



AUSTRALIAN
WAR WIDOWS NSW LTD

WINTER 2023

THE DIGEST



AUSTRALIAN WAR WIDOWS

NSW LIMITED

ABN 24 083 075 914

www.warwidowsnsw.com.au

*"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

STATE PRESIDENT
Ms Queen Dunbar

BOARD CHAIR
Ms Tricia Hobson

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
J Collins AM, S Clark AM,
MAJGEN S Coyle AM CSC DSM,
Q Dunbar, B Till, T Hobson,
L Sullivan, L Boyd and Dr R Martin

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
Ms Renee Wilson

THE DIGEST
ISSN 2652-8606

PUBLISHER
Australian War Widows NSW Ltd

HEAD OFFICE
Suite 1.01, Level 1, 9 Help Street
Chatswood NSW 2067
PO Box 146, Chatswood NSW 2057

CONTACT
guild@warwidowsnsw.com.au
Phone: (02) 9267 6577, 1800 451 615

OFFICE HOURS
Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION
\$30 due 1 April each year

Donations to Australian War Widows NSW
Ltd are tax deductible.

DISCLAIMER: The material in this
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
31 August 2023
26 October 2023

Start of Legacy Week
27 August 2023

Annual General Meeting
29 August 2023

Our Space Sydney Launch
16 September 2023

Our Space ACT Event
14 October 2023

War Widows Day
19 October 2023

Commemorations & Key Dates

Malaya and Borneo Veterans' Day
31 August 2023

Legacy Badge Day
1 September 2023

Merchant Navy Day
3 September 2023

Battle for Australia Commemoration
6 September 2023

R U OK Day
14 September 2023

National Peacekeepers' Day
14 September 2023

Arrival of INTERFET in East Timor
20 September 2023

**Vietnam Forces Welcome Home
Parade, Sydney (1987)**
3 October 2023

War Widows Day
19 October 2023

CONTENT

- 03 President's Message
- 04 Veterans' Minister & DVA
- 06 Chair's Update
- 07 CEO's Update
- 08 Remembering them
- 12 Club News
- 14 Out and about
- 15 Feature Article
- 16 Legacy centenary torch relay
- 18 Member's Story
- 20 Entitlement Update
- 21 Advocacy Update
- 22 Branding FAQ
- 24 Building Your Skills
- 26 Feature Article
- 27 Recipe & Thanks
- 28 Member News
- 30 Notice Board

OUR COVERS

Front

Our Story over the
years, with a dream to
carry our legacy long
into our future



Back

The War Widows
Motto





Welcome to the winter edition of The Digest. It has been a busy season for us at War Widows NSW. I have been visiting clubs all around NSW with many of our staff. It has been wonderful to get to know more and more of you over the last few months.

Whether it be celebrating significant milestones with social and guild clubs or attending your AGMs and regional tours – I have learned so much from you all and really value the time I have been able to spend with you. Thank you for welcoming me with open arms!

One of the most important pieces of work underway at the moment is our brand update. Throughout our 77 years, we have been known by many different names, from the NSW War Widows' Craft Guild to the War Widows Guild of NSW, to our current name of Australian War Widows NSW. This next stage of evolution of our name is about ensuring that we can be there to support people when they need us most. Sometimes they need us before they are bereaved.

When I think of my own journey, I know how helpful an organisation like AWWNSW could have been to me while my husband was still alive; to have a place and a community where I belonged, to help me understand what was happening with my husband, to help me manage the impact on our children, to catch me when he passed. What a gift that could be to so many more women out there like me and like you. I am looking forward to embracing all of those who need us when they

reach out to us and to provide them with the support that they need that wasn't available to me.

In other news, I recently attended DVA's Veteran Families Policy Forum, where we discussed the issues that are facing veteran families, including widows. Two of the major challenges explored were domestic violence and the impacts of veteran homelessness. It was great to be at the two-day forum and meet many other families. Presentations were given by the Minister of Veteran Affairs, The Hon Matt Keogh, DVA Secretary Alison Frame, Veteran Family Advocate Commissioner Gwen Cherne, and other senior DVA staff members. I have to say that I had a real sense that change is happening at DVA. It was also pleasing to be part of forums like these where we can raise awareness on the impact of policies that directly affect you and the wider veteran community. There were also opportunities to present on our personal lived experiences. I'd like to thank our very own Kathy Moore who discussed the difficulties faced by her son Chris, no doubt difficult but I really admired Kathy's advocacy for her son.

Some of you may have recently seen that Service NSW has finally been able to make the changes necessary to ensure that registration concessions for MRCA war widows are now processed without the need to prove your status as a war widow. The enormity of this cannot be underestimated. Since the war in Afghanistan, war widows, our organisation, DVA officials and NSW Government officials have all been working together on this matter. The system changes have finally taken effect and MRCA widows can now have the registration concession automatically applied. Thank you to the many who have raised and advocated on this issue over the years. This achievement belongs to all of us.

QUEEN DUNBAR

State President

Australian War Widows NSW



welcome this opportunity to connect with the NSW War Widows community and provide an update on recently delivered and upcoming activities.

I am pleased to advise that from now on eligible DVA clients assessed under the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (MRCA), including Wholly Dependent Partners, will no longer need to attend a Service NSW centre to re-establish their eligibility for a concession on vehicle registration and licencing.

This change, which came into effect on 1 July 2023, is long overdue, and will deliver a better experience and processes for our veterans and war widows. Everything you need to know is in the Transport for NSW factsheet which I encourage you to read on the NSW Office for Veterans Affairs website – www.veterans.nsw.gov.au.

In June, the Anzac Memorial launched a photographic exhibition featuring the photographs and stories of 11 Korean War veterans to mark the 70th Anniversary of the Armistice of the Korean War. The exhibition was a collaboration with the Consulate General of the Republic of Korea in Sydney.

Since 11 August, there is a new photographic exhibition, *Stories of the Dat Do Dogs*, at the Anzac Memorial, commemorating the 50th anniversary

of Australia's withdrawal from Vietnam. I thank the over 50 veterans and nurses who shared their personal experiences of serving and I encourage you all to follow the Anzac Memorial on Facebook and Instagram for updates on this exhibition.

On 15 August, we commemorated Victory in the Pacific (VP) Day, which is the 78th anniversary of the end of the Second World War, as well as Vietnam Veterans Day on the anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan, 18 August.

In September, the Premier's Anzac Memorial Scholarship will see twenty scholars and three teachers, with a shared passion for history, participate in an intensive study tour to Darwin and Singapore. I was pleased to recently meet the students and their parents at the Anzac Memorial and wish them well on their trip. You can learn more about the trip on the PAMS website – www.veterans.nsw.gov.au/pams

I look forward to continuing to support the veteran community and their families and working closely with the war widows of NSW.

Yours sincerely,

THE HON DAVID HARRIS MP
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty
Minister for Gaming and Racing
Minister for Veterans
Minister for Medical Research
Minister for the Central Coast



I am humbled to address you as the Secretary of the Department of Veterans' Affairs. Since I started in the role of Secretary in January I've met with veterans and families across many parts of the country. I've spent hours talking to key stakeholders, including the Australian War Widows associations across the country, and I've heard many stories which have informed my thinking on a wide range of issues.

I've been struck by your passion and determination to secure life-changing services and reforms for the entire veteran family community.

You have sacrificed more than many can imagine. No one feels the loss of a loved one more than their spouses, partners, children and other family members.

There are many ways that we talk to each other – from an informal coffee to formal consultation processes.

One recent example of our work together has been to ensure young people who experience mental illness or injury continue to receive benefits, including a Gold Card. This special assistance instrument provides support to the dependants of current, former and deceased members who would otherwise miss out.

Another has been our annual Female Veterans and Veterans' Families Policy Forums, which were 'solutions focussed' and identified ambitious but also practical ideas and opportunities for change.

As we continue to work to improve support for veterans and families, it is so important that these services are designed and delivered specifically to meet the evolving needs of our community. The only way we can ensure this is through a co-design process where your views and experiences are given full voice.

Right now, we want to hear from members of the community to inform the Defence and Veteran Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy, being jointly developed with Defence. The strategy and its action plan will guide how the Government supports all veterans and families for the next four years, so it is important that we get it right.

I encourage all members of Australian War Widows to keep an eye out for further information as this Strategy progresses. Please visit the DVA website for more information.

Finally, there are few things of greater importance to the department than the solemn commemoration of the service and sacrifice of your family members. This year, I've had the unforgettable privilege to attend Anzac Day at Gallipoli and the recent National Service to mark the 50th anniversary of the end of Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War.

