

Coronavirus Update Edition
(COVID-19)

REDLANDS SUB BRANCH

BUGLE

*Honouring The Fallen
By Serving The Living!*

JULY 2020 EDITION



REDLANDS RSL SUB BRANCH: 1925-2020
Information for all Veterans, Ex-Service
& Serving Men & Women in the Redlands





Latest news



VIETNAM VETERANS DAY - 18TH AUGUST 2020

We have decided that due to the current COVID situation, and with no clear direction from authorities as to when all restrictions will be lifted, the service on Vietnam Veterans Day (18 August) will be cancelled. Like Anzac Day, President Alan Harcourt and David Smock (President of Vietnam Veterans Group) will lay a wreath on behalf of everyone. If any of the families of our Honour Roll personnel are attending they may lay their own wreath.

As there is no organized service, the usual laying of wreaths will not be held also chairs will not be available. However, you are most welcome to pay your respects at a time suitable to you.

Future Vietnam Veterans Day service will be moved to 10.00am to coincide with other celebrations around the country. This will become the norm from now on.

On behalf of Suzie (the secretaries secretary) and myself please stay safe and keep well.

MICHAEL MCDONNELL, LEAGUE SECRETARY

EXCURSION - TOOWOOMBA CARNIVAL OF FLOWERS

It's so nice to be back with some good news on the Vets and Wellbeing Excursions. The overnight trip to the Carnival of Flowers on 22/9/2020 is all locked in and tickets are selling fast! The trip is great value so book and pay at Redlands RSL reception - first in best dressed. See page 20 for more info.

GREG SAUNDERS, CONVENOR OF SOCIAL EVENTS

President's Report

Fellow members

Well this is our second Bugle since the Pandemic shutdown and still no cure in sight. I hope all are avoiding the virus, you must be, as we have heard no reports. Queensland seems to be travelling pretty well, we are lucky we have New South Wales as a buffer between us and Victoria which seems to be taking a battering.

The club is back to trading almost at normal takings even with the limited seating. The management and staff are to be congratulated for the great effort they are putting in, particularly in the early stages of re-opening when Government directive were changing every five minutes, well it seemed like that anyway.

Those early couple of weeks though trading was poor gave us a chance to get everything in place and ready to trade in the current seating configuration. We are waiting to hear what the next easing of restrictions will bring about at the end of July.

Hopefully, it will bring about the guidelines for meetings, whether they be Sub-Branch meetings or other meetings like Golden Oldies etc. This is what we are really waiting for, at the moment we are holding very small meetings of the Management Committee taking notice of the Covid regulations. If we can get a stipulation on how many can attend meetings and any rules to abide by, hopefully we can get some meetings happening. There are heavy fines that can be laid against clubs and sub –branches even closure. So we have got to make sure it is right.

Due to the covid situation we had to make a decision last month on whether to conduct a service for Vietnam Veterans Day. It was decided not to hold a service for the day but to hold it, like we did Anzac Day. With just a wreath being laid by the Presidents of the Sub-branch and the Redlands Vietnam Veterans Group at 10am on the 18th of August.

Our welfare side has been working hard again with face to face meetings being carried out again though the phone calls haven't eased off at all.

I think I have just about caught you up to where we are now.

Stay well and take care.

Alan Harcourt LM
PRESIDENT



Treasurer's Report

I hope everyone is handling the Covid-19 situation as best they can. The club was certainly hit hard with 12 weeks of closure, in saying that due to good Management initiatives put in place early, there still are some great positive signs. Even with the extended closure League Wellbeing and Donations totalled \$219,244.91

I have confirmed with the Financial Controller that all statutory payments including employee entitlements are up to date and no statutory payments are under any repayment arrangement.

Greg Saunders

TREASURER



Wellbeing Report

Well here we are in the same position as last month in regards to starting to hold any meetings or allow any groups to meet in the RSL. Hopefully we have some better news soon. The good news is the Club is open with COVID restrictions in place so have been able to catch up with a few of you there.

Our Headquarters is open from 9.00am – 1.00pm, Monday to Thursday. We ask that you contact the Advocates on 34881153 to make an appointment to enable social distancing rules to be adhered to.

Entitlements are not being processed very quickly as DVA staff are still working from home as far as we know. We have had new clients as well as follow up visits with the Advocates seeing thirty clients this month as well as processing claims already in the system. There have also been a number of calls regarding wellbeing and a number of food parcels have been distributed.

