

ISSUE 28

INSPIRATIONAL
AUSTRALIAN
WOMAN
RSL MEMBER
AND VOLUNTEER
NATIONAL
AMBASSADOR
CHERISA PEARCE

MELBOURNE LEGACY'S
KEN TSIRIGOTIS

RSL AUSTRALIA

VALE TIM PAGE

CLARE SCOTT AM

OPAN'S CRAIG GEAR

DR NORMAN SWAN

MARK BUTLER

AMANDA RISHWORTH

THE LAST POST

KEEPING THE ANZAC SPIRIT ALIVE FOR AUSTRALIA'S
VETERANS AND THEIR SUPPORTERS

The Last Post Story

Through bloodlines, The Last Post magazine started at Gallipoli. Its acorn then fought with the 2/10th in Milne Bay, Buna and Balikpapan and trekked the Kokoda in WW2. By the late-sixties, The Last Post magazine was ready to be born.

Raymond Thorsby Ross, who had fought in PNG and the son of Joseph Thorsby Ross, who had fought at Gallipoli, leased a small office in George Street, Sydney. Raymond had decided that a small magazine, designed to help RSLs and their members, should be introduced in New South Wales. To do this he would need advertising to help pay printing and distribution costs. Daily, Raymond would take the train from suburban Chatswood to the city and phone local businesses and sporting clubs, asking for their support. This ex-digger and RSL member worked long hours to get each edition out and was effectively the magazine's editor, graphic designer and distributor.

In 1974, Raymond and his partner moved to Scarborough in suburban Perth and continued The Last Post in Western Australia until his death in 1983.

Twenty-eight years later, Raymond's son and Joseph's grandson, Gregory Thorsby Ross brought his father's magazine back to life. Greg had lived with his father as a 15-year old, when he started working as a copy-boy and cadet journalist at The Sydney Morning Herald. The teenager became a first-hand observer of the early days of the ex-servicemen and women's publication. By 2011 he had put everything in place to re-introduce The Last Post to a public in desperate need of a modern, quality magazine to assist the veteran community. Only this time it would be a national. And this time, it would be for all Australians.

With this humble background, and from a history steeped in the Anzac tradition, the new national TLP was born and is now respected and read by not only Australian veterans but the wider global community.

Featuring profiles on contemporary and historical veteran issues as well as honourable Australians, organisations, institutions and companies, TLP has matured to be Australia's most recognised independent online and print veteran magazine.

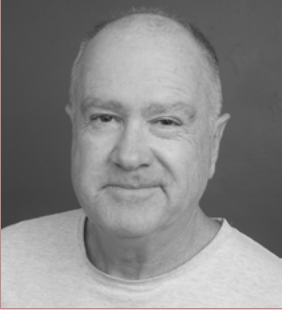
Acclaimed for its quality and journalism The Last Post is unlike any veteran's magazine seen before.

The reason?

It speaks to all Australians as a reminder that the legacy of the Anzac Spirit is relevant to us all.

With editor Greg T Ross' up-close interviews with famous Australians, stunning layout and production and input from great writers covering relevant topics in history, music, arts, entertainment, sport, travel, gardening, this magazine is so well received by a wide audience that reaches far beyond the veteran community.

Pte Raymond Thorsby Ross, founder of the original The Last Post, left, during his time with the 2/10th in Papua New Guinea during WW2.



from the publisher **GREG T ROSS**

So, here we are, 11-years after The Last Post first hit the streets and went online.

How do you describe a journey of such complexity? What stories and events highlight the journey? Was it the meeting at a pub in Adelaide, with an industry insider in 2010, when I plucked up the courage to ask how much it would cost to start up a national magazine from ground zero? Was it the serendipitous meeting with Kirstie Wyatt, a graphic artist who has been my right-hand woman since 2009? Was it the death of my wife Wendy, in 2017? Was it the moving from Adelaide, back to NSW? Was it the friends I have made along the way? All of the above.

As we prepare to welcome Issue 28, the same things that existed at the start, still exist today. The stress before each release. The exaltation at the happening. The brief break. A deep breath and back into it again for the next edition.

So, here we are. RSL, Royal Commission into Veteran + Defence Suicide, Inspirational Australian Women, Australian Veteran News, Legacy Melbourne's Chief Operating Officer, Ken Tsirigotis, Mark Butler, Amanda Rishworth, Geoff Brock, Pancare Foundation's Unite for Hope, OPAN's Craig Gear, Archie Roach, the 80th Anniversary of The Battle of Milne Bay, a battle in which my father took part. Ahead of a tribute edition to him in our Summer edition, a report on the death of legendary photographer Tim Page. In Travel, we go to Italy.

This and more in our 11th birthday edition. Hoping you enjoy.

I'm taking a brief break, to Melbourne and Broome. Tomorrow, I'll start packing my bags.

#thelastpostmagazine
#diaryofanindependentpublisher

Greg



This edition's Inspirational Australian Woman is RSL member and volunteer National Ambassador Cherisa Pearce.

foreword

Geoff Brock MP

Minister for Veterans' Affairs, SA



I'd like to start by extending my thanks and deep gratitude to those readers who have served our nation, as well as their families. The sacrifices you have made to enable Australians to enjoy our way of life will always be remembered. Thank you for your service.

Since becoming the South Australian Minister for Veterans' Affairs in March 2022, I have had the privilege of meeting many people from our community and I have learned a great deal about the needs and priorities of South Australian veterans and their families.

Military service and the veteran community have long held a very important place in my life and that of my family. I am the son of a World War Two veteran and brother to a Vietnam veteran. I served in the Army Reserve for approximately six years, first in Port Pirie and then in Port Adelaide. My time in the reserves helped instil the values of respect, discipline, self-confidence, and experience in how to overcome adversity and trust in your mates.

The 2021 Census data released in June this year, revealed that at least 3.2 per cent (47,852) of South Australia's population are currently or have previously served in the Australian Defence Force. My team continues to review this data, which is invaluable in enabling the government to implement targeted policies and programs to support the veteran community.

I am aware that there is a broad spectrum of topics of importance to the South Australian veteran population that varies based on service experience, age, gender and connection to service. The Veterans SA Strategic Outlook sets out our aims for a strong, vibrant, well-supported and represented veteran community in South Australia. The plan will continue to evolve with the needs of the community.

You will find a summary of the current priorities and initiatives being undertaken for the South Australian Veterans' Affairs portfolio on page 24 of this issue. There is a strong focus on empowering our former-serving community and educating the wider non-veteran community about the value that those who have served can contribute professionally and socially.