I'm proud of how far we have come in the short time I've been part of the broader defence community and am energised when I look ahead to what we can achieve together in the future.

ALISON FRAME

Secretary

Department of Veterans' Affairs



It is a pleasure to once again be contributing to this edition of the Digest.

This year is a significant year for our organisation.

The Board has been thinking about how to safeguard our organisation's future for some time. We want to ensure that Australia never forgets war widows, that they remain supported and that our organisation keeps its important place in the Australian veteran community – a place that many of you have worked hard to reach.

The board has met twice since the last edition of The Digest, as we are still working on our 3 key priorities for this year:

1. Updating the organisation name to ensure that we remove the final barrier to widows and families finding and connecting with us.
2. Reviewing and diversifying our funding lines to ensure we are making sustainable changes and can continue to provide services and support to you all.
3. Ensuring the programs and services we deliver to you meet your needs and are delivered in the best way possible.

Since the last edition of the digest, we have moved into the testing phase of our branding project. I believe by now many of you have received and returned the questionnaire about our branding options. The number of responses we have received to this letter has been encouraging and I'm so pleased many of you are engaging with this process. I want to take a moment to let you know that though

we are introducing a new trading name for the organisation, some things are not changing:

1. The Company name will remain Australian War Widows NSW Ltd. A trading name means that we will operate under a different name, but this will be owned by the Company.
2. Social and Guild Clubs will continue to operate and function as they are, social groups for war widows. They will not be required to call themselves anything different, nor open or change the membership of their groups. These are and will remain your peer groups.
3. The War Widows badge that we have provided to you for many years stays as is and remains yours. It will not be provided to the broader group in the same way it has been provided to you.
4. War Widows Day will not change.
5. The Field of Remembrance will not change.
6. Our commitment to you will not change.

Over the last year, many of you have been supporting our vision to carry forward the legacy of this incredible organisation and bring it to new generations of veteran families. The environment in which we operate has changed significantly and if we are to keep this incredible legacy alive, we must adapt with it. When Jessie Vasey started this organisation, she responded to the need she was faced. Today we carry forward that legacy in responding to the need we are faced with, because a veteran shouldn't have to pass away before their family is supported.

We want to be there many years prior to a veteran's passing as we now know that we should have been there to support you well before the worst happened. We couldn't be, but with these changes, we can be. We can also ensure that the memory and legacy of war widows is never forgotten by Australia, and doesn't fade into history. We can and we will keep it alive.

MS TRICIA HOBSON
Chair of the Board

Update from the CEO

It continues to be a busy time for the organisation, with key projects underway in addition to delivering our standard services and support to you through the guild and social clubs, Friendship Line, birthday calls, communications and regional visits.

In June 2023 we welcomed Julie Wicks to our team. Julie is the Chief Operating Officer for the organisation and will assist me (and you) in ensuring that we strengthen the delivery of our current programs and services so we can ready the organisation to deliver peer support to new demographics, and build our case management and social work program. Julie joins us with many years of experience in a similar role at Lifeline Harbour to Hawkesbury. You will see her out and about with us, so be sure to say hi!

In May, I was selected to attend a course in non-for-profit management at the Harvard Business School in Boston. During July 2023, I attended the course in Boston, thanks to a scholarship from the Ferris Family and the Harvard Club of Australia. This course has provided me and the organisation with many lessons and network connections. I have come back with a clear idea and plan about how best to organise ourselves, our strategy and our resources to ensure our growth and sustainability. I will cover more on this in future issues of The Digest. I also took the opportunity to visit Washington DC and meet with other organisations who like us support and advocate for veteran families. These organisations include:

- National Military Families Association
- Military Families Advisory Network
- Blue Star Families
- Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS)
- Fisher House Foundation

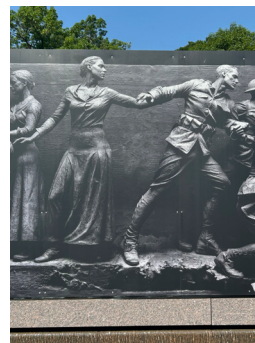
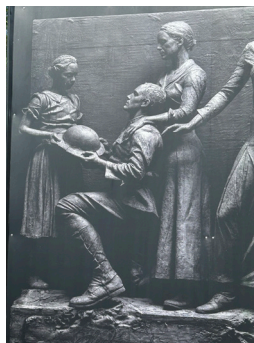
Over the coming month, I will also be meeting with a number of other organisations via Zoom. The main lesson I have learnt from these organisations so far, is how to effectively collaborate for collective impact. Again, a lot more to come on this!

The biggest take away from this trip for me was clarity

in our mission and our journey. As an organisation, our enduring vision is that no family member of a veteran ought to be disadvantaged or left behind because of their loved one's service. In the post-war years, we applied this to those most in need and at risk of being left behind: the war widows and their families. While there is more work to do for this group to ensure they remain part of the system and not disadvantaged, they are at least included in the veteran support system.

The sad reality for thousands of other spouses, children and parents of veterans is that they are not included, they are being left behind and disadvantaged because their loved one is still living. We need to bring all of these families with us now, because they need us, they need you. We are honouring our vision, our 'north star', through the evolution of our organisation because we should not be waiting until veterans pass away before we see, hear and support their families.

As many of you know, an organisation like ours is needed well before bereavement and ought to be there throughout the life of the family of a veteran. Below is a series of images from the World War One Memorial in Washington DC. This depicts a soldier's journey. If I was to sum up in images why the Board and I are evolving the organisation, it is this. It is about being there when we are needed which isn't always at the end of a Soldier's life.



'We are honouring our vision, our 'north star' through the evolution of our organisation because we should not be waiting until veterans pass away before we see, hear and support their families.'

Representing our organisation

The board and our members take great pride in representing our organisation during commemoration and events across the state. Here is a snap shot of the last few months. We thank all whom proudly represented AWWNSW at these events.

Jenny Ware – AWWNSW Member

On Saturday 17th June, Jenny Ware represented our President at the HMAS Nirimba Biennial End of an Era Ceremony and re-dedication hosted by the Nirimba Sub-Section of the Naval Association of Australia, in conjunction with the faculty of the Nirimba Education Precinct.

The religious service and benediction were held by Senior Chaplain Andrew Thorburn, RAN (pictured with Jenny) with keynote addresses by Captain Geoff Cole AM, RAN (Rtd), past Commanding Officer HMAS Nirimba, and Mr Anthony Mitri, Acting CEO of The College at Western Sydney University and Provost of the Nirimba Campus.

Representing the Chief of Navy, Captain Viktor Pilicic, CSC, RAN, Commanding Officer HMAS Kuttabul, also pictured with Jenny, provided an address to mark this occasion.

We are certain Jenny delighted all in attendance with her presence and friendliness!



Lynne Boyd – AWWNSW Board Director

Phyllis Solomon – Bankstown War Widows Guild

Lynne Boyd represented AWWNSW at the 58th annual commemoration at the Merchant Navy Memorial and Columbarium at Rookwood Cemetary.

Lynne and Phyllis Solomon from the Bankstown War Widows Guild, were honoured to meet Rear Admiral Christopher Smith AM, CSM, RAN, Commander Australian Fleet, who was the Guest of Honour for this year's event.

They were also able to take this lovely picture with the Rear Admiral.

Stuart Clark AM FAAL FAICD, Jennifer Collins AM, Meg Green AM & Bree Till

Three of our current board directors and former President Meg Green attended the special provincial service of Choral Matins, marking the Coronation of His Majesty, King Charles III, at St Andrew's Cathedral. The Vice-Regal presence of the Lieutenant-Governor of NSW, His Excellency the Honourable Andrew Bell, and various other Commonwealth, community and church dignitaries made it a truly momentous occasion.



Meg Green AM – former Director, former State & National President

On 2 May, Meg Green AM represented AWWNSW at the Ravenswood School ANZAC Service.

Meg enjoyed morning tea with the School's Principal followed by a special commemorative service to pay respect to our veterans, past and present.



Jenny Ware – AWWNSW Member Caroline Kirche – AWWNSW

Back in March, Jenny and Caroline attended the opening of the *Serving the White Ensign* exhibition at the Anzac Memorial in Hyde Park, Sydney. Celebrating 110 years of the Australian Fleet, the exhibition is still currently displayed at the memorial. We encourage our members to visit the exhibition. Entry is free and the Memorial is open every day, 9am–5pm.

