



AUSTRALIAN
WAR WIDOWS NSW LTD

AUTUMN 2023

THE DIGEST

ANZAC WEEK & ANZAC FIELD OF REMEMBRANCE 2023



AUSTRALIAN WAR WIDOWS

NSW LIMITED

ABN 24 083 075 914

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*"We all belong to each other.
We all need each other. It is in serving each
other and in sacrificing for our common good
that we are finding our true life."*

– King George VI, 1941

Under the patronage of
The Honourable Margaret Beazley
AC KC, Governor of New South Wales

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The Digest has been checked thoroughly
and to the best knowledge is correct.
However, errors may occur which are
beyond our control. If this should
happen, we apologise most sincerely.

FOR YOUR DIARY

Events

Town halls

26 June 2023

26 August 2023

Our Space ACT Meeting

Monthly, starting 20 May

Annual General Meeting

1 September 2023

Our Space Sydney Opening

TBC June 2023

War Widows Day

19 October 2023

Commemorations & Key Dates

Formation Australian Squadrons Bomber Command

5 June 2023

D Day

6 June 2023

Battle Shah Wali Kot - Afghanistan

10 – 15 June 2023

Black Hawk Tragedy Anniversary

12 June 2023

International Widows' Day

23 June 2023

Formation Royal Australian Navy

10 July 2023

The Battle of Fromelles

19 July 2023

Korean Veterans' Day

27 July 2023

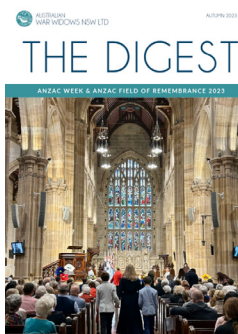
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OUR COVERS

Front

Image taken by
Caroline Kirche at
the ANZAC Field of
Remembrance Service,
Sydney



Back

A collage of images
taken by Clare Hawley
at the ANZAC Field of
Remembrance Service,
Sydney





Throughout April, ANZAC Day looms for many of us veteran families and war widows with a bevy of emotions and traditions, looking forward to and dreading the day in equal parts as we prepare for the many customs, services and marches that are held across the state and the country.

At AWWNSW, we have an added custom for our veteran families and war widows: the Field of Remembrance service that we hold every year at St Andrew's Cathedral in Sydney. For our 71st service, Michelle Carr did an amazing job hosting the solemn event. It was a pure outpouring of love and grief, comradeship and support, and understanding and silent communication. We prayed and remembered. We cried and connected to each other. Our members laid the Table of Remembrance and Jenny Ware read the most heartbreaking poem, 'The Silent Ranks'. The crosses were mailed to you, and we hope that you were able to lay your cross, pay tribute and remember your loved ones, wherever you may have been. We are grateful for the many hours that the Haberfield Men's Shed have put into producing these crosses for us to make our Field of Remembrance and the lunch provided afterwards more memorable.

As we held our Field of Remembrance, many ex-serving organisations held their own services in the lead up to ANZAC Day. Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway welcomed us to a moving visual service attended by the new NSW State Minister for Veterans, the Honourable David Harris MP, while the RSL held a service at Hyde Park for their 70th RSL and Schools Remember ANZAC Art Exhibition.

ANZAC Day is a day of reflection, of paying respect and saying a prayer to all who have served and died for this country of ours. We who are left behind remember this day with a bittersweet feeling of understanding the cost of service and the need for such events to go on. As such, wherever you were this ANZAC Day, know that you were not alone. We stand with you and next to you, shoulder to shoulder, bearing the cost of service and sacrifice alongside you and your veteran family, grateful that your loved one answered the call of duty so that we can all live free.

In other news, there are many changes occurring in the Defence sector. One of the recommendations by the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide is the need to simplify the legislation that underpins the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA). As a result, the DVA is inviting community members to participate in online webinars through the public consultation pathway to simplify veteran compensation and rehabilitation legislation. The webinars will provide an opportunity to learn more about the proposed future model for veteran legislation from experts in the Department, ask questions and provide your feedback. Please give our office a call if you would like to be involved or for more information.

QUEEN DUNBAR

State President

Australian War Widows NSW



AWWNSW President, Queen Dunbar next to past Presidents Rhondha Vanzella OAM and Meg Green AM at the ANZAC Field of Remembrance Service.



A very special part of my job is the opportunity to meet with you. It can be easy for politicians to get stuck behind their desk but I relish in the opportunity to get out and about meeting with our veteran and family community.

Thank you to those of you I met at the Legacy War Widows Mother's Day Lunch on the NSW Central Coast recently for your kindness and hospitality, as well as for letting me explain a bit about what the recent 2023-24 Budget means for our veteran and families community.

This Budget will see the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) better funded than it has been in three decades, which will mean our veteran community can access services and supports much faster.

We've invested \$64.1 million to retain 480 DVA staff who are working to deliver frontline services to veterans and families, building upon our funding in the last Budget to employ 500 additional staff to work through the veteran compensation claim backlog.

We're already seeing great results in fixing that backlog, reducing it by more than 20 per cent since its peak last year.

There's a lot more to do though, and that's why we've also invested more than \$254 million to modernise and sustain ageing IT systems to speed up payments and access to services.

Ultimately, these measures are part of the Government's response to the interim recommendations of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide.

In 2022 we expanded the Defence, Veterans' and Families' Acute Support Package to apply to a broader set of veterans and to provide more flexibility in supports for their families. We're now expanding that further to make sure that grandcarer veteran families are also supported if experiencing crisis.

We've also made it easier for those on Veteran cards to access a doctor, with the tripling of the Veteran Access Payment for GPs.

You can visit the DVA website for more information on our Budget measures to support the veteran community.

The recent round of public consultation on a pathway to simplify a century of veteran compensation and rehabilitation legislation has just concluded and is now being considered by government to develop draft legislation.

Thank you to all of you who engaged in this process. Your feedback is greatly valued and it will inform the Government's way forward.

Finally, I had the huge honour of spending this year's ANZAC Day at Gallipoli in Türkiye.

If you were watching the Dawn Service in Gallipoli, you may have noticed I laid a Legacy centenary bear in my wreath to pay tribute to all families of those who were lost.

Gallipoli was a sombre reminder of the sacrifices made by members of Australia's military over more than a century, and the families of those who serve.

Thank you for all you do.

THE HON. MATT KEOGH MP
Minister for Veterans' Affairs and
Minister for Defence Personnel



I am honoured to take over the NSW Government Veterans portfolio and am grateful for the opportunity to represent veterans, their families and war widows across the state.

As the Minister responsible for the Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty portfolio, I am honoured to be the first Minister to have both portfolio titles acknowledged as Ministerial responsibilities together.

I am quickly understanding the vastly different needs of veterans and their families throughout the state. It gives me great pleasure to continue the support to NSW veterans and their families, and I welcome this opportunity to speak to the war widows community.

I was sadly unable to attend the Field of Remembrance Service this year, but was well represented at the event by my colleague Liesl Tesch, the member for Gosford, who passed on to me how lovely and moving the service was.

On ANZAC Day, I had the privilege of attending my first ANZAC Day Dawn Service in Martin Place as Minister and it was a pleasure to meet CEO Renee Wilson.

I was also able to participate in the March alongside RSL NSW President Ray James, and I was honoured to be involved in the Coloured Digger March and Service in Redfern. It was heartening to see the large crowds throughout Sydney paying

tribute to all veterans, members of the ADF and their families.

Recently, I attended the Indigenous Veterans Commemoration Service at the Anzac Memorial. This was the 17th annual event, and an important acknowledgment of the service and sacrifice of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander veterans.

In 2021, the NSW Government Veterans Strategy was developed, following broad consultation and discussion with ex-serving personnel and their families. I have reviewed the current 2023-2023 Two Year Action Plan and I look forward to supporting the delivery of services and programs to aid veterans and their families across the state. You can view the Strategy and Action Plan here: <https://www.veterans.nsw.gov.au/about-us/nsw-veterans-strategy/>.

Veterans, current members of the ADF and their families are an integral part of our community. It is important that as a state, we honour the service of our veterans but also the sacrifices from their families and widows who have supported their service and sacrifice to our nation.

As Minister for Veterans, I look forward to continuing the NSW Government support of the veteran community and their families and working closely with the war widows of NSW.

THE HON DAVID HARRIS MP

Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty
Minister for Gaming and Racing
Minister for Veterans



Welcome to this edition of the Digest. This is a busy time of year for the Board and the organisation as we close off one financial year and commence a new year of operations. As usual, we will provide you with a full report of the activities and results for last financial year at the Annual General Meeting.

The Board has met twice since the last edition of the Digest, and we have reviewed the progress of our strategic and business plans and approved activity for the forthcoming year. This year the Board has three main priorities:

1. Updating our organisation name to ensure that we remove the final barrier to our expansion.
2. Increasing our funding lines and revenue streams to ensure we can replace the funds we are investing in our future.
3. Ensuring the programs and services we deliver to you meet your needs, and scoping new opportunities where gaps exist.

From a membership and advocacy perspective, the Board has asked the CEO to investigate how we can reduce barriers to our membership and ensure that our advocacy work is documented, publicly available and measurable. You can expect to see the Advocacy Plan go up on the website shortly after it is approved by the Board.

The Board and I understand that there are currently a lot of changes happening within the veteran sector, and indeed within AWWNSW. It is easy to feel left behind when the rate of change increases, and I want to assure you that we are doing our very best to mitigate the impacts of these changes on you personally. Through the CEO we are working hard to ensure that you are not left behind, your needs are still met, and you are advocated for and supported.

We have a very special community, and we want to grow that community to get to know many more of you. We want to be embracing as many war widows and veterans' families as we can, connecting them with each other and engaging them in our services.