If you would like to discuss these priorities, or any other topics of importance, please reach out to my team at Veterans SA.

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FRONT COVER:

Cherisa Pearce, RSL member and volunteer National Ambassador, is this edition's Inspirational Australian Woman.



designer / art director KIRSTIE WYATT

The Last Post Magazine has been praised nationally and internationally since it was launched in 2011 and is designed by Kirstie Wyatt from Wyatt Creative. Kirstie is a freelance graphic and web designer and can enhance your marketing to get the results you want in your business.

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RSL
Australia



foreword

Phil Winter
CEO of RSL Australia

The year of 2022 continues to be marked by a highly challenging geo-strategic environment, with the security of our nation emerging as a key focus amidst tensions with China, global effects from the war in Ukraine and urgent reviews of the preparedness of our Defence Force. The RSL motto – ‘the price of peace is eternal vigilance’ is as relevant now as ever in the nation’s history. To that end, our RSL colleagues will note RSL Australia’s (RSLA) increasing input into the national security dialogue through media alerts and discussions with Government.

Similarly, the RSL continues to play a key role in assisting the Royal Commission and supporting veterans who provide evidence. The Commission is seeking clarity on the number of ex-service organisations (ESOs) and their roles, which provides an opportunity for more collaboration between RSLA and other ESOs. Recently, the CEOs of the RSL met to discuss the next phases of the Royal Commission and how the organisation may assist the Royal Commission and all veterans going forward - further plans will emerge from this meeting. Already in planning is a pilot program to launch an innovative ‘catalogue of services’ web application to assist veterans and families navigate local support services. This is just one example of the new solutions RSL is pursuing.

RSL National office continues its quest to better connect and coordinate the RSL State Branches, and provide strategic-level advocacy for all RSL members, through sound analysis of policy issues and improved communications. We have already achieved a lot in this space through an updated website, stronger social media presence, regular media alerts and newsletters. Visit our website at www.rslaustralia.org to see all the resources available and subscribe to our quarterly newsletter.

We continue to invest a lot into our RSL National level programs, including the RSL Veterans’ Employment Program, Mental Health Initiative and RSL Active, which aims to engage the community through sport, arts and recreational activities.

I have greatly enjoyed the challenges presented over the past 20 months in the role of CEO of RSLA – with more changes in planning to ensure the RSL remains a highly relevant stakeholder in the Australian landscape and the trusted voice of veterans and their families. Visitors to Canberra are always welcome at the RSL National office.



Q & A with Greg Melick RSL National President

National President Greg Melick recently sat down with *The Last Post* to provide his thoughts on the role of the RSL, the challenges the organisation faces and his vision for the future of the League.

THE ROLE OF THE RSL TODAY

The RSL remains committed to its objectives as laid out in the Constitution, with our focus remaining, as ever, on providing comradeship and supporting the well-being of veterans and their families. Our role as advocates for issues and policies that support Defence and veterans' welfare is also central to our work today. The federated model of the League supports our efforts in engaging at all levels of government as we have established relationships with elected representatives across all states and territories. This puts us in a unique position to effectively lobby for positive change.

THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES FACING THE RSL & HOW THEY WILL BE MET

The lack of coordination across the plethora of veteran support and ex-service organisations (ESOs) is resulting in the duplication of resources and the dilution of everyone's efforts. It also causes confusion in the veteran community for those trying to determine who they should reach out to for the support they need. To try and better coordinate our efforts, we are organising a national forum in November 2022 where ESOs can come together to try and define common goals and ways of working that will achieve the best outcome for veterans.

In a further bid to reduce complexity for veterans and families seeking support, the RSL is backing the development of a new web application designed to help veterans navigate the range of services and support available. The web application, which is due to launch later this year, will empower veterans and their families to find and connect with vital services wherever they may be in Australia.

Also highlighted through the work by the Royal Commission into Defence

and Veteran Suicide is the lack of sufficient mental health support and services, leading to a disproportionate rate of self-harm and suicide in our community. We will continue to support reputable organisations providing much-needed mental health support services. Our recent Mental Health Initiative delivered in partnership with Open Arms, offered a range of free mental health first aid and suicide prevention workshops in Sub Branches across Australia supporting hundreds of participants. In our advocacy role, we continue to challenge the legislative complexity and budgetary constraints at a Federal Government level, lobbying for sustainable demand-driven funding of the services most in need. Our strong relationships with the Department of Veterans' Affairs and other ESOs assist us in these efforts.

A VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF THE RSL

For the League to continue to provide value and practical support to the veteran community, we must understand what the modern veteran looks like, wants and needs. To help us in this pursuit, we are currently planning a nationwide survey to capture insights that will guide us on how we need to evolve to meet the needs of the broader veteran community.

One priority is to improve how we engage younger veterans. RSL Australia is investing more into developing its social media presence across multiple platforms to meet the next generation of members where they are.

The future of the RSL depends on all veterans feeling welcomed into the League's community and understanding the comradeship and other benefits that membership can provide. We also recognise that a veteran isn't a standalone unit but often has a family that needs to be

welcomed and supported. We are attempting to build this sense of community through programs like RSL Active, which promotes various social and recreational events that unite people through shared interests. We are also striving to be as inclusive as possible and expand our definition of veterans by investigating ways that we can embrace those who have supported our Defence forces in foreign theatres of conflict and now call Australia home.

We will be increasing our efforts to engage the government on strategic defence issues to overcome, amongst other things, the lack of sufficient defence funding, the perilous state of our strategic fuel and ammunition reserves and the lack of local manufacturing capability for items as critical as uniforms and ammunition.

WHAT THE RSL OFFERS AND ITS CURRENT PROGRAMS

Comradery, community and mateship are the key drivers of what we do at the RSL and they underpin the range of programs we currently offer. While these vary across the States, key national programs include RSL Active and the RSL Veterans' Employment Program.

The RSL Veterans' Employment Program is helping veterans, their immediate family members, and the families of current serving ADF personnel to find rewarding jobs by offering a range of career services including career navigation, upskill pathways, CV and Interview training and employer connections..

The program is currently funded by DVA and we hope to continue the program and continue to realise benefits for those who participate.

Importantly, these programs extend to veterans' family members as do the range of tertiary level scholarships we offer to students across Australia.

Sign up to receive regular newsletter updates from RSL's National President:
www.rslaustralia.org



RSL Active

Since its early establishment in 1916, one of RSL's core functions has been to build supportive communities and promote the well-being of our veterans and their families. 106 years on, RSL continues to seek new ways to achieve this goal.