Queen Dunbar – AWWNSW State President Dawn Wellfare – AWWNSW Member

Our State President, Queen Dunbar, and life member Dawn Wellfare were honoured to attend the launch of 'Armistice in Korea, 1953–2023', a photography exhibition that was held at the Anzac Memorial featuring the photos and personal stories of 11 Korean War veterans.

Over 17,000 Australians served in the Korean War, with 340 making the ultimate sacrifice. To commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Armistice, this exhibition honoured the service and sacrifice of these veterans and passes their legacy down to future generations.

The exhibition is now closed, but stay informed on future exhibitions at the memorial by signing up to our Newsletter.



Bree Till – Board Director

Board Director Bree Till attended the 81st anniversary of the sinking of HMAS Kuttabul on 1 June and laid a wreath on behalf of AWWNSW alongside RSL NSW President Ray James OAM. The event was attended by many dignitaries, including Rear Admiral Christopher Smith, Commander Australian Fleet and Mr Tokuda Shuichi, Consul General for Japan, who laid wreaths on behalf of Australia and Japan.

The sinking of HMAS Kuttabul Sydney Harbour was a reminder to all Australian at the time that WWII was at our doorstep and very close to home.



The memories live on, all around the world

On ANZAC Day this year, our member Margaret Frances laid a cross of remembrance for her late husband, a Vietnam Veteran, and for her father, WWII Veteran of New Guinea, at her local Cenotaph in Windang NSW.

Following ANZAC Day, Margaret left for a holiday in Malta. While walking around Fort St Elmo, she entered the small Chapel of St Anne, also called The Memorial Building. There she saw a beautiful tribute - pictured here. Just as Margaret laid her own tributes at home a few days before, others had done just the same, halfway around the world. Margaret said she was taken back by how emotional this small tribute made her feel.

In sharing her experience and reflections with us, Margaret said that seeing this tribute made her realise how all over the world, people still suffer with their memories and loss due to war. ANZAC Day has been commemorated in Malta since 1916. There are a high number of ANZAC graves in Malta, as this is where a lot of casualties were sent for treatment during that campaign.

The wreath was placed by the British Cheshire Regiment, who were also at Gallipoli alongside Australia and Malta. We'd like to thank Margaret for sharing this with us and for reminding all of us that we are not alone and on ANZAC Day the world stands with us too.



St Anne's Chapel

Already in existence in 1488, this chapel was incorporated within the construction of Fort St Elmo in 1552 and dedicated to St Anne, the patron saint of the Order of St John's navy. It housed an icon of the saint brought over by the Knights in 1530, now at the Malta Maritime Museum. Here was staged the final defence of Fort St Elmo during the Great Siege of 1565, where the few remaining knights were killed by the Ottomans.

We want to hear more stories like this from you! Please send them to guild@warwidowsnsw.com.au or in the post.

Carrying-on the Legacy through personal tributes

Ms Shirley Palmer is the daughter of a War Widow and a Veteran who served in WWII and in UK in the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS).

Shirley accompanies her 96-year-old mother to her social meetings each month in Gunnedah.

The Gunnedah group of war widows is small, but Shirley said they enjoy a social gathering at the Palette Cafe in Gunnedah each second Tuesday of the month at 10am for morning tea, beginning with the War Widow's Motto.

When Shirley noticed that laying a wreath on behalf of the War Widows on ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day was no longer happening, she volunteered to organise it.

Initially, they all put in \$10 each for the cost of a small wreath, which cost \$70 at the time. As the cost of wreaths has since increased drastically, Shirley has been making the wreaths for the ladies herself, foraging for whatever flowers she can find, as they prefer fresh flowers rather than artificial.

Below are some pictures of the beautiful wreaths created by Shirley.

Shirley is also very grateful for receiving the cross for the Field of Remembrance each year, which allows her to paint and place them at the Cenotaph on occasion, remembering her father and her Welsh grandfather, who served in the Australian Army in WWI, and Beryl Cross's husband, who served in Vietnam.

We would like to commend and thank Shirley and the Gunnedah war widows for their commitment and devotion to each other and their loved ones, ensuring they are never forgotten.



Social and Guild Club News

It has been a very busy few months for our Guild and Social clubs, meeting each other, hosting AGMs, regional visits and special functions. Here is what they have been up to.

Christmas in July

In July, the Chatswood Social Club kindly extended the invitation to all war widows living in the area to celebrate 'Christmas in July' at the Kirribilli RSL.

It was a wonderful day and the ladies enjoyed a beautiful lunch with the best view of the Harbour Bridge.



We would like to extend our thanks to the Chatswood Club Coordinator, Elizabeth Wright, for extending the invitation to all war widows so they could connect with old and new friends. It takes a lot of dedication to organise such events for all to enjoy.

Cronulla Social Club

On 26 June, Board Director Lynne Boyd met with the ladies from the Cronulla Social Club. During this meeting, the ladies resolved to change from a Guild to a Social Club. An important and welcomed step for this club, removing the burdens of governance and finance ensuring they can focus on what they do best, supporting each other. By allowing the organisation to manage the administration efforts these ladies can simply enjoy one another's company without the hassle.



Albury

On Monday 22 May, we had an incredible time during the regional visit to Albury.

Our team enjoyed connecting with the amazing community and spreading awareness about the support and services we offer.



We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the Albury community for their warm reception and engaging conversations. It was an honour to meet so many incredible individuals and hear their

Wagga Wagga

Our State President Queen Dunbar and Board Director Lynne Sullivan had another inspirational regional visit to Wagga Wagga on 23 May.

Thank you to the ladies for your warm reception and providing a welcoming space where war widows can come together, support one another, and build lasting friendships. It was a pleasure meeting you.



Tamworth

Regional visits continued on 13 June, with our State President Queen Dunbar and AWWNSW team member visiting Tamworth to connect with our members from the region.

It was a wonderful opportunity to strengthen our relationship with the regional clubs and hear firsthand about the local issues they face.

During the meeting, Queen and Jo discussed various topics, including engagement with AWWNSW, support for regional clubs, and ways to keep our members in regional areas connected and engaged. The importance of connection and friendship was emphasized, with highlights from events like the Field of Remembrance, and the upcoming AGM in Sydney.

We value these regional visits and the opportunity to connect with our regional members personally. Thank you all for a wonderful day.



Port Macquarie

We were delighted to reunite with members from Port Macquarie Guild Club, Laurieton Social Club and Wauchope Social Club in Port Macquarie on 27 June.

While we were there, Port Macquarie held their AGM. It was a privilege for us to be there and hear about the matters affecting local members. Following the AGM, State President, Queen Dunbar, hosted a regional meeting where we had insightful conversations about local issues and ways to enhance our support for regional clubs. Your input and feedback will guide us in better serving the needs of our members and keeping everyone engaged and connected.

We appreciate the efforts of Loyis Goodyear, Lyn-Anne Bye, Ann Neilson, and all the club coordinators who played a vital role in making this event a success. Your hard work and passion are deeply valued. It was also lovely to see members from different clubs being welcomed by the Port Macquarie ladies. As the connections between the clubs grow, so does the support network for war widows in the area. Congratulations Port Macquarie for hosting a wonderful event!

Thank you to our AWWNSW representatives, State President Queen Dunbar, Joanne Nienhuis and Lisa Stephenson, for their presence and support throughout the event. Your dedication and commitment to our veteran families are truly commendable.

We are grateful for these opportunities to learn, connect and grow with members around the state. Your stories and the connections that we witness continue to inspire us.



South East Sydney

On 26 July, the AWWNSW team had a lovely time at the South East Sydney Luncheon that was held at the Penshurst RSL.

The ladies enjoyed sharing a meal while bonding with old and new friends and it was lovely for our team to witness new connections being formed. One of the focuses of our team is around peer support and it is inspiring to see the ladies who are the pillar of our organisation, gather from many locations to get together around an unspoken and unique bond.





Archibald Prize Exhibition at the Art Gallery of NSW

The Younger Members Social Club recently attended the Archibald Prize Exhibit. The ladies were grateful and felt fortunate to have such a wonderful, knowledgeable and passionate tour guide, Mary Jane (left), who brought each painting alive with all the details and insights of each artist and subject. The ladies had a delightful time spending an afternoon together at the Gallery.

A walk through the Rocks

During May, nineteen members of the Younger Members' Social Club ventured out for a guided walking tour of The Rocks, and all agreed it was a very successful day. This was the first of their planned outings for the year. The weather was perfect, the walk was leisurely, and their guide from "The Rocks Walking Tour" was fantastic and very knowledgeable. Everyone came away having learned something new about our early settlement days in The Rocks and the relatively recent campaigns to Save the Rocks.

