 Squadron, lead by Major Sweeney, of the Pilbara Regiment mounted the Catafalque Party, relieving the Scouts from the Salter Point and Guides from the South Perth Guides who had stood at a Vigil overnight.

In welcoming the assembly Mr Trent said the service was focussed on the Aborigines who volunteered for service with the First Australian Imperial Service and in the Second AIF. He pointed out that not all were accepted for not being ‘white enough’. He went on to acknowledge the many members of the ethnic groups who were called up during National Service in the period 1965 to 1972, as well as Aboriginals.

Pastor Albert Knapp of the Aboriginal Evangelical Fellowship led the prayers and readings. He then went on to relate the story of 2515 Private James Melbourne who joined the AIF to serve in Egypt, Lemnos and Gallipoli.

Pastor Albert Knapp speaks of PTE James Melbourne who joined the AIF to serve in Egypt, Lemnos and Gallipoli.

Dylan Blair and Thomas Francini students at Aquinas College spoke on ‘What ANZAC Day means to me’ and ‘The Value of Peace’. They were followed by Asli Yasar and Meryemnur Kosu who brought us a message from the Turkish community and read those memorable words spoken by Kemal Ataturk.

“Those heroes that shed their blood and lost their lives... you are now lying in the soil of a friendly country. There is no difference between the Johnnies and the Mehmets to us where they lie side by side here in this country or ours... You the mothers who sent their sons from faraway countries, wipe away your tears; your sons are now lying in our bosom and are in peace. After having lost their lives on this land they have become our sons as well...”

Stirring renditions of the New Zealand (sung in both Maori and English), the Turkish National Anthem and the Australian Anthem filled the area before the Catafalque party dismounted and Pastor Knapp issued the Commissioning and the Blessing.

Before all those assembled moved to morning tea the Mayor Sue Doherty thanked Mr Trent for organising the Service, as he has done for over 30 years.

Mr Trent replied that it was an honour to lead the RSL in South Perth and that he had followed the traditions laid down by Jim (Circus) Walmsley for services at the 1914-18 memorial on the corner of Angelo Street and Labouchere Road.

Kevin Trent
President

Asli Yasar and Meryemnur Kosu recited Ataturk’s famous message to the service which is in part “...wipe away your tears; your sons are now lying in our bosom and are in peace...”
Toodyay march a success

Toodyay commemorated with a Dawn Service, Gunfire Breakfast, parade through town and an 11am service at the Toodyay War memorial.

Breakfast was provided by the Lions club of Toodyay at the historic Wicklow shearing shed in the museum precinct for the first time.

A total of about 70 veterans, citizens, Emergency Services personnel, Scouts, Cadets and descendants of servicemen and women marched in the parade.

On a rainy day an estimated 250 attended the dawn service, 200 the breakfast and 250 came to the main service.

The RSL acknowledges the wonderful support given by many including the Shire of Toodyay, Toodyay Lions, Toodyay Scouts, Toodyay District High School, Toodyay community singers and Toodyay Theatre Group. The memorial site had picture perfect grounds and gardens.

We were pleased with the presence of veterans from outside the shire and of new residents. Many others wore medals of now deceased relatives.

Bruce Guthrie

At Dawn, 250 people commemorated the fallen. Photo: Michael Sinclair-Jones The Toodyay Herald.
A student’s perspective of suffering

Year 12 student Anthony Keutzer came up with this perspective of the ‘hidden tragedy’ of veteran soldiers in an exhibition showing at the WA Art Gallery until June 13.

The Aquinas College student says his collection of ceramic sculptures is a representation of all the mental suffering soldiers go through once leaving the military.

‘Perspectives’ features some of the best, brightest and most talented graduating high school artists in the State and the exhibition is celebrating its 24th year.

Once again this popular annual event provides the platform to showcase selected works from students graduating from Year 12 Visual Arts.