While we know regular and varied exercise is good for our physical health, it's more than that. Not only does regular exercise boost our dopamine levels (leading to improved mood and motivation), but pursuing an active sport can strengthen our community connections too. As we join clubs, teams and events alongside those who share similar interests we develop meaningful social connections which are both motivating and great for our emotional well-being.

In a nutshell, getting out, getting moving and pursuing a passion does wonders for your well-being on multiple levels.

With this in mind, RSL Active has set out to find and promote a variety of opportunities around Australia that encourage veterans of all ages and their communities to get active. Here are a few of the programs we're supporting under the RSL Active banner:



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*For runners, walkers
and cyclists*

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RSL
Australia



RSL Strava Clubs:

RSL Active has created a virtual Club for Cyclists and Runners/Walkers using the popular Strava App. For those who haven't heard of it, this savvy app will track your route, distance, time, elevation and average speed... each time you head out for an active session.

Joining our Strava Clubs will connect you with a like-minded community where you can share goals, offer encouragement and participate in friendly challenges - all while keeping fit! It is surprisingly motivating.

rslaustralia.org/rsl-strava-club



Long Ride Australia 2022:

About to embark on its 11th biennial tour, the Long Ride Australia was established in 2004 by RAAF veteran Chris Dunne and his wife Gail. This long distance ride is all about bringing bike enthusiasts together to enjoy the scenery, sociability and freedom of open road touring, with a purpose. On Saturday, 22nd of October, groups will depart from every state in Australia, all riding towards the common meet-up at Victor Harbor, SA.

RSL Australia is proud to sponsor this charitable event which attracts a large contingent of veterans. Every dollar raised goes back to the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia

rslaustralia.org/long-ride-2022



Michael Fussell Memorial Charity Day:

This event is a little different from the norm. Michael Fussell (1983 – 2008) was a member of the Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery and lost his life when an IED detonated while he was serving in Afghanistan. RSL Australia is proud to be supporting this Rugby and Netball tournament, which brings together two of Mike's passions; life growing up playing competitive sport in Armidale and his military career which all began at the Royal Military College Duntroon. On the 8th of October the Armidale Blues Club will play the RMC-Duntroon at Portsea Oval. All funds raised through the day will go to the RSL Foundation to support veterans in need. Find out more:

rslaustralia.org/michael-fussell-memorial



Learn more about the programs RSL Active has to offer:
www.rslaustralia.org/rsl-active

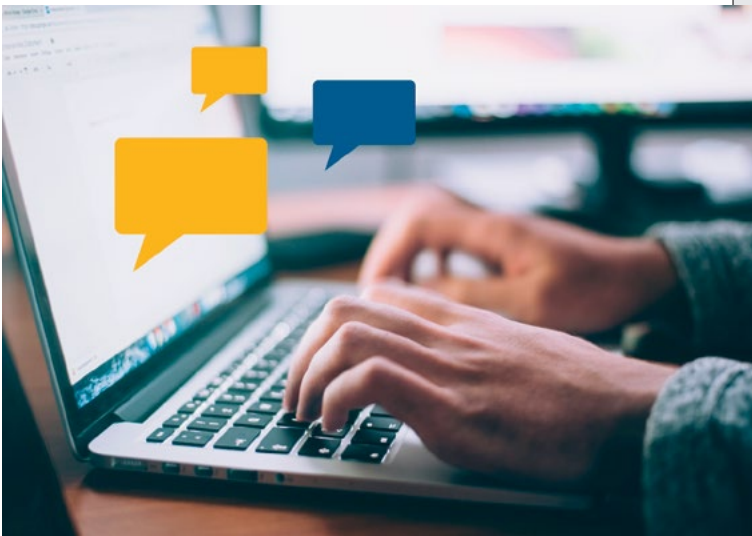
RSL National Programs

RSL Veterans' Employment Program

Our national employment program, funded by the Australian Government, sets out to help veterans and their immediate family members find a rewarding job. Regardless of one's age, stage or the type of work they are seeking, the RSL Veterans' Employment Program (RVEP) can support participants through a range of free career services. This includes pathway coaching, updating a CV for the current market, interview preparation, employer connections, and support in finding suitable upskill programs.

In the first six months of 2022, the Employment Program was proud to support over 300 participants in the program. If you or someone you know would benefit from our support, please get in touch:

rslaustralia.org/employment



Streamlining the path to support

Amongst many issues raised through the Royal Commission, it is apparent that the pathway to finding the right support for Veterans is complex, confusing and can fail those most in need. We believe a nationwide navigation tool that guides users through a network of reputable support services would help alleviate some of these challenges. To address this, RSL Australia has commenced a 12month pilot program with Australian Veteran technology provider Servulink to develop an online "Catalogue of Services" web and app tool. As the first of its kind, the user-friendly tool will empower veterans and their families to find and access the services, support and communities they need to improve their lives. The application is expected to launch in late October 2022.

We encourage established ex-service organisations (ESOs) to register their services here:

servulink.com.au

RSL VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

Rewarding work for every veteran and their immediate family



Looking for work? Changing careers?
Take advantage of free career support services and gain access to our employer network.

Make your move today: rslaustralia.org/employment



-  CAREER TRANSITION
-  CAREER NAVIGATION
-  CAREER COACHING
-  CV & COVER LETTERS
-  INTERVIEW SKILLS
-  PATHWAY PROGRAMS TO UPSKILL
-  EMPLOYER CONNECTIONS



RSL
Australia



Australian Government
Department of Veterans' Affairs

The Royal Commission and how the RSL is supporting change

On the 11th of August, the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide released its Interim Report, with the final report's release extended until the 17th of June 2024.



The interim report focuses on 13 urgent recommendations that can be addressed immediately, including calling for legislative reform to simplify veterans' access to entitlements, measures aimed at reducing the DVA claims backlog, and improving engagement with the Royal Commission. The Commission has proposed additional protection for those engaging with the Royal Commission and reforms to improve access to information.

The RSL has publicly voiced its support of the Commission's call for the Australian Government and Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) to take urgent and immediate steps to fix problems with the processing of claims for veterans. It wants to see adequate and sustainable funding committed to addressing these issues. This is a position that the RSL has highlighted from the outset of the Royal Commission process and is pleased to see its inclusion in these key recommendations.

It is clear the important and insightful work conducted by the Commission is shedding light on many issues that have not been given the focus, funding, or priority they deserve. With formalised and evidence-based recommendations now in the public domain, the RSL is committed to seeing these recommendations implemented and will work to hold those responsible accountable.