The tour ended at the Garrison Church, where the group was permitted privileged access. The Garrison Church has connections to The War Widows Guild, having hosted Thanksgiving Services for our 50th and 60th Anniversaries. By chance, a photo dated 2006 of the 60th Anniversary Thanksgiving Service held at the Church appears in *No Peacetime Cinderellas* – an unexpected serendipitous discovery!

The day was completed with a delicious lunch in the heart of The Rocks at The Tea Cosy.



Upcoming Club Visits

- Monday 11 September – Western Sydney Visit
- Friday 29 September – Central Coast (Gosford)
- Wednesday 8 November – Narrandera
- Tuesday 14 November – Orange, Parkes, Wellington
- Thursday 23 November – Ulladulla, Bay Basin, Moruya
- Thursday 7 December – Wollongong, Nowra, Kiama

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

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



Social connection and its impact on our health

Did you know that social isolation impacts negatively on your health and wellbeing? In fact, social isolation and loneliness have a greater impact on mortality than smoking, obesity or alcohol consumption.

There is a strong body of evidence demonstrating the positive effects of social connection on individuals, including helping guard against depression and burnout, which are familiar challenges defence and veteran families face. Engagement in meaningful group-based connections can help you build a sense of belonging and purpose, which can improve your mental health and wellbeing while effectively addressing loneliness.

Just as our veterans need their peers, their families do as well, particularly if those are not veterans themselves. We have learned and practiced social connection over the last 77 years through our social activities, clubs and Friendship Line and it has become our foundation. We know that the best support for veterans' families is provided through their peers.

We are working hard to build new connections within new groups of peers through a program targeting carers and spouses of veterans. 'Our Space' will allow us to build a new network of peers that have not been connected this way before.

As we know first-hand, veterans' families carry the burden of supporting Australia's Defence Force personnel, yet they often do so alone and isolated from each other, putting their needs last to be of service to their loved one and our country. They need each other now more than ever, and we are here to provide that home to them.

Through Our Space we are seeking to bring women and families together to develop strong bonds and support for each other, just as our older war widows have done for decades. We know there are many of



these women out there with nowhere to go, feeling incredibly isolated and lonely. If this is you, our message to you is: "you now have a home". We are still building some parts of it, but you are welcome to join us at any time. We are available to support you over the phone, via email, and in person at events or at our office in Chatswood NSW.

We are grateful for the support of the Department of Veterans' Affairs who, through grant funding, has enabled us to pilot the implementation of 'Our Space'. We are learning, adapting and pivoting as we find out what works, what does not and what this group needs.

The next Our Space event will take place on 16 September 2023 at the Cronulla RSL. At this event, we will hear from Board Director and veteran spouse, Rachel Martin. This will be followed by a second event in Canberra where we will hear from female veteran, spouse and leader Dr Stephanie Hodson. Come and join us to learn more about the journeys and experiences of these incredible women.

As Brene Brown once said, *"One day you will tell your story of how you overcame what you went through, and it will be someone else's survival guide."* That's what Our Space is about.

Scan the QR
code to join
Our Space
Online



A very proud moment for Dianne Vogt

On Wednesday 19 July, AWWNSW member Dianne Vogt was the first Torch Bearer to carry the Torch in the Sydney leg of the Legacy Torch Relay.

After a service at the Anzac Memorial, which included the lighting of the Centenary Torch from the 'Flame of Remembrance' at the Memorial, NSW Governor and Patron of AWWNSW, Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley AC, KC, cut the official ribbon and Dianne took off with her lit Torch, starting the flame's journey through Sydney.

Dianne explains how it was a special moment that she will always cherish. "Legacy holds a special place in my heart, and it was a privilege and emotional moment to be chosen as the first Torch Bearer in Sydney," says Dianne.

She still recalls her first Legacy meeting in 2014, following the passing of her husband, Michael, the year before.

"I was invited to tell my story", says Dianne. "Afterwards, they gave me a hug and said to me, 'If you have cared for your husband, then let us care for you', and I thought that was so special."

Dianne's late husband, Michael, served in the Vietnam War under the National Service Scheme, as did her brother, Garry.

Neither of them talked much about their experience at war, even though the trauma of war stayed with them long afterwards.



Affected by severe PTSD, Michael medically retired at 49 years old, while Dianne's brother, Garry, became a Legatee later in life, helping war widows sort paperwork for DVA claims.

In fact, it was her brother who told her she must one day become part of Legacy, advice she followed and greatly appreciated.

As a beneficiary of Legacy and a member of AWWNSW, Dianne has developed wonderful friendships with other war widows, and feels a deep connection to them. She says they understand the path she has walked: loving and caring for a veteran, and, eventually, learning to live without her husband.

As she carried the Legacy Torch forward on the relay, she did so for all other war widows and families of veterans, as well as for her brother, Garry, who loved the organisation as much as she does.



Dianne Vogt with members Wendy McKean, Fran Brock, Jenny Ware and AWWNSW President, Queen Dunbar

The Legacy families carry on

Among the war widows and veterans carrying the torch during the Legacy Torch relay was 14-year-old Alex Hopkins, who carried the torch through Maitland near Newcastle.

Everyone taking part in the relay has different reasons for doing so, and Alex was doing it to represent his dad.

Alex was only 5 weeks old when his father, Corporal Mathew Hopkins, was killed in Afghanistan in 2009. Mat's death came after he had spent just four short yet special days with his newborn son.

At the time of Mat's passing, his wife Vick said, "He was excited about becoming a daddy. He only got to spend four days with our son when he was born before he had to go back overseas. I'm so glad that Mat got to meet his son and experience fatherhood."

Fourteen years later, Alex is an ever-growing teenager who has been involved with Legacy for the past several years.



The local Legatee, Paul, a Vietnam veteran, put down the names of all the local Legacy kids to take part in the torch relay.

"Hunter Legacy had the highest number of children torch bearers take part in the relay," says Vick, who ran alongside Alex as his companion. "It's a once-in-a-lifetime event for them to be part of."

As for Alex, Vick says he enjoyed taking part in the relay to represent his dad. "He was quite proud he did his bit."

Our Members and their Legacy Story

Many of our members are Legacy beneficiaries and, as such, the Legacy Centenary Torch Relay was a very meaningful event for many and a once-in-a-life-time experience.

All around the state, members participated as Torch Bearers or Volunteers. We have listed some of them we were aware of.

Please contact us if you would like to share your stories about your involvement in the Legacy Torch Relay.

Torch Bearers

Gloria Lenon
Dallas Alderson
Denise Williams
Nancy Firth & companion
walker Anne Morley
Lorraine Stuart
Phyllis Alderston
Di Vogt & companion
walker Fran Brock

Volunteers

Wendy McKean
Yvonne Stapleton
Fi Duncan White
Carol Wilson



Members Nancy Firth (torch bearer), Anne Morley (companion walker), Pam Bowmaker & Margaret Francis in Wollongong

Community and connection, the key to a happy life

At 103 years old, Margaret Tanner is one of Australia's oldest war widows. Her husband, Noel Tanner, served in World War Two as the skipper of a boat that transferred supplies from the mainland of Australia to Thursday Island.

A few years after the war ended, Noel became ill with testicular cancer, which was attributed to his war service. He passed away in October 1949 after a short battle with cancer. At 29 years old, Margaret became a war widow and sole parent to their young son, Robert.

It's been more than 70 years since Margaret lost her husband. She admits that when he first passed away, she would cry herself to sleep. But her strength, resilience and fierce independence are both impressive and inspiring.

Margaret never remarried, but her life has been filled with family and friends, community and connection.

Today, Margaret still lives by herself in her own home. And just a few years ago, she was still playing golf, taking part in a walking group and doing yoga.

When asked the secrets to a long life, Margaret says she doesn't know. But it seems her willingness to try new things and meet new people is one of them.

She admits she has felt hesitant at times. Her life circumstances have meant she has often had to attend events by herself. Sometimes the thought of showing up to an event on her own where she doesn't know anyone else has made her feel uneasy, but she didn't let it stop her from getting out there and living life.

"When you're on your own attending things, you're always a bit nervous about it," says Margaret. "But I



always made the effort. It's very daunting, but once I got there, I always met someone that I got on with."

There were two types of events where Margaret especially made friends: Legacy events and War Widows Social Club meetings.