RSL State visited our Sub Branch and recorded an interview with

Doreen Matthews (Sticher) who served in Townsville in WW2. This was filmed in Anzac Memorial Park and the Library/Museum. Doreen was a morse code operator and at 96 years old can still use the device as though it was yesterday. They will return in a fortnight to film one of our 100 year old members. This is part of recording history approaching VP day on 15th August and 75th Anniversary of the end of WW2 This project will gradually take place throughout the State. The interviews will be on the State RSL Website and on You Tube the first two weeks in August.

Fifty World War two veterans are members of the Redlands RSL Sub Branch. Sadly, one passed away last week and the President will conduct a Poppy Service at his funeral.

We continue to keep in touch by phone with the Golden Oldies each fortnight and also some home visitations have resumed with permission from the Veteran and their families while we are still in phone contact with others.

Headquarters are doing their best to keep things as near as possible to normal whilst adhering to COVID rules and look forward to the day when we can all meet when we want and where we want. In the meantime, stay safe and remember the volunteers at HQ are always here to assist.

Linda Harcourt

WELLBEING/VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

Phone 3488 1102 / Mobile 0417 604 729

Email linda.harcourt@redlandsrsl.com.au

Bugles can also be viewed online each month on our website under Current Bugle on the Sub Branch at page: <https://redlandsrsl.com/sub-branch/>



EMAILS - Bugles (as well as other RSL related links) are emailed out to all of our Service Members monthly after our meetings. If you are not receiving these emails, please phone our reception staff on 34881199 to confirm your email address.



Deputy President & Cadets Report

As restrictions have eased we are slowly getting back to some normality. Our first Cadet Unit to start back is TS Norfolk now that the Flotilla Commander has approved their COVID Safe procedures. The first meeting I will be attending will be their AGM on the 23rd of this month and again on the 30th of July for their parade night. They have changed the parade night from Friday to Thursday. 217 Sqn AAFC will be returning on Monday 3rd August and 136 ACU are ready to return and are just awaiting on BHQ for the go ahead.

VETERAN TURNS 100

Lt Col John S.D. Mellick OAM ED (Retd) - a WW2 Veteran better known as "Stan"- turned 100 years old on the 22nd February 2020. Unfortunately, owing to the Coronavirus, we were unable to present him with an RSL Qld plaque in recognition of his reaching this remarkable milestone and for being an inspirational member of the RSL. Now that restrictions have been eased, I was able to call on Stan and present him with a framed Certificate. See separate report on page 14.

During this reporting period I called to visit Ray Mills, a long serving member of this Sub Branch who is well know to most of us. He sends his regards to all. Ray is well and now resides at lake Sherran nursing home where he would welcome a visit by members. Visitors would just need to show proof that they had had their flu shot.



TS NORFOLK AUSTRALIAN NAVY CADET UNIT

A warm hello from the cadets and staff of TS Norfolk, Australian Navy Cadets.

The unit has not been parading now since March this year due to Covid 19 restrictions placed on all cadet activities. As physical gatherings were not permitted interactions continued with staff and cadets holding video parades with subjects such as basic uniform care, a cooking lesson, knot tying and the fun of "raiding" other units video conferences.

With the easing of restrictions in Queensland and under strict Covid 19 operating contingencies TS Norfolk will be making a welcome return to physical parading at the end of July. This return will usher in a new parade night of Thursday evenings and a new parade time of 1730 to 2030. Parades will continue to be held in conjunction with the school term.

Although social distancing will put a whole new spin on parade drill, and other activities such as sailing I am sure that we shall endure and enjoy all that the Australian Navy Cadets has to offer including assisting the RSL whenever possible.

So, from the cadets and staff at TS Norfolk, stay safe, take care of each other, and look to the good in the world.

Report provided by LEUT Stephan Fields OC



AUSTRALIAN ARMY CADET UNIT

Whilst we haven't got a start date yet, we have submitted our COVID safe plan and are expecting notification any day now. Fingers crossed we are back by the end of the month.

The staff have been busy getting the unit ready for 'life under COVID restrictions' we have measured our area and put up notices alerting all to how many people we can have in each area, we have purchased and installed sanitation stations, PPE and thermometers to check everyone's temperature prior to entering the unit.

One of the sad parts of this 'new normal' is we will not be able to have any visitors on site at any time, and parents by appointment only, we are hoping this can be relaxed as we progress during Term 3.

We are all looking forward to getting back to the unit as both staff and cadets are missing the camaraderie that being at the unit creates.

Report provided by Capt. Wendy Kemp OC.



217 SQN AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE CADET UNIT

217 Squadron are making preparations to return to cadet activities on the 3rd of August. A lot of planning is happening to make the working environment as safe as possible for cadets and staff. At this time the plan is to initially return to Monday parade nights only with no external Squadron activities with a gradual progression to usual operations. The assessment of the Covid situation will be ongoing with the hope we can get back to normality by the end of the year.