Fifty eight works by 57 students from across Western Australia were selected by this year’s judging panel comprised of: Lisa Bowden, Principal Consultant Visual Arts, School Curriculum and Standards Authority; Abdul-Rahman Abdullah, Artist; and Dunja Rmandic, Associate Curator Projects, AGWA.

Works span a variety of subject matter and media, ranging from painting and drawing to sculpture, digital moving image, photography and textiles.

This exhibition represents a great opportunity to glimpse the world through the eyes of our young people.


JOIN THE RSL
Check our website at www.rslwahq.org.au
or phone our Membership Officer Andrea Hunt on 9287 3705 or email membership@rslwahq.org.au
More than a hundred people watched the sun rise over the Bastion Five Rivers Lookout at Wyndham for the ANZAC Day Dawn Service this year. Wyndham is WA's most northern town (just over 1,000km north of Broome) and has a population of about 800.

The town was the target of two aerial attacks during WWII and the MV Koolama, which limped into Wyndham after being bombed in February 1942, lies submerged just off the Wyndham Jetty.

Dick Daniels is the President of the Wyndham RSL Sub-branch and after many years as Master of Ceremonies he handed over to Simon Turnbull this year. Simon is ex-Army and Wyndham’s resident paramedic. Continuing a tradition of many years, service personnel from RAAF Tindal Airbase drove over 600kms to make up the Catafalque Party on the morning. Aviair provided the traditional fly past, to the sound of the last post and students from St Joseph’s and Wyndham District High schools combined to sing the Australian National Anthem. As usual, it was a very special ceremony, made more so by such a uniquely beautiful setting.
Taking ANZAC legend to the regions

RSL volunteer Graham Brooks has been doing one hell of a job this year touring the Central Wheatbelt and South-West spreading the ANZAC message to secondary and primary school children. Since March he has towed the RSL official trailer to numerous schools – and there are many more ahead.

“The response from the students is amazing when you open up the trailer and they see all the models, uniforms, ration packs, medals and other memorabilia,” he says. “I feel that the students are learning a fair bit about the personal lives of those who have fought in conflicts involving Australians.

“All the schools I have visited with the new trailer are very impressed with the fit out especially the extendable table high display at the rear of the trailer.

“If any ex or serving personal has a couple of spare days and would like to come on this journey with us please don’t hesitate to contact me.”

The new trailer and kit-out cost the RSL more than $11,000 and school children learn about military history and the sacrifices of Australian servicemen and women.

“I try to teach the children that war is not great for people because it takes lives, maims people and gives some people PTSD...but I also encourage people join the services if they desire to serve their country.”

Graham, a semi-retired part-time farmer at Koorda, tours schools with his wife Janet. He first developed a passion to educate school children back in 2002 when he saw the benefits of their learning of the greater sacrifices of the ADF. In 2007, the first RSL trailer began visiting schools.

He organised for the new trailer to be built late last year and it was then fully kitted out early this year in time for the launch last month.

Graham was a National Serviceman in 1968-70. He is a member of Nollamara RSL Sub-Branch.

Graham Brooks can be contacted on 0429 996 965.
Sub-Branch News

Old war-horse grows on community

A critical part for the development of any new RSL sub-branch is the development of a community presence. This development comes about by providing solemn acknowledgement of the key days of ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day; undertaking support for educational programs in the 10 local schools; supporting our veteran community; and speaking authoritatively on community and service issues.

However, there needs to be a physical dimension to developing an organisational presence, and we can do that through the construction of memorial precincts.

While our sub-branch does not have a permanent home we are keen to ensure that there are physical artefacts showing our presence in this growing suburb. When the government made the de-commissioned M113A1 APCs available we were keen to build on from our excellent memorial in place at the Amphitheatre. After a lot of paperwork, support from HQ, LWP (Ellenbrook Developers), Swan City Council and Barminco, the APC arrived.

We expect this old war-horse to be a focal point in our future growth and development.

Dr Neil MacNeill
Secretary

Ellenbrook RSL has lifted its profile through the installation of the M113A1 APC at the Amphitheatre.