Margaret joined Australian War Widows NSW in 1951 and started attending the City Evening group at Sydney RSL when it formed in 1968, after her friend and fellow war widow, Betty Bromley, talked her into going.

"I have really enjoyed my involvement with War Widows," Margaret says. "Some of my best friends were from War Widows or Legacy."

Ever since that first meeting, Margaret has been involved in AWWNSW, and still attends the Auburn War Widows social club on Saturday afternoons when her health permits.

She also attended the inaugural War Widows Day last year. After the service, while she was waiting for the bus to ferry war widows from Hyde Park to the Parliament of New South Wales, she found herself chatting to the younger war widows.

"It was interesting to see, you know, how they were coping," Margaret says. By that she means how they were coping with grief, raising children, paying the bills and holding the family together – all without their husband.

"It would have made such a difference to her life if she would have had support. I think we [...] are very lucky to have had support."

'I've thought how lucky I was to meet such lovely friends...'

When asked how someone overcomes grief and adversity, Margaret shrugs her shoulders and says, "Well, I mean, there's nothing you can do [about it] really."

For all the challenges Margaret has faced, what she speaks of most is all the happy memories from the past.

Her dining room displays just a small glimpse of those memories, with photos of all the people she has loved. A photo of her with her sister as young kids, around four and five years old. A photo of her mum and dad. A photo of her dressed in a fancy frock, complete with hat and gloves, alongside her mother-in-law.

Then there is the framed black-and-white photo of a young man, placed in the centre of her dressing table in her bedroom. While Margaret was lucky enough to hold Noel in her arms for just over 10 years, she has held him in her heart for 70 years more.

As well as speaking about all the happy memories, Margaret also expresses her gratitude for all the support, especially from organisations like AWWNSW.

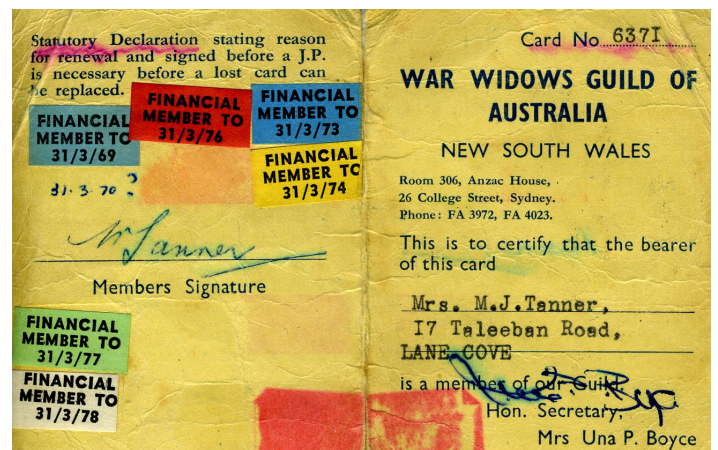
Margaret shares the story of a World War One widow who lived a few doors up from her, who didn't enjoy the same support Margaret did because Australian War Widows wasn't created until after World War Two.



"She had no support whatsoever," she says.

"It would have made such a difference to her life if she would have had support. I think we [World War Two widows] are very lucky to have had support. I've thought how lucky I was to meet such lovely friends. Even though the war widows meetings are once a month, you look forward to the meetings."

This is why, at 103 years old, Margaret still attends the monthly war widows meeting whenever she can.



Entitlement updates

DVA Update: Introducing the DVA's Rehabilitation Appliances Program (RAP)

The DVA's Rehabilitation Appliances Program helps eligible veterans, war widowed partners and dependants to live a safe and independent life.

The RAP is a program designed to provide access to aids, equipment and modifications to minimise the impact of disabilities, enhance quality of life, and live an independent life at home.

This program offers access to a multitude of items and services including household appliances, mobility devices, communication devices, alarm systems linked to a 24/7 monitoring centres, assistance dogs, rehabilitation and treatment machines, etc.

These services assist eligible veterans, widowed partners and dependents in living an independent life, staying included in the community, having access to the rehabilitation services needed and having an improved quality of life at home.

Information on the program and eligibility can be found at <https://www.dva.gov.au/providers/rehabilitation-appliances-program-rap> or by calling DVA on 1800 838 372.

Automatic Gold Card recognition for registration concession

From 1 July 2023, Transport for NSW updated its NSW vehicle registration and licensing database to automatically validate DVA file numbers for NSW veterans and eligible concession holders assessed under the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (MRCA).

These concessions are specifically available for veterans who are SRDP-eligible (Special Rate Disability Pension), those assessed with 50 or more impairment points, as well as Wholly Dependent Partners (this includes war widows).

Automatic pensioner registration renewal will be successful providing your DVA file number is recorded. To check if your DVA file number has been recorded, simply contact Service NSW on 13 22 13 for assistance.

Eligible vehicle registrations will also be automatically renewed once your CTP insurance policy is received and vehicle eSafety check (if required) is completed.

As some of you know we have been advocating on this matter for many years, joining a chorus of voices on this issue. Our thanks to the NSW Government for making the changes necessary and to many of you, for helping us see this matter through.

Gold Card concessions on NSW public transport

Thanks to members who have raised ongoing issues with public transport concessions within NSW. We went back to the Office for Veterans in NSW and sought clarification on the concession, eligibility and how to access. Here is the information they have provided:

Concession travel in NSW

If you have a Commonwealth Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) Veteran Gold Card or a DVA Gold Health Card, you are entitled to concession travel in NSW.

You must carry your DVA Gold Card when travelling as proof of entitlement and be able to show it when asked by a Transport NSW Official.

Concessions are not available on fast ferry services between Manly and Circular Quay, event shuttle buses, chartered bus services or Great Southern Rail services.

To be eligible you must:

- be an Australian citizen or permanent resident,
- reside permanently in NSW,
- have a Veteran Gold Card or a DVA Gold Health Card issued by the Department of Veterans' Affairs. DVA Gold Health Cards marked TPI, EDA or War Widow are also eligible.

To apply, you need to submit an electronic form online. If you don't have access to the internet you can call 131 500 or come to see us at the Chatswood Office during our technology drop-in sessions (see notice board on page 30 for details), bringing with you form of ID and your Gold Card. We will help you make the application.

To apply online: <https://tfnsw-mashup-2-1-prod.pegacloud.net/ApplyCEC/ApplyCEC.html>

A plan for our Advocacy

This year marks 50 years since Australia withdrew from Vietnam. While this war bought lessons and progress to the programs and services on offer to veterans, there has been very limited movement on the support available to their families.

Since 2014, we have had access to information and data about the impacts of war service on the families of veterans. The *Vietnam Veteran Study Series* confirmed what many of you know: the mental wellbeing of spouses of war veterans is poorer than the mental wellbeing of the general public. As a result of this study, we know that as many as 1-in-3 spouses of war veterans are likely diagnosed with depression, and 2-in-5 spouses may experience suicidal ideation.

Yet for the last 11 years that this data has been revealed, there has been limited progress when it comes to supporting these spouses and families. The availability and access to mental health support for veterans' families is critical and could be improved significantly. This is why their mental health of is the first priority in our Advocacy Plan.

The needs of the entire group of veterans' families are vast and need to be considered according to the most urgent need first. The solutions we are seeking is for improved access to mental health treatment and services for:

- Families bereaved by a service-related death.
- Children of veterans who have died as a result of their service, or of veterans who have been left significantly wounded/injured or ill as a result of their service.
- Families who have experienced trauma related to a veteran.
- Families caring for wounded/injured and ill veterans.



Improved access for those with a DVA entitlement consists of ongoing treatment card access for mental health conditions. For those without a DVA entitlement, improved access consists of an appropriate increase in Medicare rebated sessions on a mental health plan, in addition to improved access to appropriate levels of mental health treatment through Open Arms.

In pursuing these priorities, we have first focused on the removal of gold cards from children of deceased veterans. Currently, children of veterans who have passed as a result of their service can have their eligibility for the gold card extended where a mental health condition is impacting their ability to study full time until the age of 25 years. We are working with DVA to look at how these treatment cards can be extended to cover mental health treatment, using a similar model to the treatment model that was put in place for the children of Vietnam Veterans. Taking care of the mental health treatment of children in bereaved families removes barriers to treatment and reduces financial pressures on those widowed by Defence service. It can also limit the impacts of intergenerational trauma and improve health and wellbeing outcomes for these children.

*To read our full
advocacy plan please
scan this code*



Branding FAQs

Since the opening of the Branding update consultation, we have received many questions and we wanted to spend some time in this edition of *The Digest* addressing them for you.