This evolution of our organisation will ensure that we focus on the entire journey and experiences of people like you - the families of Australia's veterans - and that you remain connected to your defence family. Importantly, we want to ensure that it doesn't take a tragedy to ensure that veterans' families like yours are seen, heard and supported.

Before I close, I wanted to take a moment to let you know that our CEO, Renee Wilson, has been awarded a scholarship from the Harvard Club of Australia to attend a week-long course at Harvard Business School in Boston.

This is an incredible opportunity for Renee to learn from the world's experts on running a not-for-profit and charity in today's environment. Renee will also take this opportunity to meet with like organisations based in Washington, DC, and bring the learnings back to all of us. Congratulations Renee, we can't wait to hear what you learn!

MS TRICIA HOBSON
Chair of the Board

Update from the CEO

It has been a very busy start to the calendar year for the team and I as we jumped straight into delivering across all areas of the organisation.

From the special communication products we sent you over February, March and April, to processing hundreds of membership renewals, delivering very special club anniversary functions, launching new services, engaging with media, and of course delivering the ANZAC Field of Remembrance, it has been all hands on deck! I've compiled a snapshot of our work below, which I hope you find interesting.

Membership and Feedback

We are currently engaging with 2,400 members. We are seeing several members return to the organisation who have had little contact and engagement with us for a few years. This is a positive sign for our increasing public profile, improvements to our service delivery, and the changes we are making within the organisation.

Over the last two years we have organically attracted 177 new members, and we are looking forward to attracting many more once our final barriers are removed.

Over the last 12 months, we have recorded 131 items in our feedback register, consisting of compliments (74%), complaints (7%) and general feedback (19%). We love to hear from you, and your feedback is fundamental to how we deliver services, communications and events.

Whether we are doing well or not, or if you have a suggestion, please tell us.

DID YOU KNOW:

In the last 30 days we received 402 calls and made some 387 calls – that's around 31 calls a day. While our phone service has improved as we now have a system that allows all of us to answer and connect to each other, sometimes we may miss a call or two! If this happens, please leave us a message and we will return your call as soon as possible.

Member Support and Services

So far this year, 40 clubs have been visited by staff and Directors, including 23 regional club visits. This face-to-face personal engagement has been proving incredibly valuable to the members and to the organisation.

The team has been working hard administering the transport policy, and working with members and clubs to ensure as many as possible are linked with community transport, so members can not only use this to attend our services and events, but can also use it to get around in general.

So far the team has issued, reported and managed 368 cab charge vouchers under the transport policy, in addition to supporting the transport requirements of members across five special events, and moving 10 clubs and 57 members to community transport arrangements.

The team has also been cleaning up the Friendship Line and birthday call lists as a first phase of optimising the operations of the Friendship Line and the welfare calls conducted by our volunteers. Around 1,500 birthday calls have been made since the start of the financial year, and 300 members receive Friendship Line calls monthly. Another 3,600 calls have been made, with file notes on each registered. The calls are also supplemented by the presentation of flowers and the issue of life memberships to members who turn 100, as per the terms of the constitution. So far this financial year, 33 members have turned 100 and have received life membership.

Social work services are now being delivered predominantly to new widows referred to us through DVA, veterans' associations or other members. So far, this financial year we have had 22 cases under management, of which 7 cases are closed and 8 remain open. In addition to the above cases, the team also manages and assists members with complex queries via reception.

There have been 20 referrals from reception so far this calendar year, requiring information and referral to aged care services, DVA phone line, connections to local services, information and advice.

My sincere thanks to our incredible team who go over and above every day to support, connect and serve you.

Reflecting on the service

As our CEO Renee Wilson described it, “It was the usual high standard. It was moving. It was thought-provoking. It was special. It was about the families of our veterans.”

The day started with ABC News interviewing Meg Green AM and Renee Wilson on the parvis of St Andrew’s Cathedral, with guests arriving promptly afterwards. We were honoured to welcome many dignitaries again this year, including the Honorary Consul of Ukraine, who came as a special guest to lay a cross and a sunflower, a symbol of Ukraine, on behalf of the citizens of Ukraine and their war widows.

We were also delighted to welcome past State Presidents Wendy Thompson, Diana Bland, Meg Green AM, and Rhondda Vanzella OAM, as well as AWWNSW Board members Lynne Boyd, Jennifer Collins AM, Major General Susan Coyle AM, CSC, DSM and Bree Till, our Chair Tricia Hobson, Deputy Chair Stuart Clark AM FAICD and our current State President Queen Dunbar.

It was a very moving ceremony, with about 140 guests in attendance, and the emotion in the cathedral was palpable.

This year, our Master of Ceremonies was AWWNSW member Michelle Carr, who led a beautiful and authentic service, representing with perfection the legacy we uphold.

St Andrew’s Cathedral Sub-Dean Christopher Allen and, for the first time, Anglican Bishop to the ADF Grant Dibden, led the clergy and religious service.

AWWNSW President Queen Dunbar delivered once again a beautiful, heartfelt speech that resonated with all in attendance.

The service was as beautiful and moving as every year, but this year was special, with the star being Jenny Ware and her sincere reading of the poem ‘The Silent Ranks’. Not one eye was left dry in the cathedral as she read the poem with such truth and authentic emotion, carrying her heart on her sleeve, supported by Gwen Cherne, who

held her hand tight all along. When her weeping voice uttered the words “but my job is just as tough, I am the one who is left behind,” the mighty cathedral filled with emotion – sadness, love and sorrow.

The planting of the official crosses was even more poignant this year as we welcomed the Honorary Consul of Ukraine, Mr Jaroslav Duma OAM, to lay a cross on behalf of the citizens of Ukraine, their veterans and their families. He also laid a sunflower, a symbol of Ukraine, to represent their veterans’ families’ resilience. His presence and participation in this ceremony carried the painful realisation that times of war are never far, and that families still carry the losses of their loved ones through defence service.

As our war widows and families lined up to plant their crosses and lay their tributes, the emotion was still palpable, and wrapped beautifully with the music played quietly in the background by the NSW Police Band.

When the last cross was planted, the young voices of the choir echoed the first notes of “For the Fallen” in the cathedral like a lamentation, a cry that encompassed our poignant Field of Remembrance and a beautiful way to close the Laying of the Crosses Ceremony.

The service concluded with the Ode of Remembrance, read by RSL NSW President Ray James, and followed by the poignant Last Post resonating from the lofty cathedral walls. After the minute of silence was observed and we were awakened from our contemplation and remembrance by La Rousse, we farewelled the flag party and official guests.

This moving service concluded with a lunch in the Cathedral Upper Chapter House, where the NSW Police Band clarinet quintet provided lively music and our members gathered and took the time to catch up with old friends and meet new ones.

A Message from Her Excellency

On 6 May this year, I attended the Coronation of King Charles III and Queen Camilla at Westminster Abbey, a ceremony of splendour and significance whilst also filled with poignant and personal moments. During a quiet moment of reflection in the Abbey, my thoughts turned to the service of Australian men and women, stretching back a century and more, who have given their lives in service to the Crown and to our nation, knowing that for each life lost, another family joins the 'silent ranks' of loved ones left to mourn.

In recognition of this greatest of sacrifices, on the day following the Coronation, I placed a wreath on the Australian War Memorial in London, where a heartfelt dedication by the Australian Prime Minister, Sir Robert Menzies, in 1941, reads: "Whatever burden you are to carry, we also will shoulder that burden."

The connections between the Abbey and the ANZAC Field of Remembrance service run deep. The Abbey is the final resting place of the Unknown Warrior, whose body was brought from the battlefields of France to be buried in the Abbey on the second anniversary of Armistice, 11th November 1920. He was laid to rest in the presence of King George V, who placed a wreath of red roses and bay leaves; the gilded inscription on the gravestone reading: "Greater love hath no man than this."

The first-ever ANZAC Field of Remembrance service was held in 1952, in the same year as Queen Elizabeth II ascended the throne, at the instigation of a war widow, Lesley Pope, widow of Rear-Admiral C J Pope. Lesley Pope had uncovered a brochure about a UK Field of Remembrance service among her mother's memorabilia. After attending the UK ceremony, held in the churchyard of St Margaret's, part of Westminster Abbey, she was inspired to establish a service in Sydney.

Through her efforts, and that of women like her, and supported by the then Dean of Sydney, the annual Field of Remembrance tradition was born. Today, St Andrew's Cathedral's Field of Remembrance service



Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley AO KC laying a cross for the unknown soldier at the 70th ANZAC Field of Remembrance in 2022.

continues to wrap its arms around all who gather to pay their respects; to reflect and remember those who, in having served, lost their lives, through the act of laying a small wooden cross, a rose, a sprig of rosemary or a wreath.

Last year, at the 70th anniversary service, I placed a cross for the Unknown Warrior in honour of the sacrifice of all who have lost their lives in the cause of freedom and peace. The placing of that cross was also an acknowledgment of the strength and sacrifice of the many women who publicly honoured their own loved ones who lost their lives in service whilst each mourning her personal loss with dignity and courage.

This year, with that same dignity and courage, Australian War Widows NSW embraced the people of Ukraine whose losses in this modern era seem unfathomable, just as yours were and continue to be. As you support each other in friendship and with empathy, you are truly heroes of our community and, in your strength, you give us all strength.

Lest we forget

Her Excellency
The Honourable Margaret Beazley AC KC
 Governor of New South Wales

ANZAC FIELD OF REMEMBRANCE 2023



"I wear no uniforms,
No Whites or Blues or Greens.
But I am in the military,
In the ranks so rarely seen."





"I am not the one who fires the weapon,
Who puts my life on the line.
But my job is just as tough.
I am the one who is left behind."



Reflections from a country at war

ANZAC Day 2023 marks exactly 14 months and one day, since the war in Ukraine began.