Report provided by FLGOFF Dan Wruck CO

Cadet Reports compiled by

Van Gray

DEPUTY PRESIDENT & CADET LIAISON
OFFICER



RSL SED REPORT JULY 2020

South East District Sub Branch Delegates met face-to-face for the first time following several months of being isolated due to COVID-19 Virus being active in Queensland.

The meeting was held at the Riverside Reception Centre building next door to RSL SED HQ of the Limbless Soldiers building owing to delegates not being able to maintain social distancing due to the Qld Government requirements. In attendance were 26 delegates, apologies 7 and 8 visitors.

District President Wendy Taylor advised that Simon Buttons, States CIO (Chief Information Officer) is looking into possible anti-virus solutions for Sub Branches. Wendy advised members that COVID Safe planning procedures have been implemented in all Sub Branches and Service Clubs.

Stephen Darcy from City-New Farm, gave members a presentation on Carina Men's Shed at the Clem Jones Centre. Members were amazed at the size of this complex and its amenities.

Other presentations given were from Dr Robert Maher from Beaudesert on SED Well-being hub in Logan and Kerry Gallagher AM gave a summary about Greenslopes Hospital Keith Pane Unit.

SED requires Sub Branches to keep them informed of changes of Officer Bearers and to keep MMS (Members Management System) up to date with key positions holders. Any changes must be emailed to the District Secretary at State and SED as they require this information to be current, Replacement Delegate wording motion to be passed at AGM or General meeting and a copy of the minutes provided to SED.

President Wendy Taylor advised members that RSL Queensland recently sent a memo to all Sub Branches advising of an upcoming circular resolution to amend three clauses in the existing RSL Queensland 2015 Constitution. This relates to a change required under the State Government's Taxation Administration Act 2001 to the registration requirements for all charitable institutions in Queensland.

She indicated that most Sub Branches and State Branch are equally effected by this change. The effect for RSL Queensland amounts to several million dollars of charity funds being unnecessarily paid to the State Government so we are keen to progress the circular resolution before the deadline passes.

Sub Branches were asked to review this communication carefully and contact your District President if you have any questions. President Alan has advised our Financial Officer Ros Francis and the GM of these requirements.

As you are all aware, the RSL Queensland AGM has been postponed to 24th November 2020 due to COVID-19. Our Constitution requires that this meeting must occur before the end of the calendar year in order to comply with the Office of Fair Trading.

Wendy went on to say RSL Qld AGM would be held this year at the RNA Showgrounds Convention Centre. Voting on the draft Constitution will NOT be on the agenda and has been postponed until 2021.

Meeting closed at 1930 hrs and next meeting will be held on the 6th August.

REPORT PROVIDED BY IAN GRAY. DEPUTY PRESIDENT.

National Servicemen's Assoc.

We continue to live under the restrictions imposed on us in order to combat the Covid19 virus and, unfortunately, there is no alternative. We just have to carry on in the best way we can, remembering it could be much worse.

Our Branch Executive Committee has met several times over the period and endeavoured to find ways to become more active. Unfortunately, we have so far been unsuccessful. Not only is it difficult to meet the requirements imposed by the health authorities, we are also constrained by our own determination to not do anything which would put our members at increased risk.

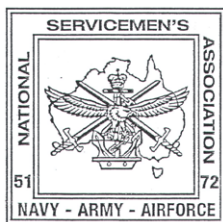
The disastrous results of one false or careless move have been clearly demonstrated.

We are investigating ways in which we can extend some benefits to our members in spite of the current restrictions, but more of that later.

In the meantime, I would ask Branch Members to give some thought as to how they expect their association with the branch will continue, and more importantly, how far into the future they expect or hope their affiliation will continue.

Eric Shaw

**PRESIDENT,
NATIONAL SERVICEMEN'S ASSOC.**



Young Veterans Redlands

New members always welcome.

To keep up to date with what the Young Veterans Redlands are up to, please LIKE and JOIN their Facebook group 'Young Veterans Redlands'.



Library Museum Report

The Veterans' Centre has still been in lockdown owing to the number of people allowed for the size of the building, however we are still receiving donations for the Library/Museum. One donation was an Italian bayonet which I have been told was taken from a prisoner in Libya during WW2. As we do not have an Italian bayonet in the collection, it should prove to be another interesting talking point to share with our visitors.

Best wishes for a speedy recovery to four of our volunteers, Derek, Robin, Sharon and Phil who have been on the sick list. I look forward to seeing all of our volunteers back on duty when we re-open.