What RSL is doing

The RSL has had representatives in all six hearings held to date to ensure it gathers first-hand insights on the evidence being presented, sentiment in the room and reoccurring themes. With contributions from its State Branches and Sub Branches the RSL produced an initial submission at the start of the Commission, followed by an interim submission in June 2022 to help inform the Commissioners recommendations.

Information on the RSL submissions can be found: rslaustralia.org/royal-commission

As the process continues, RSL Australia has been working with State Branches to collectively introduce solutions aimed at addressing some of the issues already highlighted through the Royal Commission. One of these projects is about reducing the complexity that veterans and their families encounter trying to access the right support channels. To address this, RSL Australia has commenced a 12month pilot program with veteran technology provider Servulink to develop an online "Catalogue of Services" web application. This will enable veterans and their families to navigate the service and support network more effectively. It is expected to launch in late October 2022.

Other initiatives underway include:

- Helping to expand the nationwide network of Veteran Wellbeing Centres which are welcoming hubs where veterans and their families, can connect to a range of services including transition, employment, health and social support
- Supporting veterans and their immediate family members to find rewarding work through the RSL Veterans' Employment Program
- The RSL Mental Health Initiative delivered in partnership with Open Arms, has provided family members, support workers and associates of veterans access to free mental health and suicide prevention workshops

While there was little discussion on the role of Ex-Service Organisations (ESOs) in the interim report, the RSL recognises improvements that can and need to be made in the ESO sector. The RSL plans to establish a forum later this year that brings together stakeholders from across the ESO ecosystem. This will provide an opportunity for the sector that exists to serve the needs of veterans and their families, to collectively work together in a way that better fulfils this purpose.

Calling for guaranteed need-based funding that transcends political cycles

The RSL has experienced a record year in demand for support, representation, and service delivery, with more than \$13.3 million spent on welfare service delivery. In the past 12 months, the RSL has provided close to 600,000 hours of advocacy, close to 500,000 hours of work supporting veterans' claims for compensation and more than 100,000 hours of veteran welfare services. These figures emphasise the current reliance on services provided by organisations like the RSL.

The reality is that the demand for veteran services has risen dramatically, and it is the responsibility of the Australian Government to meet this demand. The Albanese Government has committed to spending an additional \$500 million on veterans' welfare, and this commitment is a welcome start. However, to supplement the ongoing reliance on ex-service organisations and volunteers, the Federal Government must commit to providing guaranteed and sustainable needs-based funding. This funding must be demand-driven and not held prisoner to annual budgets or three-year election cycles.

There is an urgent need for long-term solutions and certainty to resolve the many serious issues and concerns confronting veterans, service personnel and their families. Without this sort of funding commitment, we are likely to see the type of stop-gap measures that have contributed to the unacceptable backlog in the processing of veteran claims and a continuing reliance on the goodwill and hard work of ESOs and volunteers. The RSL is working hard to lobby Government to commit to these changes. Regardless of where the Minister for Veterans' Affairs sits in the Government's ministry structure, we cannot waver on ensuring the changes are clearly understood and prioritised by the Government.

Through the Royal Commission and a new Government, we are presented with a unique opportunity to change the face of veterans' affairs in Australia. With a united RSL working in collaboration with other ESOs, we can hold the Government accountable and help implement the change recommended and needed to improve the lives of veterans and their families. By doing so, we honour the covenant between the Australian people and those who have served and sacrificed so much on their behalf.

Cherisa Pearce



Cherisa Pearce is full of enthusiasm and passion for bettering the lives of veterans. Her impressive military career began at 21 years of age, involved three deployments to Timor Leste and spanned over 21 years, retiring as Second in Command of the Royal Military College.

As the 5th generation to serve in her family, daughter of a Vietnam Vet, and with a currently serving partner, Cherisa is well informed on the issues facing the veteran community and their families.

In mid-2021, RSL Australia invited Cherisa to become their National Ambassador alongside Pete Rudland.

As a volunteer National Ambassador, Cherisa works within communities to inspire younger members to join the league, liaises with other ex-serving organisations and seeks a broader perspective on veterans' issues.

PODCASTS: www.thelastpostmagazine.com/tlp-interviews

Greg T Ross: Welcome to The Last Post Cherisa Pearce, how are you?

Cherisa Pearce: I'm well thank you, and yourself?

GTR: Yeah, doing well here. A lot of people know you as CJ, so we'll refer to you as CJ during the chat, and geez, you're full on, aren't you? I mean, you're an RSL member obviously, and you're national ambassador and I guess what has driven you to the position that you're at at the moment? What drives you?

CP: Well, I suppose is my passion for making sure veterans are being looked after, are living the best life that they possibly can. If I can get out there and be an advocate for those people, as well as having the platform to share their stories, well that's a win-win for me.

GTR: Your career. I guess it began... I guess over 20 years ago. You had three deployments to Timor-Leste, and I guess, how did that affect your attitude towards serving and what was that like?

CP: Well, when I joined up, I joined up in mid '94, actually three days before I turned 21. I didn't have your average 21st birthday with a big party and a few drinks. It was quite a different experience. And when I joined up, we were in a peacetime army. For me, I never thought that I could deploy or do anything like that, but I came from a military background so it just seemed like a really normal progression for me. My younger brother joined at 16, both my Mum and Dad had served in the army and my grandfather was a Navy

man and then great grandparents had also served. So it seemed like a logical thing to do. And my younger brother, he was doing such amazing, interesting things as an 18 year old, and here I was only 20 and was a legal secretary at the time doing the same thing day and out.

And I just thought, you know what? I need a bit of adventure. I don't want that boring nine to five job. I want to be able to mix up, do different things, meet different people, live in different places. So that's why I joined. I graduated in December '95, and I initially went to medical corp, but after 18 months I transferred to corps transport and had a great career after that. I was fortunate enough to go to East Timor in '99 when things first kicked off with the fifth aviation regimen. They had been there for about a month before I got there, so that was interesting. And then I went back seven months later and spent another six months over there. And by that stage, things had calmed down a little bit when the UN had taken over, so that was a different job in itself.