This year, in my capacity as the Honorary Consul of Ukraine in Sydney, it was my exceptional and most humble honour to represent Ukraine in the placement of a cross and some sunflowers at the annual war widows' Field of Remembrance church service at St Andrew's Cathedral, to honour those fallen from the Australian Defence forces in the many fields of battle in which the ANZACs had participated in over the last 108 years.

To be a guest and to participate in a most moving ceremony is an honour beyond words. Many dozens of war widows, some together with their children or grandchildren, each slowly walking toward a memorial planter box to lay a cross, a sprig of rosemary or a flower to remember their husband, father, grandfather or brother – each of whom had given the ultimate sacrifice so that all Australians, and all those that live in this magnificent country are able to live in a safe, free and democratic country.

For me personally, it was an equally moving opportunity to pay tribute to the thousands of men, women and children of Ukraine, both military and civilian, who have sacrificed their lives over the last 14 months. I paid personal tribute on the day to a friend of some 25 years – Oleh Yurchenko, who died in a battle at Bakhmut on 2 January this year.

Oleh was just 45 years old. In fact, the day of the service (20 April) would have been Oleh's 46th birthday. Oleh was a husband (to Liudmyla) and a father of 5 children – the eldest has just turned 19, the youngest is only 8 years old.

I remember hearing Oleh talking to a friend of mine last year, where he sought advice regarding

the need to fight in this war. The response was simple: "Oleh ... you have 5 children, everyone will understand if you leave the country for safety purposes..."

Oleh's response was tear jerking: "... how can I look my children in the eye if I do not defend their home(land) and their right to live in a democratic country..."

I contacted Oleh's widow on the day of the service – to let her know that on this day I had remembered Oleh, Liudmyla and their five children... She was most grateful that Oleh is not forgotten.

And as I remembered Jenny Ware's most moving recital of 'The Silent Ranks', I especially note the words:

"My husband is a patriot,
A brave, a prideful man.
And the call to serve his country,
Not all understand."

Jaroslav R. Duma OAM

Honorary Consul of Ukraine in Sydney



Picture of Oleh, his wife Liudmyla and their 5 children

The Silent Ranks

I wear no uniforms,
No Whites or Blues or Greens.
But I am in the military,
In the ranks so rarely seen.

I have no rank upon my shoulders.
Salutes I do not give.
But the military world,
Is the place where I live.

I am not in the chain of command,
Orders I do not get.
But my husband is the one who does,
this I cannot forget.

I am not the one who fires the weapon,
who puts my life on the line.
But my job is just as tough.
I am the one who is left behind.

My husband is a patriot,
A brave, a prideful man.
And the call to serve his country,
Not all understand.

Behind the lines I see the things,
We need to keep this country free.
My husband makes the sacrifice,
but so do our kids and me.

I love the man I married,
The Military is his life.
But I stand among the silent ranks,
known as the Military Wife.

Author: unknown

ANZAC Field of Remembrance around Australia

The ANZAC Field of Remembrance is an event for all veterans' families to pay their tribute to their departed loved ones in a service led by war widows.

This very personal and poignant service is accessible to all, near and far.

All around NSW and Australia, our members received their crosses by mail and paid their very personal tribute to their loved one at the ceremony or at home, in their own way.

In the last few years, we introduced a livestream of the event, which has enabled everyone to participate and watch the service from the comfort of their own homes. As the service is recorded, it can be watched any time after the ceremony has been held. If you were unable to join us this year, scan the QR code on the following page to watch the ceremony.

The livestream not only enables war widows and their families to watch the service at home, but also enables members, social clubs, families and friends to get together wherever they might be to watch the service, followed by their own personal tributes and planting of their crosses.

The beauty of this technology is that anyone with basic internet knowledge can set this up and host a get together to mark a day where community, family support and friendships are important and needed.

This year, ladies from the Coffs Harbour, Macksville and Clarence Valley Social Clubs were able to join in the commemoration at the same time as the attendees of the St Andrew's service in Sydney. The livestream was hosted by CeX Coffs Harbour, thanks to their generous club grant, and took place at the Coffs Harbour RSL, thanks to their staff who assisted us in setting up the livestream.

The ladies were able to watch the ceremony, enjoy a morning tea, and hold their own tribute to their loved ones in real time.

Thanks to technology, we are now able to host many sister events throughout NSW and Australia at the same time as the Sydney service.

The setup is very easy – all you need is a computer or smart TV! We are looking at expressions of interest from Social Clubs and members to assist us in hosting a livestreaming gathering next year so war widows and families from across our country can watch the service in real time and pay their tribute to their departed loved ones.



***We encourage our readers to forward
pictures of their own tributes to
guild@warwidowsnsw.com.au or to our
postal address.***

Scan the
QR code to
watch the
service



If you are interested in hosting or volunteering to set up a livestream get together, please send through your interest and any questions you might have to guild@warwidowsnsw.com.au or call us on 02 9267 6577.

Other clubs were also able to host their own Field of Remembrance event, and in Newcastle, the Field of Remembrance Service was held at Christ Church Cathedral on 20 April 2023.

The service was organised by the Newcastle Subbranch of RSL. However this year, they were not able to plant their crosses in the usual field due to wet and windy weather. This did not stop them from having a lovely get together and service attended by Jessie Vasey's granddaughter, Jennifer St George, who read the prayer.



Reflections on ANZAC Week – AWWNSW CEO Renee Wilson

As we do every year, we gathered on 25 April to pay our respect to our loved ones and all those who have served and continue to serve Australia. Often standing in the shadow cast by the responsibilities and burden of their loved ones' service, we also remember the service and sacrifice of the families of Australian veterans.

ANZAC Week started for me, as for many of our community, on 20 April, when we hosted our annual ANZAC Field of Remembrance service at St Andrew's Cathedral – this one our 71st. It was the usual high standard. It was moving. It was thought provoking. It was special. It was about the families of our veterans. Jenny Ware's reading of 'The Silent Ranks' moved us all, and not one eye was left dry as she read this poem with all the emotions one who has experienced life as the spouse of a veteran can give.

Our Master of Ceremonies, Michelle Carr, wonderfully delivered this year's service with humble and composed class. Her exceptional delivery of the service made it all the more special. Together, Jenny and Michelle's heartfelt contributions to the day stayed with me for many days to come.

I later laid a wreath at the Commando Memorial in Martin Place, on behalf of the ACT Ministerial Advisory Council for Veterans and their Families and the ACT Government.

I chose this memorial as it is the public space for



those in the special forces community to pay tribute to those who have served and made the ultimate sacrifice. It is very special to me, as it is a place that represents the losses and sacrifices of my part of the defence family. Together with their west coast counterparts, our nation's special forces bore the brunt of Australian casualties from the Afghanistan War, and the nature of their roles means that their families too bear enormous burdens to enable their service and care for them when the service ends.

On ANZAC Day, I was honoured to represent our organisation at the Cenotaph in Martin Place alongside our Board Director and war widow Bree Till.

I was amazed at the number of people who gathered so early to pay their respects, particularly following the years of reduced crowds and services. For me, it was my first time at the Martin Place service. Part way through the service, I found myself gazing toward George Street remembering my panic from some 13 years earlier as I rushed to the train station, convinced that something terrible had happened to my husband Gary – convinced that I was about to receive the notification we all fear. For those of you who know the story, you know I was to receive a bereavement notification that day, however Gary survived. He wasn't supposed to survive his injuries, but he did. Others, however, did not, and it was their widows and families I remembered looking at that spot.

Perhaps that is why I have avoided that service for such a long time. The entirety of Martin Place has haunted my memories for so long. But the time was right to go, to join the 7,500 others and give our thanks, pay our respects and draw on each other's strengths. It was my honour to stand beside Bree, an Afghanistan war widow and fellow member of the Special Forces family, and together lay our wreath.

I want to close by acknowledging the incredible work of a very small team of people who work so hard to not only deliver the Field of Remembrance, but to get you all there, to ensure wreaths are ordered and present where they need to be, and to see that AWWNSW is represented in as many places as possible on ANZAC Day and in the lead up. Many of them are the families of veterans themselves and this is how they serve their community.

The personal meaning and our unique ways to mark ANZAC Day

Lisa Stephenson – AWWNSW Social Worker

“ANZAC Day is a special day for my family as my husband serves in the Australian Defence Force as a commissioned officer of the Royal Australian Navy. This year we attended the ANZAC Day march through the Sydney CBD, honouring those who have come before us and given their health or their life in service. Our children cheered with pride ‘Daddy!’ as he marched past us with his ship’s company. I reflected on the resilience and bravery our children display during long deployments without their Dad by their side.

“As an ADF spouse myself, I reflect on all the women connected to Defence service, and their strength and resilience in the face of adversity. I honour the incredible sacrifices of women in support of their veterans, and am grateful for the lessons and vulnerability shared within our unique community.”



Renee Wilson – AWWNSW CEO

“ANZAC Day is such a special time for me and for us as a family. It is a day where we can celebrate Gary’s service as a family and together with our Defence family. It is a day full of such pride, admiration and gratitude – gratitude that we live in a country that is so lucky to have thousands of people like Gary who are willing to put their lives on the line to ensure that what we have in Australia is protected from harm. Our prosperity as a nation, our freedoms, our safety and our choices are all enabled by all of those who wear and have worn the Whites, Greens and Blues, and particularly those in that uniform who have made the ultimate sacrifice.



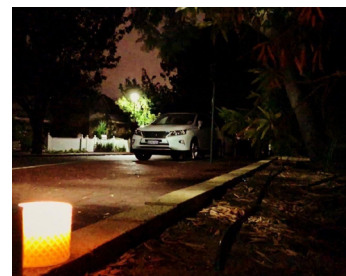
“For those that truly understand, a simple ‘thank you for your service’ never quite seems enough.”