LIBRARY MUSEUM RE-OPENS TUESDAY 11TH AUGUST 2020.

(Still no meeting permitted at this stage)

Les Warner

VICE PRESIDENT



Naval Association of Aust.

REDLANDS BRANCH

Greetings all, isn't it good to be able to get back to normality, albeit slowly and not quite the same.

We in the NAA have been managing reasonably. We were hopeful of conducting our 1st post-covid meeting on the 1st of August, however until the state government announces it's latest easing of restrictions we will have to wait. Also like everyone else we have had to cancel all social activities. Fortunately every-one is keeping well, with only one of our older members 'crossing the bar' early this year. Covid 19 was not a factor in his passing.

Until next Bugle please all of you stay safe and take care.

Yours Aye

Graham Hargreaves

PRESIDENT,
NAVAL ASSOC. REDLANDS BRANCH



**RE-OPENING
TUESDAY
11TH AUGUST
2020**

REDLANDS RSL LIBRARY | MUSEUM

LOCATION:

Cnr Passage St & Middle St, Cleveland.
Qld 4163 - opposite Redlands RSL

TRADING HOURS:

Mondays through to Fridays
9am to 2pm.

GROUP BOOKINGS:

Available by appointment.

COST:

A gold coin donation
would be greatly appreciated.

CONTACT:

For further information or to
make a group booking, please contact

LES WARNER - 0450 577 186



RSL

Redlands Sub Branch

RAAF Association

REDLANDS BRANCH

The main objectives of the Air Force Association (RAAFA) are to promote and maintain the wellness and benefits of members; and for Redlands Branch, the support of No. 217 Squadron, Australian Air Force Cadets.

The COVID-19 restrictions have completely curtailed our planned social activities although social contact between members has continued by telephone and email. Fortunately, our members mostly coped well and remained safe while observing the social distancing rules.

With the easing of restrictions, Redlands Branch was able to have our first social gather on Wednesday 15th July at the Courthouse Restaurant Winter Warmers dinner. A great night after the deprivations we have all experienced with great food, wine and camaraderie. It was great to catch up with those who could attend.



Our next scheduled General Meeting of RAAFA Redlands Branch on Sunday 9th August 2020 at 10:30am has also been cancelled as a face to face meeting.

Rob Wilson

**PRESIDENT,
RAAF ASSOC. REDLANDS BRANCH**



Anyone interested in joining the Royal Australian Air Force Association (Redlands Branch), please phone the secretary, David Field on 0439 855 894.

REDLANDS SUB BRANCH VETERAN TURNS 100

Lt Col John S.D. Mellick OAM ED (Retd) - a WW2 veteran better known as "Stan"- turned 100 years old on the 22nd February 2020. Unfortunately, owing to the Corona Virus, we were unable to present him with an RSL Qld plaque in recognition of his reaching this remarkable milestone and for being an inspirational member of RSL Queensland. Now that restrictions have been eased, however, I was able to call on Stan and present him with a framed Certificate.



Stan attended Brisbane Grammar School for two years in the 1930s and studied accountancy and law part-time before enlisting, in 1936, in the prewar Citizen Military Forces as a Cadet. Commissioned a second lieutenant when war broke out, he offered immediately for A.I.F service, was refused because of age but the following year was promoted captain and appointed adjutant Northern Command Signals. He was sent to Duntroon Royal Military College in 1942 then reposted to General Staff, HQ 5 Australian Division, Townsville. It moved to Milne Bay, January 1943 thence to Moresby and in August to active operations at Salamaua and Lae. Transferred as a major

to HQ First Aust. Army in Toowoomba. It moved via Atherton to Lae to control all operations up there. War's end and Mentioned in Despatches he was posted to the Reserve of Officers. In 1958, he returned to the Active List promoted to Lt-Col and given command of 401 Signal Regiment which comprised a half Regular and half part-time component. The Regiment won the Princess Royal Trophy for efficiency the following year.

In civilian life he owned and operated his own pharmacies for several years but suffering a wartime illness again he sold them and went to read books at the University of Queensland, while he recovered. That resulted in his becoming a senior lecturer and a PhD. He also served on St Andrew's War Memorial Hospital Board and started the restoration of heritage listed St Paul's Presbyterian Church in Spring Hill. In 2005 he was awarded as Order of Australia Medal for his service to the community and his contribution to Australian Studies.

It was an honour to meet this distinguished gentlemen and we thank him for his service.

Van Gray

DEPUTY PRESIDENT

Women's Auxiliary

As the RSL hasn't yet opened up for us to have any meetings, I am now looking at the beginning of October. This will be reviewed towards the end of August due to the current outbreaks in Victoria and New South Wales. Hopefully we won't have a major outbreak in Queensland.