I was a transport troop commander and had 75 soldiers whose job basically was to take all the logistics, ammunition, food, fuel, all across the islands, which was great. We got to see a whole lot of East Timor. That was a fabulous trip. I worked with some amazing people there and also we had different countries who would come and protect us, like the Brazilian MPs would always escort us down to the border and whatnot. Yeah, that was really good. And then thought that would be the end of my deployments, but I went

back in 2006 for another six months and was the J14 which is basically personnel logistics for the force. And again, I think that would probably, when I look at all three of them, where I learnt a lot and had a lot of growth and actually we were over there when I suppose they called it the bumble in the jungle that people... The papers were doing in that early 2007, and that was probably when I saw all the training that these people were doing and amazingly coming together, but working very hard. Yeah, I got to see a lot more than what you do, obviously, when you're a lieutenant and a captain, but being on the headquarters and working again with different people and different agencies. And that deployment, I had left a two year old and three year old at home for six months as well, so that added another element to it. I think it's easier leaving them when they're little, rather than when they're older.

GTR: You were playing a role in a very important time in not only the region's history, but obviously with Timor-Leste and Australia, and a conflict that attracted so much attention at the time, I suppose, because it was so close to Australia. You retired as, what was it, second in command, I think, at the Royal Military College? That's some achievement.

CP: I was really excited to receive that posting. I knew I was on my way out at that stage. I was medically discharged and to go back and book in my career of where it started was to me a really awesome opportunity.

And also just seeing all these young people coming through the college and seeing what they were changing 18 months later, you always reflected on your own journey when you went through there and things hadn't changed all that much, but yeah, it was a fascinating job. I loved every minute of it just to mentor the young cadets and seeing them grow was definitely a huge career highlight.

GTR: Yes, when we look back during periods of our life and we see younger versions of ourself perhaps coming through it's a moment of pausing and reflecting as to the journey you've been on yourself. But of course, discharged in 2015, is that correct?

CP: Yeah, that's right. Yes.

GTR: You joined the Currumbin Palm Beach RSL up there in Queensland, of course. And you become a board member of the sub branch. What actually does that involve for you there and what are the benefits of being a board member?

CP: Well, I am so proud to be a part of that sub branch. Currumbin Palm Beach are very progressive and they have a very proud history and our Dawn Service is the one that's televised by sunrise each year on Anzac Day, which I've been a part of the last few years. But they have listened. That sub branch for me... I wasn't a board member... I've only been a board member for about two years. And I had a conversation with the vice president probably three years ago. I had all these ideas and he said, "Well, why don't you come on the board?" And I said, "Well, I can't. You hold them on a Friday afternoon. I work then, I can't just take off." And I said, "Well, when you have them on a Saturday, I'll come." And so I got a phone call six months later and they said, "We've moved it to a Saturday so are you going to come put your hand up?"

Yeah. So I did. And I joined this amazing board of people who just want to do good things for veterans and provide excellent opportunities to ease the transition into civilian life. And we have many, many programs operating. And so we meet on a monthly basis. We obviously are, like I said, we have the Dawn Service. Yesterday we commemorated Vietnam Veterans Day where we had a beautiful service. We had a Huey helicopter come flying down the creek during the service, which was amazing. And I got to interview a soldier who was wounded over in Vietnam and he shared with us his story. And then I had the pleasure of meeting Dasher Wheatley, VC, winner; his widow and his son. And I spent the afternoon talking to them and learning about their experiences when they lost their husband and father.

And to be able to give them that opportunity to hear history first hand,

I just felt so fortunate. And I now have that little bit of history that I wouldn't have got if I wasn't a board member. And I just get to keep meeting these inspiring people that tell me a story. And I say, "Well, what would you do differently now? Or what have you learned?" And I get to take that information then back and hopefully we don't repeat the same mistakes.

GTR: And that's very important too, when you are learning from people or when you're meeting people who are actually effectively part of history, and then you absorb that into yourself and it becomes part of your learning process in life too, so well said. In 2021, I think it was, correct me if I'm wrong, RSL Australia invited you to become what national ambassador, I think with Pete Rutland. And so-

CP: That's right.

GTR: Was that a surprise, and what was your reaction to that invitation?

CP: Oh, I was extremely surprised because I was approached by Pete on Anzac Day last year and I hadn't met Pete before that. I knew of him. And then obviously seen his successes over time and knew of his story. And he came up and introduced and we had a bit of a chat and he said, "Hey, I've got a proposal for you. Would you like to work with me and be an RSL Australia Ambassador? And I was extremely honored and tickled pink to be honest with you because the RSL is the oldest ESO out there. And we have a very proud history. I think we got a little bit lost for a few years there, but certainly in the last three, four years, things are coming together and we're understanding how we need to be more relevant to our veterans and more importantly, to their families.

And I think everyone gets bad press now and then but what we have done is we've learnt from that. We've come together, we've regrouped. The states have learnt as well. And I'm very proud to do work with RSL Queensland as well. So I think for me to actually share the developments that we have had was a great opportunity. Because I am so proud to be a member of the RSL and every time I get a member to join up or bring them to an RSL or a commemorative event, or even just march on Anzac Day for the very first time, for me there's no better reward than seeing that and saying, "Oh my gosh, I had a great day." I met someone yesterday and it was this first commemorative service he's been to since coming back from Vietnam. And he had a wonderful day and said, "I'll be back on Anzac Day." So to see that, very rewarding.

GTR: Actually you speak about the RSL and there has been... I mean, I've been hands on with the RSL ever since the magazine started, and

there has been a rejuvenation led in various areas, which is noticeable to me running the magazine. And I think it's been welcomed by the community of Australia because it is the oldest obviously established representation of veterans. And it's now having some success in incorporating younger people, notably yourself, into its regions and into its enacting of policy if you like, and changing policy, so well done there. You are also a sporty person I do believe, and into the fluro surfing, what's that about?

CP: Yeah, well I'm sporty when I'm not with an injury or something going wrong with me. We get around that. But yes, the fluro community is a part of OneWave, which is a nonprofit organization founded in Bondi by a gentleman called Grant. He suffered from bipolar and had a severe breakdown one day. And he found that when he went surfing and talking to his mates about his mental health, it got him through another day and through another week. And he found himself really looking forward to connecting with people and telling his story while he was sitting out on the surfboard waiting for a wave.

I was a little bit lost after getting out of the military and wanted to give back to the community. I think that's one thing any defense member will tell you is that sense of service stays with you throughout your lifetime. I did a bit of Googling and then I got this email from... Just a random spam email, talking about OneWave and how that they were located on beaches all across Australia and even the world. I think we've got 15 plus countries represented now. The aim is that we, usually on a Friday, but with us being on the border here and having different time zones with New South Wales and Queensland, we meet up every single Saturday at Greenmount beach and we get dressed up in fluro and we basically all surf together as a small little community.