Why are we changing?

For our future and to ensure war widows are not forgotten and retain their rightful place in the veteran community.

When our organisation was founded, we responded to the needs of those times: we supported widows of World War II who were left out of the veteran support system. War widows are now included in the support system and while there is always more work to do, there are entitlements and support accessible to them after a veteran has passed away.

But why should spouses and their families have to wait until the worst has happened before they are seen, heard and supported? Why should veterans have to pass away before we recognise and support the service of their families? We do not believe this is right, we do not believe this is enough.

We need to be there to support and raise the voices of families before the worst happens, because waiting for a disaster to happen before we support them isn't good enough. The needs of our community today have shifted, and we need to shift with them to help those who need us - who need you.

I am a war widow and I've been a member for 20 years, will I not be included anymore?

You will absolutely be included! Nothing about the name change will dilute the services, support or our service to you. The only thing that you will notice will be a change to the logo and organisation name. What has been pleasing to see is that more than 80% of you can already see how changing our name will not affect your status in this organisation, in

Australia or the veteran community. Neither will it affect what you are currently accessing and what we are offering to you.

What is not changing?

- The existing services and programs already offered to war widows will not decrease.
- The membership of guild clubs and social clubs that have been created for war widows will remain the same, including their club names, eg War Widows Social Club Paramatta.
- Our strong advocacy for matters affecting war widows all of which is mapped out in our advocacy plan [please see QR code on page 20].
- The Company name will remain Australian War Widows NSW Ltd (more detail on this below)
- The pewter badge we provide to War Widows will stay the same and remain yours. It is exclusively for war widows and will not be provided to other family members.
- War Widows Day will not change.
- The Field of Remembrance will not change.
- Our commitment and availability to you will not change.

Will wreaths still be laid by War Widows NSW for war widows?

Yes, of course. As the new brand is implemented we will be working closely with all our stakeholders including organisers of commemorative events to ensure that this important place in commemorations is not lost or changed because war widows are the chief mourners.

Will the membership of our social and guild clubs have to include non-war widows?

No, your clubs can stay as they are, we have no plans in changing the composition of your clubs. These clubs are peer groups and work best when everyone in the group has a like experience. New groups for non-war widows will be created. This work has already begun through the creation of Our Space. Our Space is open to war widows and non-war widows and its intent is to form new peer support networks which may contain like experience or intergenerational experiences.

What is the benefit of changing the name?

Changing the name will help us connect with thousands more widows and unite the group of veteran families who currently do not have a place or a voice in the veteran community until their loved ones pass away. Increasing our impact means we can grow and do more for you, we can grow our influence and we can make sure that your legacy, your service and sacrifices are never forgotten by Australia.

Your journey and sacrifices prior to and post bereavement are known and valued.

Keeping our name the same will result in seeing the spirit, hard work and legacy of Australian War Widows lost. This isn't the outcome the Board wants and from the majority of responses we have received from you, it is not the outcome that most of you want either.

What is the difference between a company name and a trading name?

A company name is the official title of the organisation, at this stage, the Board intends to keep the company name the same. The company name will appear on the audited financial statements, AGM paperwork and minutes, ACNC reporting, ASIC records, Board agendas, minutes, and financial accounts and records.

The trading name will be the name we use to communicate with you, stakeholders, and the general public. It will be the name that we use to deliver our programs and services, fundraise and effectively conduct the business of the organisation under. Both names are linked and the company owns the trading name – in other words the new name will be owned and operated by Australian War Widows NSW Ltd.

Though new for us, this is a fairly typical structure, for example Woolworths Group Limited is the name of the company that owns and operates Everyday Rewards, Safeway, Woolworths, Big W etc. In the veteran community sector similar structures have been used before, for example the company name of Australian International Military Games owned and operated through the name Invictus Games Sydney 2018.

Who can access our services now?

Currently many family members can access our services, regardless of the status of their veteran. In fact, we are the most inclusive organisation in the veterans family space: no other organisation includes all family members at any stage of their lives. We offer our programs and services to:

- Spouses, children, parents, siblings of serving members who have passed away
- Spouses, children, parents, siblings of current serving members
- Spouses, children, parents, siblings of past serving members
- Spouses, children, parents, siblings of serving members who are injured or ill.

Are we duplicating services with other organisations like RSL or Legacy?

No, certainly not. We will continue to deliver the same sorts of services, support and advocacy that we have for 77 years, working in partnership and collaboration with RSL and Legacy where the beneficiaries of our services and support are the same. We will fill the gaps and provide a place and a voice to those families Legacy cannot support.

CLOSING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE – LESSON 201

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

Last winter we started our series to help you improve your digital literacy and 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 Zoom.

Technology is often foreign at first. It takes a little time, and a little knowledge, to understand what does what and how to use a computer, mobile phone and the internet.



What is Zoom?

Zoom is a video conferencing platform that allows its registered users to make video calls to one another and participate in group calls.

Zoom works based on every call having a host (the organiser of the call) and participants (the invited guests).

The host sets up the meeting and sends a meeting link and passcode to each of the participants in the form of an invitation.

Zoom can be used for a range of things, from connecting with friends and family anywhere in the world, to attending online doctor's appointments, taking educational classes or games nights with friends.

Zoom has a range of plans available that cater to several types of users. The good news is that there is a Basic Zoom plan that is free for personal use.

The Basic plan allows unlimited one-to-one calls, but there are some restrictions for group calls, including:

- You can only have up to 100 people on any single call.
- Group calls are limited to 40 minutes in duration.

What do you need to use Zoom?

Zoom can be used on most mobile devices, as well as desktop and laptop computers. Regardless of which device you use, you will need to download and install the Zoom app and create a Zoom account.

As Zoom allows you to use both video and audio, you will ideally need a stable, high-speed internet connection. If your connection is slow, you may notice lags (delays) in the video and some distorted audio.

Using and watching video over your internet connection requires a significant data allowance. For example, a one-to-one call on Zoom for 40 minutes can use approximately 0.5GB to 1.2GB of data. The more people on the call, however, the more data is used, so group meetings can use almost double the data for the same duration of call.

Before downloading Zoom, check that you have the required data allowance for your mobile device or home internet.

For more information about how to use Zoom, visit:

<https://beconnected.esafety.gov.au/topic-library/connecting-to-others/how-to-use-zoom>



Using Zoom to connect with others

Every call or meeting on the Zoom platform has a Host. This is the person who sets up the meeting (or call) and sends email invitations to others (known as Participants) to join the meeting.

The Host also controls:

- who can join the meeting – by admitting individual Participants from the Waiting Room,
- who can speak during the meeting,
- when the meeting ends.

Participants are those who have been invited to join the meeting or call by the Host.

To join a Zoom meeting as a Participant, you will need the following information, which you will find in the meeting invite:

- the link to the meeting room,
- the meeting ID number,
- the meeting passcode.

When it is time to join the meeting, click on the link contained in the invitation and enter the meeting ID and passcode when prompted. You will then enter the Waiting Room and the Host will admit you into the meeting.

Zoom tips

Before you join a Zoom call or meeting, it's a good idea to make sure that:

- your camera is working (and that your background is blurred if you don't want others to see behind you)
- the microphone on your device is working so you can be heard
- you have the meeting passcode on hand so you can enter it when prompted to join the meeting. The meeting passcode is sent to you with the meeting invite
- you familiarise yourself with the Zoom controls so you can mute yourself or turn off your camera if required during the meeting.

During a meeting or call, remember not to share personal information if people you don't know are participating. Other tips include:

- Familiarise yourself with the Screen sharing option so that you don't accidentally share your computer's or device's screen.
- Be aware of the Chat function so that you know if you're sending a chat message to an individual or everyone in the meeting.
- Always click the Leave button once you are ready to hang up. This ensures that you are logged out of the call correctly.

E-safety Tip

Always take care when connecting to public Wi-Fi networks, as they are not secure.

To be safe, never do anything on a public Wi-Fi network that needs a username or password or banking details to be entered, for example, online banking, logging in to social media or buying goods online.

E-safety Tip

Always be careful when receiving emails and zoom invitations from someone you don't know or are not expecting. As a general rule, don't click on links contained in suspicious emails.

If you are not sure if the email or invitation is suspicious or not, it's best to show a loved one or friend.

An empowering guide for women ageing on their own terms

In this feature article, we welcome the empowering words of TV celebrity, author and journalist Melissa Doyle. Melissa and her co-author Naima Brown penned this article for The Digest to share with you the secrets of ageing in our own terms and what it can mean for you.