Applecross recognises hard workers

Two members of the Applecross RSL Sub-Branch have received an RSL award for years of dedicated service.

They are Ila Reynolds who was for many years sub-branch Treasurer and editor of the sub-branch newsletter ‘O-PIP’ and Ken Hall who worked for many years as Hall Liaison Officer.

Both have made an outstanding contribution to the sub-branch.

Helen Pickering
Secretary

Hard work recognised: Ila Reynolds, Applecross President Denis Connelly and Ken Hall.
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LONG TAN 50TH ANNIVERSARY
VIETNAM
14 AUGUST 2016
HIGHLIGHTS: SAIGON - VUNG TAU - BA RIA – NUI DAT - HOI AN - HUE - HANOI - HALONG BAY
Join us for an unforgettable journey through Vietnam, as we Commemorate the 50th Anniversary of Long Tan. Along our journey we will visit sites especially significant to the Vietnam War for Australians. Together we will travel from South to North, discovering beautiful historic cities, cruising down tranquil rivers and across glittering bays, sampling the delightful cuisine and exploring the history and traditional life of this fascinating country.
14 day escorted journey with helloworld Claremont with return economy class airfare flying Singapore Airlines from $5,254*pp
*Price per person twin share subject to change.

The Liberator and the Liberated
Jeli bin Abdullah, a child survivor in 1945 of the Batu Lintang POW camp on the island of Borneo, meets Ron Hatch (ex-2/12 Commando Coy) who landed with the Allies to liberate Labuan Island and Kuchin.
Jeli wrote a book about his experiences as a captive of the Japanese; Ron is now Vice President of the Narrogin RSL Sub-Branch and a life member of the RSL. He lives in Cunderdin.
Batu Lintang was the officers’ POW and civilian camp during the years 1942-45 and was liberated in January 1945 by the elements of the 9th Australian Division.
Jeli bin Abdullah, previously known as Michael Dandi Tiong, tells his story of his incarceration in the book ‘Mike a priceless journey’. He lives in Kuchin where at a commemoration service at Batu Lintang the two men met and reminisced about the liberation. Ron Hatch (91) was on tour with the Borneo Exhibition Group ANZAC tour which included Les Snell (95) from Mandurah, who landed on the other side of Borneo at Taracan with the 9th Division.

Hendrikus ‘Reece’ Chattillon
President
Narrogin RSL Sub-Branch

COMMUNITY SUPPORT
CAN WE HELP?
RSLWA provides a full range of welfare services to the veteran community including allied, currently serving members and their dependents. Assistance is available with but not limited to the following areas:

• Emergency relief
• Advocacy
• Overseas Pension applications
• Crisis counselling to point of referral
• Financial assistance
• Referral to other services
• Home and Hospital visits
• General crisis assistance
• Legal Support Group – 9440 6233 or email rslwalegal@gmail.com
After hours: 0433 847 155.

All applications are treated in the strictest confidence. Where possible it is best to arrange a face to face appointment with the Welfare Officer at ANZAC House 28 St Georges Terrace, Perth. For regional members assistances may be sought through the local sub-branches.

Appointments are available Monday to Friday 9.00am to 3.30pm. Contact the Welfare Officer on 9287 3707 for further information.

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Training

By the time this edition of The Listening Post is on the streets we will have completed our advanced Facebook training, facilitated by Janine Pittaway of Bright Communications, on May 7. Some informal training into the duties of Secretaries and Treasurers happened on May 14. I hope that all will be valuable and that in the new financial year a similar forum can be held for membership officers.

My thanks to the Secretaries panel of: Rob Sweet, North Beach; Sue O’Donnell, Pinjarra; Tom Rynn, Armadale and Jenny Scioritno City of Rockingham. Also to the Treasurers panel of: Alan Stubbs, Gosnells; Jean Harris, City of Perth; Kay Cleak, City of Cockburn and Peter McGlade, State Accountant.