Everyone's welcome. It doesn't matter if you're a surfer or not a surfer, if you just enjoy the ocean and the atmosphere, but we're there rain, hail or shine, just supporting each other, creating that connection for the community, which is really important. And COVID has certainly found that people being disconnected and feeling a bit lost, but they knew. We started an online OneWave community, which is something that I was wanting to do for a long while when I couldn't get to the beach for different reasons, and then COVID happened, so we did that. One wave is all it takes. And the concept, obviously you need that one good wave and it doesn't even have to be a good one, but one wave can change your whole outlook on your day.

GTR: Yes, that's true too.

CP: There's been plenty times, I've been out just for 30 minutes and caught that riff of a wave and you just go, wow, this is awesome. And you get that smile on your face and you can see it. We have regularly about 20 people come down now every Saturday and it's amazing. And then popping up at different clubs like Bondi is awesome.

GTR: Isn't that beautiful. And of course being a surfer myself, although I haven't been for too long, but I've got to get back into it, as you say, you go out for a session and you count the waves. It's one, I've got one, I've got two, I've got three, whatever. It doesn't matter because it's even just being out there and having a good time.

CP: Yeah. I mean, so many times in the mornings I've gone out and there might not be any waves, it might be like a lake. But just sitting out there to see the sun popping up. And I often say to my daughters, and they say, "How was the surf?" I said, "I didn't get away. But I saw the sun coming up on one side, the moon going down and there's dolphins out the back. I mean, how much better can life get?" And I just feel so grateful and so blessed to have that opportunity to do that every single day.

GTR: Fantastic stuff. And it is recommended too, as a health, both mentally and physically, it's a wonderful thing.

CP: Absolutely.

GTR: Tell us a little bit about the partnership with RSL Queensland and the Gold Coast Suns, CJ. What's happened there?

CP: Well, they started a partnership earlier in the year and it was launched on Anzac Day. The Suns were gracious enough to host a whole heap of veterans the day before Anzac Day to watch their Anzac round game against Brisbane. And it was just, I think, for them to respect or acknowledge the service that our defense people have provided and their families. So it was an amazing partnership. And I was fortunate to meet some of the players at the announcement and they were just... Here we are in awe of the captain and the coach and thinking they're really cool. And they had the similar respect so it was quite funny to see that. But it's a great partnership and we get quite a few veterans to each game now, and Suns are great to provide some tickets here and there and when they get the opportunity, and yeah, it was an amazing experience to be a part of that

announcement.

Being an AFL tragic anyway, so it was pretty good. Oh, I said I'm an AFL tragic growing up in Adelaide, always followed Adelaide Crows. But now that I'm on the Gold Coast, I'm definitely Sun's for number one.

GTR: Oh, isn't that interesting? Yeah. I'm from Adelaide. I was born in Adelaide too. And yeah, we lived around Mitcham and Kingswood and that. Yeah, but don't hate me, but Port Adelaide and Collingwood. So there you go.

CP: Oh dear. There has to be some fault, right Greg?

GTR: Yeah. We've all got our problems. That's for sure. Look, Cherisa Pearce, CJ to friends and those that know you, thank you so much for being part of this wonderful interview chat, as part of our Inspirational Australian Women's series. And yeah, we are so rapped to hear about what you are doing, what the RSL's doing, your history, your family's history, and we honor you and thank you very much for your community work.

CP: Well, thank you very for letting me be part of this. It was a huge privilege for me. Thank you. ■

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Veteran News

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Army's LTCOL Russ Lowes lays a wreath at the funeral of an unknown Australian WW1 soldier at Tyne Cot Cemetery in Zonnebeke, Belgium. Photo: SGT Adam Richards.

Unknown Australian WW1 soldier laid to rest in Belgium

The Australian Army has laid to rest an unknown Australian World War I soldier with a military funeral today at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's Tyne Cot Cemetery in Zonnebeke, Belgium.

Believed to have fought in the Battle of Menin Road in 1917, the unknown soldier's remains were discovered in 2017 by archaeologists near Zonnebeke and were identified as Australian.

As part of Army's ongoing commitment to remember our fallen soldiers, the unknown soldier was honoured with today's military funeral and burial, and a dedicated Last Post Ceremony yesterday at the Menin Gate.

The funeral was supported by a group of Army members recently awarded the Jonathan Church Good Soldiering Award for their embodiment of Army values. The group is representing Army for a series of ceremonial activities at war cemeteries in France and Belgium throughout July.

Chief of Army Lieutenant General Simon Stuart, AO, DSC, honoured the courage and sacrifice of those

who served in the World War I and the importance of Army's work to honour our military's past.

"Australian Army's Jonathan Church Good Soldiering Award recipients are our future leaders who personify compassionate and ethical soldiering," Lieutenant General Stuart said.

"Today's funeral is a reminder that we all owe a debt of gratitude to those who have served our nation, and it is a genuine and rare honour for our serving soldiers to lay to rest this unknown soldier," he said.

"Army's commitment to identifying our fallen soldiers is an important duty, and our ongoing work continues to identify unknown World War I soldiers and bring peace to their families."

The Australian Military Representative to NATO and the European Union,

Major General Matthew Hall, attended the funeral and said it was an opportunity to reflect on the enormous sacrifice of our World War I soldiers.

"Today was a very special opportunity to reflect on Australia's history and sacrifice in this region, and a reminder of our long and continuing role in partnering with Europe to provide global security," Major General Hall said.

"As we fought alongside our European partners during World War I, we continue to stand by them today, honouring our fallen soldiers 105 years on."

The Jonathan Church Good Soldiering Award is awarded annually to junior soldiers who personify compassionate and ethical soldiering. The award is named in honour of Trooper Jonathan Church and his actions in Rwanda in 1995. ■

Further information about the Jonathan Church awards: <https://news.defence.gov.au/service/embodiment-good-soldiering> Department of Defence, Canberra, ACT

RSL Remembrance Ride

In May a group of committed veteran cyclists successfully completed the RSL Remembrance Ride. Lead by Geoff Stokes (President of RSL Cooma-Monaro Sub-branch and Invictus Games competitor), the group undertook a 15-day ride across the iconic 920km Mawson Trail in South Australia.

The trail traversed Flinders Range (South Australia's largest mountain range), providing spectacular scenery and at times some very rugged terrain. Each day the group rode between 40km to 90 km and by night they camped in transit towns along the trail.