Caroline Kirche – AWWNSW Communication & Events Manager

“My favourite way to commemorate ANZAC Day started in 2020. My partner was away on a six-month rotation in the Gulf and Covid-19 had just recently changed our lives. We were ordered to stay home and ANZAC Day transformed itself that year into the ‘stand at dawn’ movement.

“With my partner on operations, ANZAC Day had an even more special meaning to me that year, so I woke up before dawn, took my candle and cup of coffee outside in the autumn morning cold, and lit my candle standing in my small quiet street in Subiaco, WA. A few moments later, I looked up from my contemplation and saw I had been joined by my neighbour across the street who, like me, was standing in the darkness carrying the light of her candle. One by one, we were joined by additional lights that appeared in a line on both sides of the street, in the blanket of night and under ancient trees.

“One of our neighbours played the Dawn Service on the radio, and the Ode of Remembrance followed by the Last Post resonated within our street. It was very moving, magically unplanned and I shed a few tears. It was to me the most intimate way I could pay my respect to the ANZACs, to our past and present service men and women, and their families.”



Jessica Taylor – AWWNSW Community Liaison Officer

“What ANZAC Day means to me is different to what it used to be. I used to stand each ANZAC Day with my husband and my boys at Warragamba ANZAC Memorial service thinking about those we lost and what all those before had given for us to be living how we do, which I still do. However, since the passing of my husband, it feels so different. I now stand holding my two boys’ hands with a hole in my heart, thinking about everything that we as a family have lost and given with our sacrifices, and thinking about all the families before us who have lost so much that has gone untold.

“My boys and I pay tribute to their Dad each year at our local ANZAC Memorial service up at Warragamba, where we lay flowers and touch his plaque just so he knows we are there. But it is not only a place that we visit on these publicly significant days, but also where my boys and I often go to talk to and about their Dad, or even take their friends to talk about him.”



Northern Beaches Social Club



It was a wonderful day and all of us were thrilled to be there to celebrate the 70th Anniversary of the Northern Beaches Social Club on 22 March.

Our dedicated Northern Beaches club coordinator, Shirley McLaren OAM, worked tirelessly with our Program & Services team to make this incredible event a reality.

The RSL ANZAC Village in Narrabeen provided a beautiful backdrop for the event, and we enjoyed a delicious three-course lunch and sponge cake to celebrate this milestone.

A raffle was organised – thanks to our amazing volunteers for putting this together and for all their donations. Our State President Queen Dunbar gave a beautiful, heartfelt speech to all in attendance.

This was a milestone anniversary and we would like to congratulate all members, past and present, who have kept our Social Clubs going throughout the years thanks to their dedication, time and community spirit.





Social and Guild Club News

Regional Visits Ongoing

Our Program & Services team has been working hard to coordinate the visits and bring clubs together to hear from the State President, Board Directors and staff. If we haven't visited your area yet, don't worry – we'll be visiting you soon.

Our sincere thanks to each of the clubs we've visited so far for your hospitality and openness. We have been learning a lot as we travel around.

The visits are your opportunity to tell us what you're thinking and what you'd like to see. We want to know how to better engage and connect with you, and what we can do to support you and your clubs.

To find out more about clubs and groups in your area or online, please give our Program & Services team a call on **(02) 9267 6577**.

Upcoming Club Events:

- Wednesday 7 June – Regional visit Inverell
- Tuesday 13 June – Regional visit Tamworth
- Tuesday 27 June – Regional visit & AGM Port Macquarie and surrounds
- Monday 3 July – The Entrance AGM
- Monday 10 July – Bankstown AGM
- Tuesday 18 July – Chatswood club social event
- Wednesday 26 July – South East Sydney social event

To find out more about upcoming club events or to RSVP, please give our Program & Services team a call on **(02) 9267 6577**.

Is there a club near me? Scan this QR code to find out!



Goulburn

On Monday 20 February, AWWNSW staff and President attended the Goulburn Regional Meeting.

It was lovely to visit Goulburn as part of AWWNSW's Regional Tours. The purpose of these gatherings are to reconnect with members from regional clubs to hear about local issues and engage with AWWNSW on how we can better support regional clubs.

Members from Goulburn, Yass, Moss Vale, Bowral and surrounds were in attendance as well as Queen Dunbar, AWWNSW's State President.

Thank you to Diggers by The Park Brasserie, Goulburn Soldiers Club for a beautiful lunch.



Murwillumbah

On Monday 27 February, AWWNSW President Queen Dunbar and social worker Lisa Stephenson attended the Murwillumbah Regional Meeting.

It was a wonderful day in Murwillumbah to continue AWWNSW's regional tour. We heard from members about local issues, helping us to better understand the experience of regional war widows.

Members of the Murwillumbah Social Club were in attendance, as well as members from surrounding regions who were connecting with this group for the first time.

A special mention to member, Nancy Boyd, who celebrated her 100th birthday with a delicious cake baked by Wollumbin Street Bakery.

Thank you to Murwillumbah Services Club for a lovely lunch.

As another member of the Social Club, Beverley, said, "We will keep going as long as we possibly can."



ANZAC Day at Holsworthy High School

On Friday 28 April, Lesley Gray, Wendy McKean, Di Vogt, Sharon Anderson and Lynne Boyd went to Holsworthy High School to celebrate ANZAC Day. This year, the special theme was Vietnam Long Tan. The ladies' attendance was appreciated by the event organiser, Tracy Carr, and they felt very special.

The Home Science students organised a light lunch and they were given a Battle of Long Tan 50th anniversary coin as a memento of the occasion.



City Saturday Social Club

The City Saturday War Widows Social Club now meets at the Auburn Club. Board Member Lynne Boyd is always a delight to all members and has a great relationship with the Auburn Club. The club is very supportive of the ladies and offers extra care to them. Jo, our Programs & Services Manager, felt very welcome and had a lovely time during her last visit.

North Ryde Social Club

Our Program & Services Manager Jo also attended the North Ryde War Widows Social Club gathering in March. They all had a great time catching up and enjoyed the semi-formal lunch they had put together. Our young student Katie, who was with AWWNSW for a few weeks, thoroughly enjoyed meeting our members face to face and said she had a wonderful time.



War Widows Day in Muswellbrook

Flash back to 2022 when the lovely ladies from the Muswellbrook Social Club had a beautiful lunch on 19 October to celebrate the inaugural War Widows Day. They organised a bus trip and lunch in Sandy Hollow. All in attendance had a wonderful time and enjoyed this special day. They said lunch was very tasty and the bus trip was a lot of fun. Lots of laughs were shared to celebrate a very special day for war widows.

What is Our Space?

Through Our Space, AWWNSW is extending its social connection and support programs, responding to unmet community needs and filling a fundamental gap in the veteran support system.

Our Space is a modern version of our Social Clubs, built to create social connections for veterans' families that unites the community of peers around their common experiences.

Currently there are very few projects focused specifically on building connections and establishing informal peer-to-peer support for veterans' families and widows. We know that veterans' families and contemporary widows struggle to find and connect to services and have their needs met, and are generally isolated within the veteran community.

Our Space seeks to address those problems by providing a place for them no matter how they are connected to the veteran community. It will unite veterans' families based on their common experiences.

Younger widows are different to their older counterparts. They have different needs due to their stage of life, and their experiences of military service, war and its aftermath. They too need to connect with their peers who are facing similar challenges and are at a similar stage of life. Our Space provides them with a pathway.

Our Space groups will meet in person on a monthly basis. While the timing of the gatherings will be confirmed with the group members, to start with the groups will meet on the last Saturday of every month. In-person meetings will alternate between dinner events that are not necessarily child friendly (though children will not be excluded) and lunches where members are encouraged to bring their children if they like. Children will be provided for at the lunch events and undertake activities including mindfulness-based craft and creative activities. This is an opportunity for the children of our veterans' families to get to know one another and form their own friendships and bonds with children who live similar experiences.



Dinners and lunches will feature guest speakers and facilitated conversation to help the new groups bond. In-person meetings will take place where the majority of group members are or where the population that needs such space can be found.

Our Space Online

Our Space Online is currently running through a private Facebook group. It shares information relevant to group members, facilitates chats and encourages engagement through:

- **Skill building events** and information sessions that will help members in their day-to-day lives. Skill building sessions may include writing master classes, job preparation and career development, as well as self-care and wellbeing fundamentals.
- **Facebook Live sessions and chats** where members are encouraged to 'ask a peer' questions about issues they are facing.

We will soon commence delivery of one skill building session per month and one 'ask a peer' session every second month.

Our Space ACT

Our Space ACT Launch
One-off

Weekend catch up - child friendly
Monthly

Saturday Activity and Dinner
Bi-monthly

Our Space NSW

Our Space Sydney Launch
One-off

Weekend catch up - child friendly
Monthly

Activity and Lunch / Dinner
Bi-monthly

Our Space Online

Online Master Classes - Free
Monthly



To find out more about Our Space please contact the Program and Services team on 02 9267 6577.

The Soldier's Cake Tin

The Soldier's Cake Tin is part of Australia's wartime history. During World War Two, mothers and wives would bake their absent husbands and sons a fruit cake, which they would then place in a 'Soldier's Tin' and ship to their loved one at war.

It was so commonplace that the Australian War Memorial has a newspaper clipping of a fruit cake recipe from the war years. The recipe gives instructions to "pour into a soldier's tin" and "seal the outside edge with a piece of adhesive tape before packing".

One of the most recognisable 'Soldier's Cake Tins' is from Willow, which is reported to have manufactured thousands of cake tins in Australia.

Daphne Turner was one of the many Australian women who baked a fruit cake and sent it to her husband. Her husband, known to everyone only as 'Snakes' because of his passion for collecting snakes, served with Australia's 2/4th Commando Company in Borneo, Tarrakan and New Guinea during World War Two.