Ladies please stay safe and well and if anyone needs anything or some one to chat to, please give me a call on 3207 2919.

Desley Lingard

PRESIDENT WOMEN'S AUXILIARY,
REDLANDS RSL SUB BRANCH



VICTORY IN THE PACIFIC (VP DAY) - 75 YEARS

Saturday, 15 August 2020 marks the 75th anniversary of Victory in the Pacific and the end of the Second World War. Some one million Australians served in the Second World War, overseas and on the home front, to protect our nation.

Victory in the Pacific or 'VP Day' is commemorated annually in Australia and around the world. With some 12,000 Second World War veterans still alive today, all Australians are encouraged to observe this important commemorative date.

MEDALLION FOR ALL WWII VETERANS

To acknowledge the significance of the 75th anniversary of the end of the Second World War, the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) has produced a Commemorative Medallion and Certificate of Commemoration.

The medallion and certificate will be made available to every living veteran of the Second World War. While Australia can never repay the debt we owe almost one million Australians who served, this medallion and certificate are a small but meaningful way we can thank living veterans of the largest global conflict of the 20th century.

The medallion will be presented in a display case and will include a card that explains the design and contains a brief expression of thanks. The theatres of war detailed on the medallion are based on locations identified within the Commemorative Courtyard of the Australian War Memorial (AWM).

The certificate will be contained within its own folder that will allow for independent display, framing and mounting.

Applications can be made online via the dva website, or for those without access to the internet, by phoning (02) 6191 8217.

Anyone needing assistance with this, please phone Linda Harcourt on 0417 604 729.



FROM RSL QUEENSLAND...

In the lead-up to VP Day on 15 August, RSL Queensland is asking you to share your stories and remember our remaining WWII heroes. Whether you were personally on the battlefield of WWII or have a family story to tell, this is a place for every Queenslander to share their memories, show their support and connect with one another.

If you're in Brisbane, visit City Hall to watch our special VP75 installation up in lights on the iconic building. The installation runs every 15 minutes from 6pm to 10pm starting Monday 10 to Saturday 15 August.

To learn more about VP Day and the end of WWII visit rslqld.org/VP75.

Alan Harcourt, President of Redlands Sub Branch, will lay a wreath on Saturday 15th August at the ANZAC Centenary Park Cenotaph on behalf of all Redlands Sub Branch members to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of VP Day.

Due to the current COVID19 restrictions, we will not be holding an official service, however anyone wishing to lay a wreath or pay their respects are invited to do so throughout the day.



HOME ASSIST SECURE

Phone: 3821 6590 | Location: Shop 6/ 124 Queen Street Cleveland.

A service for Queenslanders aged 60 years and over or people of any age with a disability

WHAT CAN HOME ASSIST SECURE DO FOR YOU

Home assist Secure provides safety related information referrals and subsidised assistance to Queenslanders 60 years and over or people with a disability who are unable to undertake or pay for critical maintenance services to their homes without assistance.

FREE INFORMATION AND REFERRALS

Your home assist secure service can provide information about

- Home maintenance
- Repairs
- Minor modifications
- Other assistance provided by the Department of Housing and Public Works

Staff can also refer and/or assist you with employing tradespeople to undertake repairs or modifications, or plan future work.

MORE SCHOLARSHIP SUPPORT

We're thrilled to have significantly increased support to our Defence family this year! Through the RSL Queensland 2020 Scholarship Program, we've provided 73 scholarships to ex-Defence members,

Defence partners, and veterans' children. Each scholarship is worth up to \$12,000 over a maximum of three years of tertiary study or vocational education. Higher education and training opens the door to opportunities, and can improve your employability, sense of purpose and financial security.

The RSL Scholarship program aims to empower ex-Defence personnel, partners and their children by supporting them through tertiary study or vocational training.

The next round of our Scholarships Program opens on 18 August. For further information visit: <https://www.rslqld.org/Find-Help/Scholarships?>

DISCOUNT FOR MEMBERS

Thank you to Freedom Fuels who have provided Redlands RSL with discount cards for our members!

Please ask our reception staff for one next time you are in!

Limit to one card per member.



Young Veterans Redlands

Information obtained from Facebook page: 'Young Veterans Redlands'

BUNNINGS SAUSAGE SIZZLE

The Young Veterans Redlands braved the rain on Saturday morning, raising money with a Bunnings sausage sizzle at Capalaba. Thank you to everyone who supported them.