At each destination, the Last Post service was performed at local memorials, cenotaphs and RSLs, enabling the group to foster meaningful connections in remote communities. The hospitality and support provided to the riders was a true demonstration of the camaraderie that RSL inspires amongst its members.

The RSL Remembrance Ride set out to create a challenging endurance event that could be undertaken in a supportive environment, whilst raising funds for the upkeep of War Memorials in the Southern Flinders region. By all accounts, the event was deemed a great success by both the participants and the supporters.

RSL Australia hopes to make the RSL Remembrance Ride an annual event.

For those who are interesting in participating in similar events visit RSL Active for more inspiration. ■

www.rslaustralia.org/rsl-remembrance-ride



Aims of the Mawson Trail Ride

1. Deliver an opportunity for Veterans to collectively challenge their lifestyle in a challenging but mentally supportive environment, whilst riding an iconic Australian Outback Trail.
2. Provide an environment for Veterans to challenge themselves both individually, and as a group, in a collaborative, enjoyable and mutually supportive environment which is conducive to fostering both individual, and group networks with other Veterans.
3. Where they exist, link and support veteran communities within the villages and towns along the Mawson Trail transits
4. Promote Local, State and RSL Australia as we pass through the towns and villages along the Mawson Trail, highlighting the importance of remembering those that went before us, and the imperative to support and assist returning Service personnel, struggling with post-Operational physical and mental trauma.



20 years, where did the time go?

At 0425hr, Leut Bourne (the on duty Principal Warfare Officer) made a pipe (announcement) "In two minutes the United States will commence tomahawk missile attacks on Iraq". I still remember that pipe as it was the moment my life changed, and the lives of many others. The 20th of March 2023 will mark the twenty year anniversary of Australia's involvement in the attack on Iraq.

On the 20th March 2003 at 0427hr the attack of Iraq began.

A day after the attack on Iraq, HMAS Kanimbla's boarding party conducted an inspection of a tugboat and barge. They found a total of sixty-eight mines with a mixture of traditional sea mines with sea anchors and limpet mines. On this day, thirty-four POWs were taken into custody and processed. Some of these prisoners were taken to the tank deck of HMAS Kanimbla. This is where one of the prisoners changed my life, my way of thinking, and the decision to leave the Defence Force. I was dipping fuel tanks next to the holding pen in which the POWs were being held. A prisoner grabbed hold of my overalls leg and was begging and pleading with me not to kill him and to let him go as he had a family.

This event made me realise that he was not the enemy, he was a person just like me and war is never the answer. Even though it only lasted less than a minute, nearly twenty years on, I can still see his face and the fear in his eyes.

For completing our task and our professionalism in the Arabian Gulf we were awarded the Meritorious Unit Citation. I left the defence force two years after we got back. I still march every ANZAC day, not because I went into a war zone or because I was given medals; I march to remember those who fell or were injured during conflict.

Looking back on the whole event, I think that a bit more diplomacy should have taken place before the government committed our defence forces to Iraq at the request of America. 18 years on, the Australian government still hasn't learned from prior mistakes, as shown by our withdrawal from Afghanistan. There was no planning, or consideration of the people who helped the coalition forces. They have been abandoned with a target on their back. I guess it's true what they say: "Governments and politicians create war and conflict, and the rest of the population has to deal with the horrors of the outcome".

I am now in the process of training to be a large technology conservator, mentored by Victoria Pearce from Endangered Heritage. Conservation is helping my PTSD and recovery as I am not only making artifacts look better and get another fifty years of life, but I am also learning about different cultures and their heritage. This keeps the mind active, gives me purpose, and helps me to integrate back into society.

On the 20 March 2023 I will sit down with a drink and quietly remember the family that I served with during the Iraq invasion. ■

SEAN PUTTIFOOT



TOP: Tomahawk Cruise missile launched from USS Milius.
BOTTOM: HMAS KANIMBLA in the Arabian Gulf.

OPPOSITE PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:
Attack on the Presidential Palace in Baghdad 22 March 2003.
Engineers (Stokers) sitting on a captured Iraqi howitzer.
LUGM Mines under 44 gallon drum covers on the captured Iraqi tug.
Task group 633.1 - HMA Ships ANZAC, DARWIN, and KANIMBLA in the Arabian Gulf.



YOUR CONSERVATION QUESTIONS ANSWERED

In every theatre of war there are items which become iconic or symbolic of time and place for that period. Medals are awarded for specific battles and postings and these can have specific fragilities due to the patination or dyes in the ribbons.

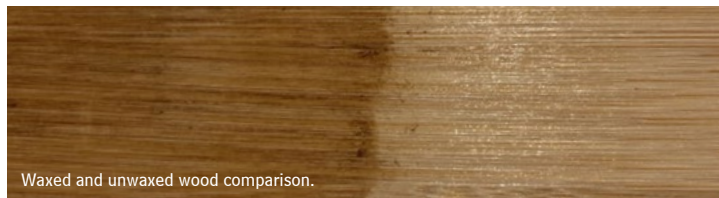
WW1 first aid kits and WW2 silk maps are iconic and also have issues specific to those times in contamination and dye bleed. During different conflicts even documents can have specific issues. The civilian resources are utilised for the war effort, making paper, ink and ink pads often of a lower quality than in times of peace. Modern engagements are no different. Ration packs, synthetic fibres, temporary dyes and modern plastics are all complex. These materials are increasingly designed to be biodegradable, leaving our service personnel and their families with less memorabilia as time goes on, proper timely care is essential to prevent them falling apart. This month's letters have been selected to reflect the items which have come from the Iraqi conflict in recognition of the 20 year anniversary.



Copper Corrosion on a Bronze Statue.



Iron corrosion.



Waxed and unaxed wood comparison.

VICTORIA PEARCE

Last Post readers can write in with concerns or queries about the artefacts they have in their family collection. Letters will be answered by a qualified conservator from Endangered Heritage Pty Ltd. Endangered Heritage is a conservation business in Canberra, endorsed by the National RSL for conserving our military history. Both Victoria and Andrew Pearce have years of experience at the Australian War Memorial and with other military collections.

Write in to LastPost@endangeredheritage.com to get a response in the following issue.