She would send him a fruit cake. He would eat it and return the empty tin, and then she would bake him another. The cycle continued the entire time he was at war. It is said that her cake was so popular among some of the Australian Commandos that if Snakes wasn't around when it was delivered, his friends would open the parcel and help themselves.

When soldiers are deployed overseas or are serving at war, sending them a parcel is much more than just sending them goods. It sends a message: we miss you, we're thinking of you, we care about you.

The parcels boost morale and provide a little bit of comfort in often harsh and hostile environments.

When Snakes returned to Australia and retired from the Army, his Soldier's Cake Tin was retired too.

Some 60 years later, in Iraq in 2003, Marcus Thompson, a former Commando who at the time was a Lieutenant Colonel serving with the Australian national headquarters in Baghdad, received an unexpected, round, heavy package wrapped in calico.

Curious and intrigued, he searched for a pair of scissors to cut open the packaging. When he did, he immediately recognised the tin. It was old and vintage-looking. The word Willow was sprawled across the lid. It had slight dents and dings, evidence that it had enjoyed a previous life.

Marcus recognised it as a Soldier's Cake Tin from World War Two. But what he did not recognise was the sender's details.

Who was Daphne Turner? Why had she sent him a fruit cake?

There was, however, a handwritten note that said something along the lines of:

"Dear Marcus,

You don't know me, but my daughter works with your mother. My husband was a Commando in World War Two and I would send these cakes to him when he was away. The rules are that you have to share the cake with your mates and return the cake tin to me and I will refill it."

Following the instructions, once Marcus had shared the cake around, he sent the empty tin back to Daphne, who then baked him another cake. The tradition continued.

When Marcus returned from Iraq, he travelled down to Victoria to meet Daphne. He had greatly appreciated her kind, caring and generous gesture. Daphne's fruit cake had provided Marcus and his colleagues in Iraq great joy, just like it had no doubt provided to her husband and his friends in Borneo and New Guinea.

When Marcus deployed to East Timor in 2006, Daphne once again sent him fruit cakes in the same trusty Soldier's Cake Tin. And she did so again when Marcus deployed to Afghanistan for 12 months in 2013.

Her fruit cake became legendary with the Australian Commandos in Afghanistan. There is even a picture of several soldiers standing around the package, eagerly waiting for the cake to be opened.

Each time she sent Marcus the cake, he would send her back the empty tin with a handwritten note. Over the years, and through the deployments, Marcus and Daphne became good friends. When she turned 100 last year, Marcus was there to help her celebrate.

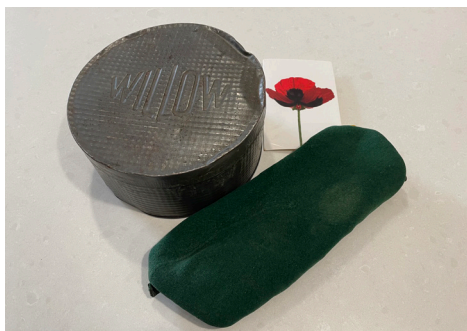
"The veteran community is really special," Marcus said.

"This story is a great example of how military families and associations support each other."

Two years ago, Marcus retired from Australian Army after 34 years of service, and Daphne sent him the cake tin once more. This time it was empty and sent to his house with a note that said, "You have both completed your final tours of duty – the tin retires with you".

Not long afterwards Daphne died peacefully in her sleep, dying as she lived, with no nonsense.

The Soldier's Cake Tin now takes pride of place in Marcus' study.



CLOSING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE - LESSON 103

All information provided in the following pages is thanks to Australian Government's e-safety resources and available on the Be Connected website

Last winter we started our series to help you improve your digital literacy confidence. We took a deep dive into different types of devices. In this edition of the Digest, we take the next step and take a closer look at social media.

Getting online: social media basics

Technology is often foreign at first. It takes a little while, and a little knowledge, to understand what does what and how to use computer, mobile phone and the internet. The Australian Government created several online courses on its Be Connected website to help get every Australian online. Here's what they say about social media basics.

Introduction to social media

You've heard the term social media – but what does it mean?

Social media is a collective term used to describe the apps (short for applications, or programs) used on our computers or smart devices to communicate with each other and share information, ideas and interests.

In times past, we met up in person at clubs and other social gatherings, or even picked up the phone to talk to each other. We can still do all of that of course, but we can also share information using our computers and smart devices as well.

In the past 20 years, social media apps such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and others have become ever more sophisticated, and even changed the way we interact with each other and the world.

What is Facebook?

Facebook is an online social media platform that allows its users to share their thoughts, photos and interests with just a few people, all their friends or the entire world. When you share something on Facebook, it is called a post.

People use Facebook for many reasons, including:

- staying connected with family and friends, even if they are living far away
- reconnecting with people from the past
- keeping up with the travel adventures of children, friends and other loved ones
- connecting with likeminded people in the community and abroad
- joining groups based on common interests and hobbies
- keeping up with news and current affairs.

You can follow us on Facebook by typing "Australian War Widows NSW" in the search tab and clicking "like" on our account.



For more information about social media basics, visit <https://beconnected.esafety.gov.au/topic-library/social-media-apps>

What is Instagram?

Instagram is a photo and video-sharing social media platform where users can upload and share photos and videos from their mobile device. You can access Instagram by downloading the app to your mobile device.

Instagram works based on its users following, or linking to, other users. Users can then interact with posts by:

- liking them
- commenting on photos or video
- sharing posts with their own followers.

You can follow us on Instagram by typing "aww_nsw" in the search tab and clicking "follow".



What is Pinterest?

Pinterest is a social media platform that allows people to view billions of photos called Pins. Pins are photos that are posted to Pinterest by its users. These photos can be of anything and are categorised by theme and genre.

Pinterest allows you to set up Boards, where you can save photos that you like. For example, you might set up a Board with the name Vegetarian Recipes. You can then save Pins of vegetarian recipes that you come across when you are using Pinterest. Saving Pins to Boards allows you to access them quickly without having to search for them again.

What is Twitter?

Twitter is one of the world's largest and most widely used social media apps or microblogging sites. The premise of Twitter is simple: users share their thoughts with their followers via small snippets of text called tweets.

Tweets can have a maximum of 280 characters and can consist of text, photos or short videos.

When a Twitter user posts a tweet, it can be seen by other users who follow that person. The tweet will appear on each follower's Timeline, also known as a feed.

Users can simply view a tweet in their feed, or they can interact with it by:

- liking: showing appreciation by giving the tweet a thumbs up
- replying: commenting on someone's tweet
- retweeting: showing appreciation by sharing the tweet with their own followers
- quoting: sharing a tweet and adding their own commentary with their own followers
- sharing: sharing a tweet outside of the Twitter platform.

Control your privacy settings

All social media platforms give you control over your privacy settings, but the default settings on new accounts often display many private facts about you, such as your birthday and the town or city in which you live.

Before posting your first message on social media, be sure to visit your account's Settings menu, and update your privacy settings to protect your identity, control who sees your posts and what personal information is displayed.

Keeping your information private

Be cautious about what you say or post online. Social media is very open, and your messages could be seen by strangers or scammers.

Be particularly careful about sharing any private or personal information online. Even if you know the person really well, you can't control who sees their posts or messages, and your private information could fall into the wrong hands.

E-safety Tip

Scammers look for people's personal information on social media sites (e.g. date of birth or address), to help them create dummy online accounts, or even open fake bank accounts with these stolen details.

The rule of thumb is to never share anything online that you wouldn't want complete strangers to know about you.

E-safety Tip

The aim of many scams, including catfishing, is to get you to give money to the person behind the scam.

No matter how convincing the sob story, never, under any circumstances, transfer money or share your financial details with someone you have met online.

Our Voices

There has been a lot happening on the advocacy front recently. Not only have we been putting the finishing touches on our Advocacy Plan for the next 12 months, but we have been busily raising awareness of issues and working to close gaps for veteran families.

Our work is centred on three key priority areas:

1. Mental Health needs of veteran families
2. Equity in application of policy among veteran families
3. Recognition of veteran families

These priority areas have been identified through listening to the veteran families who join us every other month in our community Town Halls, and of course through listening and learning from the experiences of veteran families in a variety of forums, consultations and community engagements.

At the last Town Hall meeting in February 2023, a number of themes for further discussion and work were identified by the group, including:

1. Support for children of veterans
2. Support for carers of veterans
3. Support for ageing widows, widowers and their families
4. A baseline level of support for all veteran families.

An urgent priority regarding access to treatment for bereaved children of veterans was identified and immediately actioned following the Town Hall. The issues brought up then were:

- the expiration of the Gold Card for dependent children unless they are in full-time study
- an inability to complete full-time study due to serious, diagnosed mental health conditions
- an inability to sustain the costs of treatment independently of the Gold Card due to the level and type of treatment required
- a fear of what the loss of the Gold Card would mean for the treatment of their children and a fear they would also lose their children to mental illness
- the cut-off for treatment being aged-based and not factoring in the illness that the child has resulting from the death of their parent
- the utter frustration at being unable to access treatment, hospitals and the like because the process isn't represented properly in the information provided on the DVA website.

Over the course of the following four weeks, we worked with DVA and the Minister's office to understand the barriers in the system. Through this work, DVA advised us of a decision of the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission (MRCC) which "could be" applicable in the circumstances we

were discussing. On review of the decision, which was passed into law in February 2022, there was no question of "if" it was relevant – it was relevant and applicable to the circumstances raised by one of the widows in the Town Hall: a widow whose child had lost access to the Gold Card because she couldn't study full-time anymore due to a severe mental illness.