BUILD AN ENGINE

An Ambulance Officer sister is entering a Holden HZ, built by a YV Toowoomba member into Variety Bush Queensland to raise money for a children's charity. The factory 6 is getting removed in lieu of this donated Holden 308.

If you always wanted to learn how to build an engine, come down to our workshop on Saturday 12pm at Boss Customs - 4b, 539 Redland Bay Rd, Capalaba. Get on the tools for tear down to see what this engine requires for rebuild. Tuition will be provided during the entire build process and installation into the old wagon.

Phone 0421 206 963 for more info.



VETERAN'S AND WELL-BEING EXCURSION

TOOWOOMBA CARNIVAL of FLOWERS

18-27 SEPT

It is great to announce that our excursion to the Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers in September is already over half booked. An overwhelming response received. Our service members with valid email addresses on our membership database were the first to hear of this great trip!

- TOOWOOMBA CARNIVAL OF FLOWERS -

When: Tuesday 22nd September 2020

(Returning 23rd September 2020)

COST: Single: \$300 | Double \$400

Price includes bus, accommodation, breakfast
(all meals including morning tea).

Bookings with payment are essential.

See the staff at Redlands RSL reception, or phone 34881199.

ITINERARY:

Departs: 8am, Tuesday 22nd September from Redlands RSL
(Passage St, Cleveland)

Morning Tea: Picnic Point

Lunch: 12noon at Toowoomba City Golf Club

Check In: City Golf Motel - Toowoomba

Evening Meal: 6pm - Toowoomba City Golf Club

Breakfast: Hot or cold provided

Lunch: Old Gatton Hotel

Return: Approx. 4pm, Wednesday 23rd September at Redlands RSL.

REQUIREMENTS:

Please advise of any dietary or mobility requirements
(limited disability and ground floor rooms).

'NO SURRENDER' ROSE

- DESCENDANTS OF THE RATS OF TOBRUK ASSOC. -

On Sunday 26th July 2020, with 20 people in attendance, two rose bushes were planted in the ANZAC Centenary Park to commemorate our brave Rats of Tobruk.

This special rose is called 'NO SURRENDER'. The red colour symbolises blood spilt by our men and the yellow representing the desert sands where they fought. — *'Lest We Forget'*



DESCENDANTS OF RATS OF TOBRUK AUSTRALIA ASSOCIATION INC

It is with a heavy heart that the Association wishes to advise their beloved patron Gordon Wallace QX7646 and one of the last known Rats of Tobruk in Queensland passed away on 13th July 2020.

Without Gordon pushing for us to form our Descendants of Rats of Tobruk Australia Association the Association would not be formed.

This Group meets whenever possible at Redlands RSL.

We extend our sympathy to members of the Association and his family RIP.

- rest in peace -



THAT ARMY LIFE

- BY DOREEN MATTHEWS -

My eighteenth birthday in 1942 seemed a long time in coming, but finally it was June and I could join up, at sixteen I had joined a small group of Naval Cadets at Manly in Queensland. I lived in Lota the next suburb and our instructor Mrs Pully was the wife of the local cabbie. We learned morse code and semaphore and how to work together in a disciplined group.

I was accepted into the A.W.A.S on 7th September 1942. Did a few weeks rookie training at Indooroopilly where I was made Drummer Girl. That was great as when we went out on route marches I didn't have to throw myself down beside the road during air raid training, HAR! Missed those cow pats.

Next we went into camp at Chermside, by then I was part of L of C signals. One morning we were called out on parade then volunteers were called on to go to Townsville. It was a good feeling to step forward, I didn't have to go to school down south as wireless operators were urgently needed up north.

Boy did we have a shock coming to us. But first there was the troop train. Everyone has heard the tales of the slow train trips and how we had to find a way to sleep on the long journey, but we were young, eager, and enthusiastic, happy to be on our way to do our bit with the war effort. I guess there were many like me, I had never been away from home before and I missed my parents and four young brothers. It helped to have the company of the other servicemen and women on that crowded train. There was a lot to talk about. From Townsville, troops would be sent wherever they were needed. There were mixed feelings all around about facing the unknown but got together in our separate carriages and played cards to pass the time. Some of men climbed into the luggage racks to sleep.

On finally reaching Townsville we boarded the army trucks and were taken to our camp at Stuart, not far from the jail. When we disembarked we found a house on stilts (I was used to that) but soon found that our new home was not the house but the backyard, where we were to sleep in tents.

In no time at all we were lined up given hessian bags and told to fill them from a pile of straw, these were our paillasses, which we put on bed boards. Took a bit of getting used to sleeping on that lot, one thing we never got used to was the ground fleas.