More recently – on May 15 and 16 – Graham Edwards, myself and John Arthur visited Esperance and were greatly impressed with that sub-branch’s activities and enthusiasm for the year ahead. Apart from being a beautiful seaside town, Esperance is a community that is proud of its military history and veterans. We met with sub-branch members, visited the local museum packed with military history, saw the excellent seven-panel mural officially launched on ANZAC Day and learned of plans for the Entrenchment musical production later this year. Our thanks to George Starcevich and all the sub-branch for their wonderful hospitality.

ANZAC House

As you are aware RSLWA has commissioned a Business Feasibility Study undertaken by a team of specialist consultants to determine a variety of options for the redevelopment of ANZAC House.

In summary, a total of nine options have so far been considered. These options are all considered capable of development approval with concepts fully costed by appropriate and qualified Quantity Surveyors. Of these nine options, two are now considered worthy of greater assessment and form the basis of the next phase of a Redevelopment Business Case. These two options have been forwarded to the Department of Premier and Cabinet by way of an interim report. Like our previous concept paper, the work undertaken to this stage provides sufficient confidence that the options are feasible, meet the objectives of the RSLWA and are therefore worth further consideration.

The new ANZAC House design envisages a street level ‘one stop shop’ dealing with pensions, advocacy and welfare. Many Ex Services Organisations (ESOs) currently deal with the same client issues/claims as the RSLWA, the aim is to streamline the system and have various agencies co-located, which would be more beneficial to veterans. We will continue to keep you informed.

State Congress

Preparations for State Congress are now well under way. If you are reading this and realise you have not forwarded the information required for delegates, agenda items... you have, unfortunately, missed the deadline. It was previously advised in this magazine prior to ANZAC Day, the Sub-Branch Signal and also promulgated through our various electronic mediums.

ANZAC of the Year

The ANZAC of the Year Awards are awarded nationally to recognise the efforts and achievements of up to seven Australians who have given service to their fellow Australians and to their community in a positive, selfless and compassionate manner.

RSLWA submitted four nominations. The 2016 recipients in WA are Mr. Geoffrey McClements, in recognition of his tireless work for the Veteran and wider community of Claremont and for fostering the remembrance and commemoration of Australia’s military history; and Ms Claire Hunt in recognition of her inspiring and remarkable commitment to supporting members of the Defence Community and their families through the Defence Transition Mentor Program at the Comet Bay College, Secret Harbour, and for her passionate resolve to honour Australia’s military history within the broader community. My congratulations to Claire & Geoff on this richly deserved award.

Life Membership

This year’s nominations, 11 in total, were received by March 31. RSLWA is entitled, with the current full service membership numbers, to select nine nominations to go forward for national approval. As always, selection was tough and scoring very close with the narrowest of margins between 9th and 10th. My congratulations to the nine successful members who will receive their certificates and badges at State Congress. Until then, only they know who they are!

Finally, I congratulate our new interim President, Peter Aspinall, on his appointment. As I have written in this year’s Annual Report I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the leadership, management and achievements brought to RSLWA by the State President, Graham Edwards.

There have been many challenges over the last few years, all of which have been met head on. As Graham steps down from the Presidency, on behalf of all the staff and membership of RSLWA, I wish him and Noeleene the very best for the future.
Cockburn honours Aboriginal service

Indigenous ex-RAN and City of Cockburn RSL member Ron Bradfield Jnr, Mayor Logan Howlett and the President of City of Cockburn RSL Digger Cleak pose with some of the street signs approved for use in a subdivision on Wattleup Road in Hammond Park.

Twelve Aboriginal men who served in World War I are having streets named after them after approvals from the Geographical Names Committee and Lands Minister Terry Redman.

“It is estimated that around 50 Aboriginal men fought at Gallipoli during WWI with 13 of those men having been identified as coming from Western Australia,” said Cockburn Mayor Logan Howlett, who is co-patron of the City of Cockburn RSL Sub-Branch.

The approved road names are Boota Lane, Corbitt Lane, Dickerson Loop, Dimer Way, Hong Lane, Jennings Street, McPhee Road, Melbourne Loop, Naley Lane, Nettup Street, Ralph Lane, Ronan Lane.