I then met with DVA and asked that a treatment card that had been revoked from this child, aged just 16, be immediately reinstated. Within two business days the card was reinstated, and we worked through our network to get this child reconnected with mental health treatment. While this was a positive outcome, the problem was that it should never have happened in the first place, given that the decision of the MRCC over 12 months earlier. When I enquired into this, it was noted that until we raised this matter and the application of the instrument, the Department did not have a process in place to ensure that the decision was implemented.

Let's sit with that for a minute – over 12 months after the decision was passed into law, and there was no process in place to ensure it was implemented.

While I'm still trying to understand how this was allowed to occur, the silver lining is the Department is now working very quickly to establish a process and review cases where children aged 16–24 have lost access to their treatment card due to being unable to remain in full-time study. Importantly, this issue would not have been surfaced or resolved unless it was raised in the February Town Hall by a very brave, very vulnerable participant.

Our advocacy on this matter isn't yet completed, however. There is a much larger piece of work to resolve, and that is ensuring the mental health needs of veterans' families are supported throughout their lives. This will take the form of a policy proposal that will seek to ensure that children who fall outside the MRCC decision but are nonetheless impacted by their parent's service have reduced barriers in accessing mental health treatment. This work is ongoing, but we are leveraging as many opportunities as possible to bring the idea to the front of decision-makers' minds, including through:

- ongoing Royal Commission engagement
- legislation review submission
- DVA consultative forums
- media articles and engagement.

While this story is ongoing, I hope you can see that we listen, we act and we are committed to ensuring you are seen, heard and supported.

Renee Wilson,
CEO AWWNSW

Veteran & family entitlement updates

NSW Transport Concession Card

We would like to thank AWWNSW member Wendy McKean for writing to the AWWNSW team and raising matters relating to NSW transport concessions. Wendy noted her concerns regarding NSW Government changes to the travel and rail concessions available to war widows. We raised these concerns with the NSW Government directly in January and we received their response in March. The information they provided is below.

According to the NSW Government, Transport for NSW has confirmed that the DVA Veteran Gold Card printed with 'War Widow' replaces the former NSW War Widow or Widower Travel Concession Card (TCC) as the form of identification which validates eligibility for travel concessions.

NSW residents who hold a DVA Veteran Gold Card printed with 'War Widow' are eligible for Pensioner Travel Vouchers on regional services. This entitlement is for four Pensioner Travel Vouchers each calendar year for travel within regional NSW, which can be used for four one-way trips or two return trips annually.

To access your Pensioner Travel Vouchers you need to register your concession card with Service NSW. You can do that by calling TrainLink on 13 22 32.

We are continuing to work with the NSW Government on gaining equity in concessions for war widows and Gold Card holders who do not have access to the Income Support Supplement. If you have trouble accessing transport concessions with your Gold Card, please let us know and we will follow this up through the NSW Office for Veterans.

Legislation Reform Pathway

On 16 February 2023 the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, the Hon Matt Keogh MP, announced the commencement of public consultation on a pathway to simplify veterans' compensation and rehabilitation legislation. The reform pathway seeks to simplify veteran-related legislation, entitlements and benefits, resulting in better outcomes for veterans and their families. It involves taking the best of three acts and merging them into one.

Importantly, DVA and the Minister have said that no person currently accessing entitlements, compensation or other benefits under any of the acts will have them removed.

The high-level plan has been released and is open for consultation. We are being involved throughout this and

future consultation processes, and we are here to represent your views and the views of the veteran family community.

We have been capturing feedback, ideas and input through our ongoing town hall series, and also with questionnaires. The results and feedback are being aggregated, de-identified and used to develop a written submission on the legislative changes, and inform the positions taken during consultation activities.

The first round of consultation closed on 12 May 2023. For more details on the work AWWNSW is currently doing with this consultation, please refer to our Advocacy update on the previous page.

Meritorious recognition for veterans who served in Somalia

Australian Defence Force personnel who served in Somalia in the 1990s performed extraordinary work in very challenging conditions.

The Australian Government has accepted the independent Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal recommendations for unit recognition for ADF service in Somalia.

The Government will make an announcement later this year on how current and former ADF members can receive the insignia of the Meritorious Unit Citation.

Further information about the Meritorious Unit Citation is available via <https://www.defence.gov.au/adf-members-families/honours-awards/honours-decorations/australian-gallantry-distinguished-service-awards/meritorious-unit-citation>

Commemorative medallion to mark 50 years since the end of Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War

To mark the 50th anniversary of the end of Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War, the Prime Minister and Minister for Veterans' Affairs launched a commemorative medallion.

The medallion is a small but meaningful way to honour the service of Vietnam veterans and to recognise the sacrifice of those who never returned home – and that of their families.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the end of Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War. Some 60,000 Australians served in the Vietnam War, of whom more than 3,000 were wounded and 523 tragically lost their lives. We must honour those who served and the families that support them.

The medallions are available for every veteran, and can be applied for by Vietnam War veterans, widows of veterans and other family members of veterans.

For more details on the commemorative medallion, including how to apply, visit www.dva.gov.au/vietnam50.

Is incontinence keeping you home?

Let's talk about it to mark World Continence Week, 19–25 June 2023

Over 5 million Australians, or 1 in 4 people aged over 15 years, experience bladder or bowel incontinence. Incontinence is a common condition that can be treated and proactively managed. Incontinence can affect people at any age and is common among women and the ageing population. It can be prevented, better managed, or even cured with the right support team.

One of the most common social impacts of incontinence is the feeling of shame and embarrassment, or the fear being judged by others. This can lead to social isolation, avoidance of social situations, and decreased participation in activities that affected people previously enjoyed. They may also experience anxiety and depression, further exacerbating the impact on their social life.

Age can impact continence in both men and women. As we age, the muscles and nerves that control bladder and bowel function may weaken, leading to stress incontinence or urge incontinence. Neurological changes, medical conditions and medications can all impact on continence. Childbirth is a common cause of continence issues in women, as the body rapidly changes during pregnancy and birth.

If you are experiencing continence issues, there are some steps you can take to manage and improve your condition to start socialising again:

- 1. Talk to your healthcare provider:** Your doctor, specialist or allied health professional can support you with an effective treatment plan.
- 2. Visit a women's health physiotherapist:** Your physio can help you learn correct technique for pelvic floor exercises, which help strengthen the muscles that control urination and bowel movements. Regularly practicing these exercises can improve bladder and bowel control over time.
- 3. Adopt healthy habits:** Making healthy lifestyle changes can help manage incontinence. This includes maintaining a healthy weight, eating a balanced diet, drinking plenty of water, and undertaking daily gentle exercise. A dietitian



and exercise physiologist can support your health and wellness journey.

4. Use absorbent products: Absorbent products like pads, liners, or continence aids can help manage leakage and provide a sense of security and comfort. There is a variety of products available in different sizes and absorbency levels to meet individual needs.

5. Seek support: Continence issues can be overwhelming, but it is important to remember that you are not alone. Reaching out to your peers and loved ones can help alleviate some of the emotional burden, and provide a sense of community and understanding.

Overcoming continence issues is a journey, and it may take time to find the right combination of treatments and strategies that works for you. With patience, persistence and a positive mindset, it is possible to manage continence issues and improve your quality of life.

For more support

The Continence Aids Payment Scheme (CAPS) is an Australian Government scheme that provides an annual payment to assist eligible people who have permanent and severe incontinence to meet some of the cost of their continence products. CAPS payments are not payable to people who receive continence product financial support in their NDIS plan or from DVA. The CAPS payment rate for 2022–23 is \$650.40. Please call the CAPS Information Team on 1800 239 309.

DVA (1800 838 372) Gold Card holders with a clinical need may be eligible to receive continence product financial support.

The National Continence Helpline (1800 33 00 66) is staffed by Nurse Continence Specialists, who offer free and confidential information, advice and support to people affected by incontinence. They also provide a wide range of continence resources and information on local continence services.

Transforming lives through education

When Taryn McCarthy's father passed away in October 2020, just weeks before her final HSC exams, her life was shattered.

Taryn's father was an Army veteran, and she describes his death as 'complicated' and 'traumatic'.

"He went through so much heartache," said Taryn. "A back injury in the army, alcoholism, drug addiction and mental health issues, including PTSD, depression and severe adjustment disorder."

When her dad passed away, she had been living with him and caring for him. She remembers the day she came home and life as she knew it was gone.

"The motivation to do anything went out the window. I cried and cried and was depressed," said Taryn. "I scribbled journal entries furiously and slept fitfully. At one point, I remember watching Dance Academy and crying through a whole episode. My dad was a very pivotal and important figure in my life, and his death hit me like a brick."

Her home town was filled with painful reminders of her dad. The road they used to drive to school. The supermarket where she worked. The RSL club. The beautiful beaches.

She knew to heal, she had to leave. Taryn points out that she wasn't running away, she was trying to move forward.

After moving to a different town and spending a year with her mum, last year Taryn made the big move to Sydney to study at the University of New South Wales (UNSW).

The same year, she was awarded a Legacy Australia Scholarship, which is one of roughly 250 scholarships managed by the Australian Veterans' Children Assistance Trust (AVCAT).

AVCAT is a national charity that manages a range of tertiary education scholarships and bursaries for the children and grandchildren of Australian ex-serving men and women. Its mission is to transform lives through education.

The scholarships are sponsored by a range of ex-service organisations, corporate sponsors and individual donors, including AWWNSW, RSL Australia, Legacy, Bravery Trust, Vietnam Veterans Federation, and many more.

AVCAT also manages the Long Tan Bursaries on behalf of the Department of Veterans' Affairs.



The scholarships are targeted at the children and grandchildren of veterans who are assessed as being in financial need, show academic potential and are in deserving circumstances. Scholarships are between \$4,000 and \$6,000 per year for three years, and support full-time tertiary study at university, TAFE or registered training organisations.