There was only one shower in that first camp, that consisted of corrugated iron nailed around four of the house stumps, no shower rose oh no! Instead we had a kerosene tin with holes in the bottom suspended on a rope tied to a nail in the post. Water was always in short supply, we would soap up fill the tin and quickly jump under I couldn't imagine we were every squeaky clean.

We soon settled into camp life. Our Army cook used to sprout seeds for some of our meals, there were tables under the house and the seed were spread between the wet potato sacks, what I enjoyed most in those early days were our special treats of madeira cake spread with butter... YUMMY.

One of the things I had in my gear was a beautiful kimono, black swami satin on the outside, whilst the inside was a lovely shade of green, lots of colourful roses embossed right down the front and back. My Aunt Ruby had bought it back from overseas. My family could never have afforded such a garment. We had come through hard times, Dad had been on relief work, anyway Mum had insisted that I have something nice amongst my gear to put on after my showers is what she had said, never did feel right stuffing that kimono into a kit bag.

One afternoon after I had finished day shift I decided to wash my gown as I knew it would dry overnight in that heat. The wire clothesline stretched across the yard and had the forked pole to raise it up. Before I closed my eyes that night I couldn't help feeling a little happy to see there was a hot breeze blowing and my kimono waving around, the next morning there was a rude shock waiting all that was left of my pride and joy were a few tatters hanging from the pegs the goats of the area had had a great time munching all those roses, the army reimbursing me for what they thought it was worth, but that kimono was never replaced.

One day I know I should never have gotten out of bed, I was on day shift at our Roseneath signal station. The station was built on a rise and the whole area was enclosed by an electric fence. It was time for my lunchbreak so walked down to the mess hut. I had bully beef

again that day, I don't know why but I liked the stuff, and enjoyed my meal. I was washing my enamel plate and mug in the dish outside the hut when Big Mick said who threw the plate outside the fence? The fence had been out of order for a few days, "it's ok I will get it". I took my hands out of the water and grabbed the wire and wow it grabbed me right back, I could hear this terrible noise like a banshee gone mad it was me screaming this terrible noise. Little Nell tried to pull me away but couldn't let go of me, then Big Mick threw a blanket over us both and pulled us off. Lieutenant Wilkinson had been on his way to warn us about the fence being on when he had been handed an urgent message, my bad luck. Went to bed for a few days my muscles were so sore they seemed to bunch up at the time. Was soon back at work. I loved my job as a wireless operator and even managed the sounder, that clackety clack they used in the post offices and railways yonks ago.

There were lots of happy times. I especially liked the night shift the stars were so bright up there in the north, I loved to see the morning star come up. Most of our leave was spent at Arcadia on Magnetic Island. We were told the early aboriginals would never leave the island and go to the mainland as they were afraid of the sleeping giant and when you look back at the mountains behind Townsville you could see what they meant.

Arcadia was absolutely beautiful and a great swimming area. The water was so clear you could see any small sea creatures on the sandy bottom, I wasn't a bad swimmer I learned the hard way. At home I was jumping into the creek to go after my brothers they could be real little horrors, they would stand on the small side platforms of the railway bridge and wait for the old steam train to get near and jump into the creek and I would cop a blast from the driver. I entered the inter services swim races at Arcadia and came in second. That early training paid off. We had so much fun over there on the Island, it was real good rest and recreation.

We were in billets in Denham Street for a time, everyone was excited about the New Year dance and was looking forward to going as there was a great American band going to be playing. But before the night arrived I developed a temperature and ended up in sick bay with the dreaded dengue fever, the MO wasn't letting me go anywhere, quite a few tears were shed but them's the breaks.

Later we went into billets out near the signals station. They were

dormitory style huts. On Christmas Eve the night was stinking hot, there was a group of us who didn't have leave passes, we were allowed one dish of water a day each and we were hot and sweaty. Someone suggested we visit the Majors garden, he was so proud of it, we didn't want his veges, the treasures we were after was the water trough. We waited until well after dark when all was quiet, then climbed through the barbed wire fence, we had our bathers and towels, the trough was a bit green and slimy but we didn't care. One at a time we got in and had a splash, it was so cool we were laughing and shushing at the same time, even cleaned our teeth at the tap then one of the girls said there is a man. We had no torches so we bolted, a few of us got a little blooded from the barbed wire in our rush to get away, we must have been a bit troppo or maybe it was the midnight madness, the man had only been a tree. Next day was payback time, all of our girls were ordered out on parade, the Major was furious. His garden was a no no. We had left some evidence behind in our haste to get away. We got a good dressing down and all leave was cancelled (that hurt). Nobody snitched on us and that's what good old Aussie mateship is about.