Digger Cleak said, “For many, many years I’ve made the comment that Indigenous returned service personnel should have the same recognition as our non-Indigenous personnel: they joined the services; they fought the same battles; they suffered the same injuries and in some cases they paid the ultimate sacrifice.

“So why not pay them the same honour and respect as are recorded for non-Indigenous people? I think this should be considered for future developments in all areas.”

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WA Veterans bowl well in Tassy

This year the West Australian RSL Bowls Section travelled to Launceston, Tasmania to compete in the 49th Annual National RSL Bowls Carnival.

Two hundred veteran bowlers from all around Australia descended upon Trevallyn Bowls Club, situated high above the famous Cataract Gorge in Launceston for a little bit of comradery and to do battle on the greens to establish which state will reign supreme as the champion RSL bowling state in Australia for 2016.

Tasmania turned on the superb weather for their guests with temperatures hovering around the 30 degree mark for the 10-day duration of the carnival.

After some fierce competition from all states, it was Victoria who regained the shield for the 2016 Test series.

Western Australia finished a creditable equal second on points with Queensland and New South Wales.

A break from the carnival on New Year’s Day saw a group of RSL bowlers head off to the historic Longford races (over 100 years of racing) and the remainder were last seen sneaking off to the historic Longford races (over 100 years of racing) and the remainder were last seen sneaking off to the casino, perhaps maybe just for lunch!

The four-day National Fours competition, which follows on from the Test series, was eventually won by the Tasmanians.

Unfortunately the West Australian entered teams battled with the slow greens, and for the first time in a number of years, could not manage to get a side into the finals.

If any veterans, current serving service personnel or other RSL bowlers are interested in being part of the WA RSL Bowls Section and would welcome the opportunity to represent Western Australia at the next forthcoming and history making 50th RSL Carnival in South Australia, then get on board now and contact Phil Griffiths – 0412 224 570 for further information.

Long Tan and Yarloop fury collide

from page 32

On the night of August 17, 1966 the Task Force Base at Nui Dat came under mortar attack. Thirty rounds fell in the regimental area with the majority in to 103 Fd Bty position. The battery suffered two casualties. One had to be evacuated back to Australia and the other was relatively minor. It was Squizzy’s first exposure to incoming mortar fire.

On August 18 at 1620hrs the battery was ordered to engage in three regimental fire missions supporting D Coy at Long Tan.

The weather conditions were appalling. Heavy wind-driven rain, drastically reduced visibility, cordite fumes sitting in the air, not been dispersed, forced the gunners to breath in unclean air.

During the battle 103 Fd Bty fired 1078 runs of ammunition in the short space 4.5hrs - the highest number of rounds by any battery of the regiment during the battle by a significant margin. If it was not for the battle at Long Tan, the VC were planning on attacking the Task Force coming through 103 Fd Bty area. They saw this as the easiest entry point. As Gunners we say, thanks for the Battle of Long Tan. They say the artillery saved D Coy, however 6 Coy may have saved 103 Fd Bty and others.

The service was caught by surprise when Peter Manucci, who served with Les, exclaimed “We miss you Les,” and added the 103 Field Battery chant “Up the red rooster and drink more piss!” Squizzy’s family didn’t mind the Army send-off at all.

Lest We Forget.

 Notices

- HMAS Duchess Reunion 2017
  Expressions of interest are called for the 8th reunion of all HMAS Duchess crew members, to be held at Tweed Heads RSL, November 3, 4 and 5, 2017. The expected cost will be $200, but this includes Friday and Saturday night dinner and Sunday lunch, and a certain amount of dry till Saturday night. A deposit of $50 is expected to be called end June 2017, balance of payment by end September 2017.
  Inquiries to Rod Clary 0409 267 388 or email rod.clarey1@bigpond .com or Bruce Bowmaker 0403 243 795 or you can email littlefish.in@bigpond.com.