We start ageing from the minute we are born. With time on this earth we learn to talk, walk, laugh and hug. We're older at five than we were at four, older at fifty than we were at twenty. And the more time we have the more we learn, celebrate, love and experience. That's what makes ageing so glorious ... and better than the alternative.

So why do we fear it so much? Why do we talk about it in such negative terms?

Why is ageism having such an insidious impact on the lives of older women, from the multi-billion dollar anti-ageing industry that sells us the idea that our ageing is something to rectify or be ashamed of, to the fact that single women over 50 are the fastest growing cohort of homeless people in Australia?

No two women will age the same. Whether or not a woman has a safe, stable, supported older life is directly related to whether she was safe, stable and supported in her younger life.

There are actions we can take when we're younger to potentially change this trajectory –education, financial literacy, knowing your rights in the workplace. But we also believe there are more conversations society needs to have around ageing - retirement, mortality, relationships, housing security, grief – all necessary if we're going to make lasting positive changes, not just for ourselves but for generations to come.

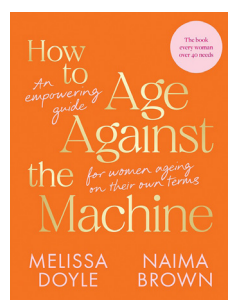
Because after all, older women start out as young girls.

One of the questions we posed in 'How To Age Against the Machine' is "What is the difference between becoming an elder and becoming elderly?" No two women we spoke to answered this question in the same way, and our own answers continue to shift and change as we continue



to learn. But there is a consistent theme that underpins the vast majority of the responses we've heard: Being an elder requires 'ageing in' to your role, while being elderly is a process of 'ageing out.' So how can we identify, create and protect more opportunities for women to age into the role of elder in our communities? In our families? In our workplaces and government institutions? And how can we ensure that women aren't unfairly aged out of these spaces?

And in case you're wondering, the "machine" in the title of our book refers to any person, any institution, anything at all that leads you to believe that there's a right way to age, and that you're doing it wrong. If the external changes that ageing brings are something you want to do something about, go right ahead. Let her amongst us who has never looked in the mirror and thought 'wait a second...' cast the first stone. But, let's not get bogged down in the "war" on wrinkles and grey hair. That's where the machine wants us to focus and spend our time and resources. Instead, let's redirect our outrage away from the mirror and towards the wage gap, towards ageism in the workplace, towards the persistent blind spots in medical research when it comes to women's health, and so much more. Nobody is coming to save us ladies, we have to do it ourselves. And it's never too early, or too late, to start.



How to Age Against the Machine. Hardie Grant 2023



Thank you to our club coordinators!

We wanted to take some time to acknowledge our amazing group of Social Clubs and Guild Clubs coordinators.

Coordinating a War Widows clubs takes a lot of dedication, time and love for our community and organisation. With our Clubs, located all around NSW, our members are able to keep their connections with their peers, remain socially connected and are able to connect with the women they have this strong unspoken bond with.

This edition, we would like to bring the spotlight on and celebrate our oldest club coordinator, Elizabeth Wright. At 102 years old, Mrs Wright has been coordinator of the Chatswood Social Club for over 10 years.

Thank you Mrs Wright and all our Club Coordinators, your time and dedication are a priceless contribution and we could not bring change and support without you. From the bottom of our hearts, THANK YOU! ❤️



We are always looking for assistance with club coordination.

If Mrs Wright has inspired you and you would like to lend a hand to a club in your area or assist our program & Services team in any way, please call Jo on (02) 9267 6577

AUTUMN RECIPE

Chicken, Potato & Fennel Tray Bake

Preparation time: 10 minutes

Cooking time: 40 minutes

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

Tip: Don't like fennel? Substitute with any root vegetable



INGREDIENTS

Olive oil spray

400g potatoes – cut into wedges

1 fennel bulb – cut into wedges

350g skinless chicken thighs (fully trimmed) – cut into thirds

250g cherry tomatoes

2 sprigs of rosemary – leaves picked & roughly chopped

salt & pepper, to taste

METHOD

- 1 Preheat oven to 200°C/fan forced 180°C and spray a large baking dish with oil.
- 2 Add potatoes and fennel in an even layer and nestle chicken and tomatoes evenly on top.
- 3 Spray with oil, scatter over rosemary and season with salt and pepper.
- 4 Bake for 35-40 minutes or until chicken and potatoes are cooked through.
- 5 Divide between plates to serve.

VALE

* Adeline Sweeney, CAMDEN
 * Alice Butler, COFFS HARBOUR
 * Alison Ollivier, MALABAR
 * Alison Woodham, SHELLHARBOUR
 * Audrey Higgins, INVERELL
 * Audrey Griffiths, WEST PYMBLE
 * Audrey Fox, MOLLYMOOK
 * Barbara Carter, ARMIDALE
 * Beryl Peo-Duncan, PALM BEACH
 * Beryl Jolley, SHOALHAVEN HEADS
 * Betty Hoggins, AVALON BEACH
 * Betty Hayward, MACKSVILLE
 * Betty Thompson, ERINA
 * Diana Bland S. WENTWORTHVILLE
 * Dulcie Menzie, NEW NORFOLK
 * Edna Delaney, CONDELL PARK
 * Eileen Cox, TAREE
 * Ella King, WEST TAMWORTH
 * Elma Doyle, MONTEREY
 * Esma Graham, BLACKTOWN
 * Eve Garrett, LILLI PILLI
 * Gloria Corey, HARDEN
 * Gwenda Robertson, DARLING POINT
 * Gwentyth Gibson, KOGARAH
 * Heather Edge, KINGS LANGLEY
 * Helene Suptut, ROCKDALE
 * Janet Cowlshaw, MORUYA
 * Jean Lacey, PORT MACQUARIE
 * Jessie Ayling, INVERELL
 * Joan Wood, ALBURY
 * Joan Grainger, CHESTER HILL
 * Joan Staples, MIRANDA
 * Joan Brigden, NORTHMEAD
 * Joan Garnett, PANANIA

* Joan Davis, MURWILLUMBAH
 * Joan Hurley, ABBOTSFORD
 * Josephine Thompson, HORNSBY
 * Joyce Norris, WOLLSTONECRAFT
 * Joyce Cootes, BELMONT
 * Joyce Walker, VALENTINE
 * Joyce Williams, KINGSGROVE
 * Joyce Lay, MITCHELLS ISLAND
 * Joyce Williams, PORTLAND
 * Judith Payne, REEKARA
 * Keva White, SAPPHIRE BEACH
 * Leila Elstub, JANNALI
 * Lorna Kimpton, WAHROONGA
 * Lynne Mackie, WYOMING
 * Madge Harden, ASHFIELD
 * Margaret Rutter, DRUMMOYNE
 * Margaret Newham, PARKES
 * Marge Ryan, SINGLETON
 * Maria Digby, NORTH RYDE
 * Marion Jackson, NIAGARA PARK
 * Marj Wells, TERRIGAL
 * Marjorie Harris, CHISWICK
 * Marjorie Murphy, STOCKTON
 * Mary Kelly, RANDWICK
 * Meg Nisbet, CROYDON
 * Mollie Cahill, KIAMA
 * Mona Cary, STANWELL PARK
 * Myrtle Vallis, GEORGES PLAINS
 * Nancy Paul, COLLAROY BEACH
 * Nina Hextall, LEICHHARDT
 * Noela Bentley, TEA GARDENS
 * Nola Fuge, BEGA
 * Norma Daley, CHIPPING NORTON
 * Norma Hill, COLLAROY PLATEAU

* Olga Buggy, WENTWORTH
 * Olive Hognio, BARRABA
 * Pamela Cameron, NORTHBRIDGE
 * Pamela Brown, GORDON
 * Patricia Kennedy, PORT MACQUARIE
 * Patricia Smith, WANGI WANGI
 * Patricia Woods, SYLVANIA WATERS
 * Peg Morrison, BALGOWLAH
 * Peggy Thomas, TERREY HILLS
 * Phyllis Watson, WOLLONGONG
 * Phyllis Stewart, PORT MACQUARIE
 * Rona Jarrett, ALBURY
 * Roselyn Mitchell, NARRABEEN
 * Ruby Pitt, GLENFIELD
 * Ruth Gilbert, ARNCLIFFE
 * Sally Woods, NARRABEEN
 * Shirley Boyd, KOGARAH
 * Thelma Holt, KENTHURST
 * Trixie Anderson, ALSTONVILLE
 * Val Town, TUGGERAH
 * Veronica Chapman, DUBBO
 * Wynne Warr WOMBARRA

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

Vale Diana Bland

Diana was an incredible woman who embodied the meaning of service and the War Widows motto, particularly “in serving each other and in sacrificing for our common good that we are finding our true life”. Diana joined the War Widows’ Guild in 1993 following the death of her husband.