THAT ARMY LIFE - Doreen Matthews



History

JULY

DATE	TITLE	EVENT
1 July 1916	First day of the battle of the Somme	This was the worst single day in the history of British arms, with 60,000 men being killed or wounded. The battle of the Somme then continued for four months and resulted in more than 1,200,000 casualties on both sides.
1 July 1945	7th Division landed at Balikpapan, Borneo	The landing at Balikpapan was the largest and final Australian amphibious landing of the Second World War.
6 July 1943	Darwin bombed	Darwin was bombed 64 times during the Second World War.
7 July 1956	Last RAAF transports return from Korea	The last Australian servicemen did not depart Korea until 1957.
9 July 1943	Nos. 3 and 450 Squadrons, RAAF, and eight RAN corvettes involved in the allied invasion of Sicily	Known as Operation Husky the invasion of Sicily was the second largest undertaken in Europe during the Second World War, Overlord being the largest. The operation involved 180,000 troops and 2,590 ships.
10 July 1911	Formation of the RAN	In its original form, the Royal Australian Navy consisted of the battlecruiser Australia and several cruisers, destroyers and submarines. When the new fleet arrived in Australia on 4 October 1913 the day was declared a public holiday and was described in the press as the greatest day in Australia's history.
19 July 1916	Battle of Fromelles	A total of 5,533 Australians were killed or wounded in this battle, most on the night of 19–20 July. Fromelles was the first battle for the Australians on the Western Front.
20 July 1943	HMAS Hobart torpedoed	HMAS Hobart torpedoed off San Cristobal, Solomon Islands. Seven officers and six ratings were killed in the attack. Though badly damaged the Hobart was able to reach Espiritu Santo the next day.
26 July 1940	Formation of the Royal Australian Air Force Nursing Service (RAAFNS)	The RAAFNS was established in response to the need for a greater number of nursing personnel as the RAAF underwent a rapid expansion early in the war. Membership of the RAAFNS expanded from 45 in December 1940 to 616 in December 1945. The service was disbanded at the end of the war, but in 1948 a peace-time service was formed.

WITHOUT HISTORY, THERE WOULD BE NO FUTURE!

Associated Groups

	<p>AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION (RAAFA) REDLANDS BRANCH Meetings held 2nd Sunday every second month at 10.30am in the Gallipoli Room. Social get-togethers held Wednesdays at 3pm in the Anzac Lounge. Contact: President Rob Wilson 0419 688 014</p>
	<p>NAVAL ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA (BAYSIDE SUB SECTION) Meetings are held on the 1st Saturday of the month at 12 noon. Contact: Graham Hargreaves 0427 432 293</p>
	<p>T&PI ASSOCIATION MORETON BAY SOUTH Meetings held on the last Wednesday of the month in the Veterans Community Centre. Contact: Ken Logue 0402 028 806</p>
	<p>REDLANDS RSL SUB BRANCH WOMEN'S AUXILIARY Meetings held the 1st Monday of the month at 10am in the Meeting Room. Contact: Desley Lingard 0409 060 267</p>
	<p>REDLANDS SUB BRANCH AUSTRALIAN WAR WIDOWS (QUEENSLAND) Meetings are held the last Friday of the month in the Gallipoli Room of the club commencing at 10.00am. Contact: Merrill Ovenden, Acting President on 3207 2710</p>
	<p>REDLANDS LEGACY CARE GROUP Meets on the 1st Friday of each month in the RSL Club Gallipoli Room commencing at 10.00am. Contact: Lynne Martin, President on 0416 224 453</p>
	<p>YOUNG VETERANS REDLANDS Contact: Adrain Aiple on 0421 206 963. Find the group on Facebook.</p>

DISCLAIMER -

The Bugle is intended for members and friends to be informed of the club activities and to be entertained with articles that may, or may not, be relevant to the Clubs activities.

The material is contributed from far and wide and therefore may not necessarily be the views of the Redlands RSL.

The Redlands RSL can take no responsibility, under any circumstances, for any material contained, in any part, of this publication.



NEED A RIDE? If you would like the Courtesy Bus to pick you up and bring you to the monthly league meetings, then phone reception on 3488 1199.

Next meeting is yet to be advised.

LAST POST

NAME	DECEASED DATE	SERVICE
Lindsay Bennett	4th June 2020	RAAF
Ralph Court	1st July 2020	ARMY
Thomas Paine	5th July 2020	ARMY
Robert Hocking	15th July 2020	ARMY



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RSL
Redlands Sub Branch

"HONOURING THE FALLEN BY SERVING THE LIVING"