- Vietnam reunion
  Seeking WA Locators of 131 Div. Loc Bty RAA Vietnam for a reunion this year. Will take the form of lunch/dinner and fellowship. Please contact: Barry Guzder 9295 1749 or 0420 927 139

- Tours to Borneo and WF
  For the adventurous, Frank Taylor’s Australian Military History Tours are planning tours with a Western Australian focus later this year to the Western Front (with a Western Front focus) and Borneo. The guide for the Western Front tour in September is author Neville Browning and in October a tour goes to Sabah, Labuan and Sarawak. Inquiries to Frank Taylor on 0428 686 899.

- Invisible wounds
  Partners of Veterans ran a series of seminars in Pinjarra, Busselton and Albany in early April and we thank the RSL clubs for all their help and support. If you would like us to hold a seminar on Invisible Wounds – Service PTSD Awareness in your area then please let us know as we would be very pleased to hold one for you. The seminars are open to veterans, military, Police, Ambulance, Fire & Emergency personnel as well as partners, friends, families, work colleagues and service and health providers. Kerryn McDonnell, Secretary (08) 9228 3350 or partnersofveteranswainc@bigpond.com
Sudoku

Sudoku is a logic-based, combinatorial number-placement puzzle. The objective is to fill a 9x9 grid so that each column, each row, and each of the nine 3x3 boxes (also called blocks or regions) contains the digits from 1 to 9 only one time each. The puzzle setter provides a partially completed grid.

Crossword

Across
1  Clock time
4  Pluck out a hair
10  Dined
11  Out-of-breath
12  Ma
13  Imagine
14  National capital
16  Staff
17  On top
18  Seattle locale
20  South Carolina (abbr.)
22  Ms. Minelli
26  Government agency
29  Lessened
31  Sign
33  Bard’s before
34  Back ___ (game)
35  Swab
36  Slanted
37  Supersonic transport

Down
1  Mom
2  European ermine
3  Rate
4  Deride
5  Black poisonous spider
6  East northeast
7  Swiss-like cheese
8  Greek letter
9  Paradise
15  United Parcel Service
19  Wing
21  Long, skinny boat
23  Objects
24  Goose eggs
25  Skilled
26  Omelette ingredient
27  Ring
28  Bullets
30  Bond with
32  Rascal

Sudoku Solution

from last edition - April 2016

Crossword solution last edition (April 2016) on page 90

JOIN THE RSL
Check our website at www.rslwahq.org.au
or phone our Membership Officer Andrea Hunt on 9287 3705 or email membership@rslwahq.org.au
Last Post

Navy
R45731; Brayshaw, Sydney
Nollamara RSL Sub-Branch
35178; Bruce, Stanleigh
North Beach RSL Sub-Branch
40897; Gillard, Lawrence
Nollamara RSL Sub-Branch
C/SSX871247; McIntosh, Ian
North Beach RSL Sub-Branch
S/4258; Thomas, Ronald
City of Perth RSL Sub-Branch

Army
NX204745; Bell, Leslie
City of Rockingham RSL Sub-Branch
WX1125; Bloffwitch, J.
Yokine-Joondanna RSL Sub-Branch
WX40962; Brand, Ian
Riverton RSL Sub-Branch
5/1768; Brewer, William
City of Perth RSL Sub-Branch
F/1046; Campbell, A.M.
Esperance RSL Sub-Branch
WX22826; Charles, Trevor
Osborne Park RSL Sub-Branch

Air Force
38192; Adams, Frederick
City of Rockingham RSL Sub-Branch
45291; Davis, Douglas
Bullsbrook & Districts RSL Sub-Branch

Crossword Solution from last edition – April 2016

ANZAC DAY PHOTOS 2016
This year’s ANZAC Day and Sunset Service photos are on flickr:
VISIT: www.flickr.com/photos/rslwa
Members of RSLWA can get free digital copies.
To purchase a print, phone ANZAC House 9287 3799
Waiting for ‘Someday’ to preplan your funeral may be a big mistake. Last time we checked, there is no ‘Someday’ on the calendar.

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