Applications for scholarships open on 18 August each year to coincide with Vietnam Veterans' Day, and close on 31 October. Successful applicants are notified between February and March the following year.

Since starting university, Taryn said she has tried many different sports, including Muay Thai, roller skating, ice skating and running, and has made many beautiful friends.

"If you asked me two years ago what my hope for the future was, I'd say something like, 'I hope I can be happy'," said Taryn. "And I am. Some days are harder than others, but I feel more stable and content living on my own."

Taryn said she is lucky and grateful to have received an AVCAT scholarship. She is also grateful for her father and the role he played in her life.

"I'd like to also thank my dad for helping me create my own light and path," said Taryn. "For supporting me and loving me for 17 years, and for relentlessly battling and fighting his own problems despite how hard it was for him."

She also said, "I hope this glimpse into my story can help others not feel so alone."

Robert Doust was awarded the Australian War Widows NSW Scholarship in 2023. Robert is studying a Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) / Bachelor of Information Technology at the Queensland University of Technology.

Applications for 2024 AVCAT Scholarships, including the Australian War Widows NSW Scholarship, open 18 August 2023. For more information, visit www.avcat.org.au.

Source: Taryn McCarthy – AVCAT Scholar | Australian Veterans' Children Assistance Trust

FAQs

OVER THE LAST COUPLE OF MONTHS, WE'VE BEEN KEEPING TRACK OF YOUR QUESTIONS. HERE'S A SNAPSHOT OF YOUR FAQs FOR AUTUMN.

Why was the NSW Governor not at the ANZAC Field of Remembrance this year?

Our Patron is patron of several organisations and in addition undertakes a number of roles as part of her appointment. Unfortunately, Her Excellency was unable to attend this year's ANZAC Field of Remembrance as she was conducting two investiture ceremonies at Government House on 20 April 2023. This was also why she was unable to send a representative. Her Excellency has however written to you all and that can be found on page 9.

Our club would like to host a Field of Remembrance luncheon, is that possible?

Yes! With the Field of Remembrance now being live streamed, why not arrange a local luncheon with your club, gather together and watch the city service live? We have supported three clubs in the Mid North Coast to bring this together for the last two years, and it is a wonderful opportunity for those who are not Sydney-based to come together and remember their loved ones. Please make contact with Jo and her team to ensure you are on the list for 2024.

Will we march on ANZAC Day again?

We are very happy to support those who wish to march on ANZAC Day behind our banner. It is however significant to note that the Sydney March goes for around 3.5 hours, and it is important that you are supported on the day. If you would like to March in 2024 and/or form part of a volunteer group to help bring this together, please contact us on 02 9267 6577.

If you update the organisation name, am I still a war widow?

Yes, changes to our organisation name do not affect your Gold Card or entitlements. It does not affect the support and services we provide you, nor does it affect our advocacy for you. The war widow badge will remain yours, as will the war widow's motto.

Wreaths will continue to be laid on behalf of war widows, and War Widows' Day will also continue. An updated or refreshed organisation name makes us an inclusive and welcoming organisation, one that ensures it is there for those who need it when they need it, but it changes nothing in terms of what you receive, nor does it reduce your important place in our community and organisation.

How do I get my voice heard for AWWNSW advocacy work?

You are welcome to send any concern you have by email to guild@warwidowsnsw.com.au or give us a call on 02 9267 6577.

However, if you wish to have a discussion with our CEO and peers that have or are going through similar issues that you are, please attend one of our Town Hall sessions. The next Town Hall will be held on 28 June. Email or call us to register.

Do you have a question you would like answered?

***Please send them through the post, via email or give us a call.
We'd love to hear from you.***



Thank you volunteers!



From 15 May, Australia celebrated volunteers across our nation for National Volunteers Week. It was an opportunity for AWWNSW staff and members to acknowledge our wonderful volunteers, their effort and time, and to extend our thanks for their service and kindness.

From our hearts to yours, thank you to our wonderful group of volunteers who go above and beyond to be here for our community. Thank you for all you do, for bringing support and connection to our members through the Friendship Line, and for your help during AWWNSW events.

We could not bring change without you, from the bottom of our hearts, THANK YOU! ❤️

Riding into 98 like: Beaty Hawkins!

On her 98th birthday, Beaty was driven around town to her birthday party by her grandson - on a Harley Davidson!

Long gone are the beliefs that we get too old to do what we want, and thank you Beaty for the sweet reminder that we are never too old to do fun things!

Thank you for sharing this special birthday with us. Ride on!



AUTUMN RECIPE

Vegetable Frittata with Goat's Cheese

Preparation time: 5 minutes

Cooking time: 40 minutes

Picture & recipe - Centr.com – recipe by Dan Churchill



INGREDIENTS

Olive oil spray

6 large eggs

1 tin of cannellini beans

1 red capsicum – deseeded & diced

½ head of broccoli – finely chopped or grated

Salt & pepper, to taste

40g Goat's Cheese – or feta crumbled

1 spring of fresh basil – leaves picked & roughly chopped (optional)

METHOD

- 1 Preheat oven to 190°C/fan 170°C and spray a large oven-proof frypan or a deep dish with oil.
- 2 Whisk eggs in a large bowl.
- 3 Add beans, capsicum and broccoli, season with salt and pepper and stir to combine.
- 4 Gently pour mixture into prepared dish, scatter over cheese and bake for 40 minutes or until the centre is completely set.
- 5 Cool for 5 minutes. Scatter with basil if using and serve.

**"Grief is the price we
pay for love"**

- Queen Elizabeth II



- Ada Mumford, GLOUCESTER
- Adrienne Fisher, KILLARA
- Adyth Fielder, WARATAH
- Angelita Garbutt, GRANVILLE
- Anita Kirkwood, CARDIFF
- Audrey Blood OAM, NTH RICHMOND
- Audrey Cook, WOLLSTONECRAFT
- Audrey Finney, INVERELL
- Audrey Fry, TOMAKIN
- Barbara Brown, DENILIQUIN
- Beryl Morris, MOUNT ANNAN
- Beryl Suttie, WHYALLA
- Betty Bush, WARRIGAL
- Betty Glover, TANILBA BAY
- Betty Leeming, UMINA BEACH
- Betty Quinn, NEW LAMBTON
- Betty Sara, TOORMINA
- Betty Willdigg, BIRMINGHAM GDNS
- Betty Woodland, KOGARAH
- Carolyn Sands, TAMWORTH
- Catherine Spalding, WOY WOY
- Christine Hetherington, RANDWICK
- Claire Ives, NARRANDERA
- Daphne Byron, SEVEN HILLS
- Dawn McMillan, LAKE HAVEN
- Doreen Perry, WERRIS CREEK
- Doris Lucas, NELSON BAY
- Edna Ashby Worden, WAVERLEY
- Edna Bruce, BANORA POINT
- Edna Devlin, WOLLONGONG
- Edna Gill, SHOAL BAY
- Eileen Campbell, CARDIFF HEIGHTS
- Eileen Campbell, MORISSET
- Elizabeth Hipwell, ASHFIELD
- Elizabeth Rudge, TUMBI TUMBI
- Elsie Wilson, PORT MACQUARIE
- Elva Batt, CHURCH POINT
- Elva Price, ASHFIELD
- Enid Ingram, PORT MACQUARIE
- Enid Payne, GERRINGONG
- Errolie Myers, CAMPBELLTOWN
- Estelle French, TUMUT
- Ethel Sinclair, GREENACRE
- Eunice Stirling, HAMMONDVILLE
- Eunice Taggart, BONNELLS BAY
- Eva Cheslett, BARRACK HEIGHTS
- Evelyn May, EAST MAITLAND
- Evelyn Payne, BELMONT

- Fay Cutting, SEVEN HILLS
- Fay Foxton, ST GEORGES BASIN
- Fidelma Kennedy, WAGGA WAGGA
- Flo Earsman, NARRANDERA
- Frances Howard, PORT MACQUARIE
- Gail Lane, BONNET BAY
- Georgina Taylor, CASHMERE
- Gloria Phillips, HAMMONDVILLE
- Grace Denholm, BATLOW
- Grace Marsden, BLAXLAND
- Gwen Calder, GREYSTANES
- Hazel Lambert, PENRITH
- Heather Wright, NEW LAMBTON
- Helen Andrews, WISEMAN'S FERRY
- Helen Bentley, NEUTRAL BAY
- Helen Harvey, LANE COVE
- Hilda Beavis, EAST MAITLAND
- Hilda Carey, MUSWELLBROOK
- Irene Burnham, PORT MACQUARIE
- Irene Hyndes, BALGOWLAH
- Iris Barrett, MURWILLUMBAH
- Isobel Davison, MOSMAN
- Ivy O'Dea, ST MARYS
- Janet Ross, EMU PLAINS
- Janice Reid, GLENHAVEN
- Jean Anderson, BALLINA
- Jean Smith, BRINGELLY
- Jean Walters, MURWILLUMBAH
- Jeanette McLaughlin, TWEED HEADS
- Jennie Craggs, TAMWORTH
- Jennie McGregor, NORTH RYDE
- Jill Frost, GUILDFORD
- Joan Daer, WALLSEND
- Joan Edwards, ROSE BAY
- Joan Fitzpatrick, SEVEN HILLS
- Joan Hughes, WINSTON HILLS
- Joan Lee, CONCORD
- Joan Leonard, CASTLE HILL
- Joyce Ashley, CASTLE HILL
- Joyce Christianson, ROSELANDS
- Joyce Guthrie, MOSMAN
- Joyce Hunt, PAMBULA
- Joyce McKee, MERRYLANDS
- Joyce Morgan, TEA GARDENS
- Joyce Zucchetti, FORRESTERS BEACH
- Judy McTavish, BEXLEY
- Julie Hitchenor, WALLSEND
- Kathleen Lopresto, MAROUBRA
- Keitha Knowles, TORONTO
- Lal Jakeman, WOY WOY
- Leita Burgis, BANORA POINT
- Leonie McParland, WATTLE GROVE
- Lilian Sheer, DULWICH HILL
- Lillian Ayling, UMINA
- Loma Millen, SUMMER HILL
- Lorna Carr, TUMUT
- Lorna McFadzean, GRIFFITH
- Lynda Crookham, GRAY
- Madge Harrington, MORUYA
- Madge Roberts, FRENCHS FOREST
- Marcia Evans, MORTDALE
- Margaret Prest, ASHFIELD
- Margaret Thompson, WAHROONGA
- Margaret Whiting, LAVENDER BAY