Here at AWWNSW, Diana served as Honorary Assistant Secretary from 1997 to 1999 and Honorary Secretary from 1999 to 2006 of Parramatta War Widows’ Guild Club; President’s Representative 2001–2003; Member Director and member of the Finance & Compliance Committee from 2003 to 2009; State President and National Vice President 2006–2009; National Secretary/Treasurer from 2008, and was elected to the National Health Aged & Community Care Forum and was a member of the Australian Veterans’ & Defence Service Council.

Diana was a long-time volunteer on the war widow’s Friendship Line and also made birthday calls to widows over 90 years old, making sure they knew they were never forgotten. She hand wrote Christmas cards to thousands of members, most recently spending an entire day with a team of volunteers and staff in December 2022.

We are fortunate to have had the privilege to have worked and known such an incredible, compassionate and inspirational woman. Rest now Diana, your service is done.

“I have enjoyed many friendships belonging to War Widows and I think this is very important, as members and staff are like our extended family and understand what we have been and [are] going through.” – Diana Bland 1937–2023



Happy birthday to members who have recently celebrated 100 years!

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| • Betty Gehrig,
SANS SOUCI | • WOOLLAHRA |
| • Dulcie Ellis,
RICHMOND | • Grace Wood
MALABAR |
| • Elizabeth Wynn,
BUNDANOON | • Niki Alldritt
STRATHFIELD |
| • Jewell Knight,
CRONULLA | • Dorothy Shilling
WILEY PARK |
| • Louisa Towers
CARDIFF HEIGHTS | • Judy Westcott
EAST LINDFIELD |
| • Eva Clyburn
COLLARROY PLATEAU | • Lona Bower
GOONELLABAH |
| • Mona Sense
KANAHOOKA | • Marjorie Love
SURRY HILLS |
| • Clare Lidgard
CONDELL PARK | • Sheila Hall
KINCUMBER |
| • Muriel Dewberry
REVESBY | • Elizabeth Walsh
MIRANDA |
| • Norma Temens
CARINGBAH SOUTH | • Laurette MacSween
DARLING POINT |
| • Aileen Bailey
PANANIA | • Shirley Curzon
MOUNT RIVERVIEW |
| • Ivy Luscombe | |

Welcome to members who have recently joined

- | | |
|--------------------|------------------|
| ★ Rosina Davies | LAKE INNES |
| ★ Margaret King | SANCTUARY POINT |
| ★ Beverley Inman | SANCTUARY POINT |
| ★ Carol Hope | BELMONT |
| ★ Christine Foster | SOUTH PENRITH |
| ★ Jenny Findlay | YASS |
| ★ Margaret Holley | MANLY VALE |
| ★ Margaret Ashby | NEWPORT |
| ★ Maureen Clayton | ST GEORGES BASIN |
| ★ Maureen Henricus | EPPING |
| ★ Suzanne Hawkes | YASS |
| ★ Suzi McLachlan | WYOMING |
| ★ Valerie Tobin | EMU PLAINS |
| ★ Yvonne Kinsela | BLACKTOWN |

Wishing you a very special Happy birthday!

Veronica (Niki) Alldritt was the 'Birthday Queen' at her 100th birthday celebration on 13 June 2023.

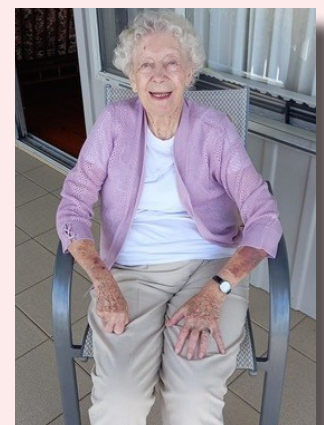
A small party was held for Niki at the aged care centre where she lives. Many flowers, gifts, and cards were presented, including cards from the King and Queen of England, Governor General David and Mrs Hurley, and Prime Minister Anthony Albanese. Niki looked wonderful, congratulations on this milestone birthday Niki!



Beryl Jean Nugent (Montgomerie), pictured here, celebrated her 100th birthday on 11 July 2023.

Beryl is not only a war widow, she is a veteran herself. In 1941, she joined the Australian Imperial Force and was posted in Darwin during WWII, right after the Japanese bombing. Her job was secretary to the Colonel who was in charge of contacting the families of the service men and women who were fighting in Europe who sadly could not return. They were also looking after those displaced after the bombing. She remained in this posting until the end of the war. After the war, she worked in Sydney until she married Allan Hilary Nugent, in 1948.

Allan was also a veteran and served in the Middle East and the Pacific. Beryl's darling husband died in 2010. Beryl credits her long and happy life to her marriage and her three daughters. "I have a large, loving family", she says, "11 grandchildren and 21 great grandchildren". Until she moved to residential care 3 years ago, Beryl attended War Widows



"Aging is just another word for living."

— Cindy Joseph

Assistance with Community Transport

No longer driving and having trouble managing Public Transport?

Contact 'My Aged Care'

<https://www.myagedcare.gov.au/>

Phone: 1800 200 422

When you call, you will be asked a few questions then you will be able to complete an assessment over the phone or in person at your home.

My Aged Care is your portal to services to help you stay safely in your own home.

DV Through Their Eyes – Art & Visual Design Prize

This art competition, organised by Campbelltown Domestic Violence Committee's (CDVC), is an opportunity for everyone to visually communicate ways to address and bring about change, whether it is for an individual, a community, a family, or friends, to end domestic and family violence.

CDVC welcomes works any medium including but not limited to original painting, drawing, photography, digital art, sculpture etc.

Entry is open to people of all ages, both professional and amateur Artists.

Application forms for entry into the Competition are to be submitted in digital form by email

thegenderequityproject@gmail.com

Entry Cost: • Adult: \$35 • Child (14 & under): \$15 • Concession: \$20 All Competition fees are non-refundable

Pensioner Travel Vouchers

A Pensioner Travel Voucher provides free and discounted travel on NSW TrainLink Regional services to eligible pensioners and seniors within NSW.

If you hold a NSW or ACT Pensioner Concession Card or a NSW Veteran Gold Card marked 'war widow' you are entitled to four Pensioner Travel Vouchers each calendar year for travel within regional NSW.

You can use Pensioner Travel Vouchers for free travel on NSW TrainLink Regional services in Economy Class within regional NSW. You can use them for four one-way trips annually or two return trips annually.

If it is your first booking, you will need to register your concession card with NSW TrainLink. You only need to register your concession card once, and you can do this by calling 13 22 32.

Once you've registered your card, you can book online anytime.

You can also book over the phone by calling 13 22 32.

Please remember to carry your concession card when you travel as the onboard crew will need to check it.

AWWNSW Technology drop-in sessions

Our Program & Services team is offering to our members monthly technology drop-in sessions.

Sessions will be held on the **first Wednesday of every month** from **10.30am to 12pm** at our office in Chatswood, NSW.

During those hours, you can come to see us and bring your device and/or your technology questions so the Programs & Services Team can sit with you and help you.

Sessions will be commencing on 6 September 2023 and reoccurring on the first Wednesday of every months. There is no need to register, just come in between 10.30am and 12.00pm.

Any questions, please call (02) 9267 6577.

Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm Unit Citation

Australian Defence Force members who served during the Vietnam War have been recognised with the Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm Unit Citation (the Citation).

The Citation was awarded by the former Government of the Republic of Vietnam (South Vietnam) to military units that distinguished themselves in battle. The Governor-General has formally approved the awarding of the Citation to Australian military units in recognition of their service during the Vietnam War.

To be eligible for the Citation, Navy and Air Force members must have served in Vietnam as part of a unit awarded by the former Government of the Republic of Vietnam or a unit under the operational control of United States Military Assistance Command Vietnam, during the eligible dates. Scan this QR code to find out more on eligibility and how to apply.



Our Space Sydney Luncheon

Our Space is about creating a place that is for you to find them, and each other, a place to connect and build your support network. Our Space first event in Sydney will take place on 16 September and will feature an inspiring guest speaker who is the spouse of a veteran.

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)

Our Motto

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.