- Marie Pantlin, TOCUMWAL
- Marjorie Ainsworth, SPRING HILL
- Marjorie Nielson, YASS
- Marjorie Ross, QUEANBEYAN
- Mary Erickson, RHODES
- Mary Thomas, INVERELL
- Mary Thomas, ST IVES
- Maurita Berg, MATRAVILLE
- Mavis Faber, BATEAU BAY
- Mavis Jackson, BANGALOW
- Mavis Smith, BATEMANS BAY
- Melba Douglass, SOUTH MAROOTA
- Mildred Kingsmill, WYOMING
- Mildred Matthew, LITHGOW
- Myra Kelly, TUMUT
- Myrtle Rogers, ORANGE
- Nancy Davidson, GUYRA
- Nancy Davis, WALLSEND
- Nancy Stephens, WARREN
- Netta Curnow, TOMEWIN
- Nola Warby, TELARAH
- Norma Payne, CROYDON PARK
- Olga Davis, NSW
- Olga Gosson, TAMWORTH
- Olive Gay, SMITHFIELD
- Pamela Fox, DARLING POINT
- Pamela Perkins, NORTH TAMWORTH
- Pat King, ROSEVILLE
- Pat O'Malley, WAHROONGA
- Pat Stokes, TAMWORTH
- Patricia Adland, MORISSET
- Patricia Dircks, CAVES BEACH
- Patricia Thomas, KANWAL
- Patricia White, EMU PLAINS
- Patricia Hole, COLLAROY PLATEAU
- Pauline Ward, MAROUBRA
- Phyllis Butler, TOOWOON BAY
- Phyllis Callahan, MITTAGONG
- Roma Baker, SADLIER
- Sally Phillips, PARKES
- Shirley Buckingham, LAURIETON
- Shirley Crotty, SARATOGA
- Shirley Glen, PENSHURST
- Shirley Johnston, WEST RYDE
- Shirley Passmore, SOUTH GRAFTON
- Sylvia Dawes, NSW
- Thelma Daley, SMITHFIELD
- Thelma Menz, WAGGA WAGGA
- Thora Pearsall, MACLEAN
- Val Veney, WOLLONGONG
- Valmai Toomey, SEFTON
- Velma Rainford, DARLING POINT
- Veronica Cameron, KILLARNEY VALE
- Viola Sherlock, BEGA
- Violet McArthur, SANCTUARY POINT
- Wilma Furlonger, MOUNT PLEASANT
- Zena Michelmores, PORT MACQUARIE

We extend our deepest
sympathy to the families and
friends of these members ❤️

Welcome to members who have recently joined

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| ★ Aileen Garner, GRAFTON | ★ Kathleen Dews, FORBES |
| ★ Betty Flentje, BENDIGO | ★ Lynne Mahony, NOWRA |
| ★ Carol DiSalvia, CHINDERAH | ★ Margaret Clarke, NARRABEEN |
| ★ Carol Wilson, KINGSWOOD | ★ Olga Davis, TELEGRAPHPOINT |
| ★ Collien Chatfield, TAMBAR SPRINGS | ★ Patricia McAdam, GUNNEDAH |
| ★ Denise Crouch, GOULBURN | ★ Pip Hayman, BOWRAL |
| ★ Dianne Heath, LANKEYS CREEK | ★ Rose Millwood, BUDGEWOI |
| ★ Evon Bradford, HEATHCOTE | ★ Sheryl Howison, DEE WHY |
| ★ Grace Lane, NARRABEEN | ★ Susan Vellacott, BATEAU BAY |
| ★ Jean King, BATEAU BAY | ★ Vicki O'Connell, KINGSWOOD |
| ★ Kathie Cosgrove, GOULBURN | ★ Yvonne Kenyon, LAURIETON |



Shirley Curzon, celebrating her 100th birthday this month

Mary Tagg, treasurer of the Cronulla Sutherland WWG, celebrated her 99th birthday this year.



Happy birthday to members who have recently celebrated 100 years!

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ● Doris Luxford, MORTDALE | ● Marjorie Watson, MANLY |
| ● Joan Palmer, EAST MAITLAND | ● Muriel Jackson, EDGEWORTH |
| ● Joan Thatcher, LITHGOW | ● Nancy Boyd, TWEED HEADS |
| ● Harvey Joy, WOY WOY | ● Patricia Sullivan, NSW |
| ● Maisie Berger, YAMBA | ● Shirley Curzon, MOUNT RIVERVIEW |
| ● Laurette MacSween, DARLING POINT | ● Allen Valda, BARDWELL VALLEY |



Laurette MacSween (centre) turned 100 on 13th May and is pictured with: (left) Ms Kellie Sloane MP, Member for Vaucluse; and (right) her daughter, Prue MacSween, media, TV and public relations personality.

Laurette also received messages of congratulations from King Charles III and Queen Camilla; His Excellency the Hon. David Hurley, Governor-General of Australia; The Hon. Anthony Albanese MP, Prime Minister; The Hon. Matt Keogh MP, Minister of Veterans' Affairs and Defence Personnel; Ms Allegra Spender MP, Wentworth; and Ms Kellie Sloane MP, Member for Vaucluse.

Congratulations on this milestone birthday to Laurette, Shirley and all our members who recently turned 100!

Dementia Support

Sadly the number of Australians with dementia is expected to double by 2058 to just under 1 million people.

Two-thirds of this are expected to be women. But do you know what dementia is and how to support and communicate with loved ones who might be suffering?

That's where Dementia Australia can help. They have developed free online courses and information that can really help you understand and support someone.

To have a look at what is available and learn more visit dementialearning.org.au

Regional Seniors Travel Card

The NSW Government offers seniors living regionally a \$250 prepaid card to help ease the cost of travel.

The card can be used to pay for pre-booked NSW TrainLink Regional trains and coaches, fuel and taxis.

To find out more, please call **1800 569 070**

Defence and Veterans Legal Service

The Defence and Veterans Legal Service provides free, independent legal support to veterans and their families who are wanting to share, or considering sharing, their experiences with the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide.

They can help you understand the protections in place for you, write your submission, and help you provide evidence in the way that best suits you and your circumstances.

Please call **1800 33 1800** for more information or visit defenceveteranslegalservice.org.au

Personal Advocacy Services

Did you know that there are advocacy services that can help advocate for people with disability, mental illness as well as older people and their carers?

While at AWWNSW we focus on systemic and policy advocacy within the veteran system, other services like ADACAS advocate on personal matters within the ACT and NSW.

To find out more please call **(02) 6242 5060** or visit adacas.org.au

Have you heard of Stepping On?

Stepping On is a FREE 7-week fall prevention program for adults aged 65 years and over, and Aboriginal adults aged 45 years and over.

Stepping On is run by NSW Health and there are multiple locations across the state. The best way to enquire about the program and enrol is via their website: steppingon.com.

If you need help to enrol or would like more information and you cannot access the internet or their website, please don't hesitate to call us on **(02) 9267 6577**.

Club events

Is your club having a special event? Is your club out and about or looking for new members?

Let us know! We would love to feature your club and activities in the Digest. Email your stories to guild@warwidowsnsw.com.au, mail them to us or call **(02) 9267 6577**

Walking, Running or Dancing for War Widows and Veterans Families

Join the Change Makers: walk, run or both for AWWNSW at the City 2 Surf on 13 August! It is a great way to connect, have fun and catch up with friends! We cannot wait to have you on board!

Don't want to join? It's OK, help us promote this as much as possible or get people together to join us

Cherry on top? We will be raising funds for our community!

Scan the QR code to join our team OR to donate

or go to awwnswchangemakers.raisely.com



June Town Hall

Register now for our next online Town Hall on **28 June 2023**. We will continue our conversation on the matters before the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide, including our next submission.

To register scan this QR code:



GPs and White/Gold cards

- DVA would like to assure veterans and families that there are thousands of GPs who accept Veteran Cards across the country.
- If a DVA cardholder does not already have a usual GP, they can call their local GP practice to determine whether they accept DVA Veteran Cards prior to visiting.
- If a DVA cardholder is having ongoing difficulties finding a health-care provider themselves, then they are able to contact DVA for assistance in locating GPs in their area who have accepted a Veteran Card recently.
- DVA may be able to assist in arranging transport to alternative health care providers

If you, or someone you know, is having a tough time and needs support, information, or guidance, please reach out to our office or one of these many phone services available.

- **Open Arms – Veterans & Families Counselling** – 1800 011 046
- **Defence Member and Family Support Helpline** – 1800 624 608
- **All-hours Support Line** – 1800 628 036 *Australian Department of Defence*
- **Lifeline Australia** – 13 11 14 (24/7 crisis support line)
- **Suicide Call Back Service** – 1300 659 467 (24 hour counselling for suicide prevention and mental health support)
- **1800 ELDERHelp** – 1800 353 374 (national free call phone number that automatically redirects callers seeking information and advice on elder abuse with existing phone line service in their jurisdiction)
- **1800RESPECT** – 1800 737732 (24 hour sexual assault, family and domestic violence counselling service)