**EH,
We were all given a shell from Bazra, mine has started corroding. Is it safe?
Robbo**

*Hi Robbo,
Because they were already used, they were checked and deemed safe in regards to any incendiary chemicals. The most likely area to be corroding is the primer, which was steel. If the corrosion is red, it is iron corrosion which is safe. It can be cleaned off with a little bit of steel wool for any loose material and a touch of lemon juice on the corroded area and then neutralise it with water before drying. There are how-to's on the internet that suggest adding salt to this process, this will just make the corrosion worse and they never tell you to neutralise which will allow the acid in the lemon juice to catalyse further corrosion. A crystalline wax over the top will stop future corrosion. If it is a blue-green corrosion, that is the copper inside the brass alloy corroding out. This is more hazardous and we do not recommend you dealing with it yourself. Please bring it to us for treatment.*

*Best,
Sean and Bretony*

**To Endangered Heritage,
The wooden teabox I bought in Colombo has faded on the top. Is there anyway of getting the colour back?**

*Hi Sara,
The fading is sun damage. To re-introduce some of the colour, and protect from further damage, we use a product called Liberon. They have a range of pigmented waxes that will help. It is something that will need to be re-applied semi-regularly, although you can reduce how often it needs done by keeping it out of direct sunlight. The reason we recommend Liberon, is that the products are very pure without some of the damaging chemicals that other wood treatment products contain, and the colour is pigment particles not dyes. Dye stains the wood, and does not provide any long term colour protection. While pigments are a bigger molecule that can be cleaned off if needed, and they capture the harmful light spectrums before it can reach the wood and cause more fading.*

*Best,
Bretony*

**Dear EH,
I got my wife a metal lamp in Dubai. One of our kids knocked it over and bent the spout. How can I fix it?
Tim**

*Hi Tim,
When metal bends, it stretches. Further manipulation will continue the stretching if done cold. Warming it slightly before manipulating it back will help, however there is a risk of further damage. Metalworkers can do it hot and reduce the stretching. We can do it in our lab, other a local manufacturing jeweler or copper pot makers will also be able to help.*

*Best,
Sean*

**Dear EH,
My Dad brought me back a small robotic car from his deployment in Iraq. It stopped working ages ago, but it still sits in my dining room. The plastic is faded and recently started to crack. What can I do?
Proud Child of a Soldier**

*Hi Proud Child of a Soldier,
Unfortunately, plastics have a lot of inherent vice. There is little that can be done to stop or reverse the damage. What we can do is slow it down. Good airflow to remove the chemical off-gassing that will otherwise accumulate and speed up the damage is important. Additionally, keeping it in a cool, shaded spot will also help. Different plastics behave in different ways, and need different storage solutions. It is best to seek more specific advice from a plastic conservator.*

*Best,
Bretony and Andrew*



LEFT: Sydney Kinsman enlisted for the army a year into World War II, aged just 19. Photo: Australian War Memorial.

INSET: Sydney Kinsman as a young soldier. Photo: Virtual War Memorial Australia.

World War II veteran and Rat of Tobruk Sydney George Kinsman dies in Alice Springs, aged 100

Alice Springs' 'living treasure'

Mr Kinsman was well known in Alice Springs, where he was the town's last living World War II veteran.

On Anzac Day 2020, after COVID-19 restrictions cancelled ceremonies across the country, hundreds of residents held a car procession outside his home to pay tribute to his service; and later that year, he and his wife were overwhelmed with donations from the community after their annual Christmas lights display was vandalised.

Last year the local council erected a monument in his honour, to coincide with his 100th birthday.

Mr Kinsman moved from Adelaide to the Red Centre in the late 1940s, initially to work as a kangaroo shooter, but quickly moved into the construction industry — in which, along with a few friends, he built many of the town's residential and commercial buildings.

He was also a strong advocate for the Alice Springs RSL and was involved in a number of the town's sporting and social organisations.

Mr Clarke said Mr Kinsman would be sorely missed by the Alice Springs community, which had been shocked by his death.

"The respect that that man had [here] — it covers multiple generations and all sorts of industries and social groups, and the outpouring of emotion has just been amazing to watch.

"People just thought this day would not happen, that Syd would always be here."

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Sydney George Kinsman was among the 35,000 Allied soldiers, including 14,000 Australians, who held the Libyan port of Tobruk against the German Africa Corps in 1941, in a vital battle for the Allied forces.

His death in Alice Springs on Wednesday came about a month before what would have been his 101st birthday, and has sent the tight-knit community — where he was a beloved figure — into mourning.

Born in Adelaide in 1921, Mr Kinsman enlisted in the army in 1940, just two weeks after his 19th birthday, and entered the 2/48th Infantry Battalion.

He served with the unit in North Africa, fighting in both the Siege of Tobruk in Libya and the First Battle of El Alamein in Egypt.

Alice Springs RSL sub-branch president Chris Clarke said the eight-month-long Siege of Tobruk had been a stand-out battle for Australia's soldiers.

"[The Tobruk soldiers] were the first people ever to stop the German Africa Corp in North Africa — until that time, the Germans had moved through all of North Africa totally undefeated, with nobody able to even slow them down," he said.

"Even [German Africa Corps commander] General Rommel paid praise to [their] fighting capability."

Captured by the Germans in 1942 during the First Battle of El Alamein, Mr Kinsman spent time in three different prisoner of war camps in Italy before he managed to escape with several other soldiers about a year later.

"Over several months he climbed the Alps and made his way over to Switzerland," Mr Clarke said.

"He was there for just on 12 months before the Allies caught up to where they were, close to the border, so they were able to cross back over and rejoin with the Allied forces, and go back to his old unit."

Mr Kinsman was repatriated to Australia in 1944 and discharged from the army the following year.

He remained an active member of RSL Australia for many years, and was recently made a life member of the organisation.

Mr Kinsman previously told the ABC about the harsh conditions troops had faced during the Siege of Tobruk.

"It was pretty dusty in the desert, digging your trenches when you had to dig them, and it was rocky ... so you couldn't go [too far] down," he said.

"You had your minefields, but you had your pass to go through them, [and] you had all your tripwires ... and barbed wire ... they were everywhere.

"There was no continuous trench system ... It was never ever a continuous trench system like there were in World War I."

ALICIA PERERA AND MITCHELL ABRAM

Apple News



WWII veteran celebrates 100th birthday

NSW Shadow Minister for Veterans and Member for Campbelltown, Greg Warren MP, congratulated WWII veteran and Leumeah resident, Russell Tipper, on reaching his 100th birthday on July 7.

Mr Tipper, served for two years in Darwin as a gunner during WWII.

War medals and a certificate marking the 50th anniversary of the ending of the war are displayed prominently on Mr Tipper's lounge room wall.

Mr Warren, who served in the Regular Australian Army, surprised Mr Tipper with another certificate and a box of chocolates to mark the milestone.

"Russell is an incredible man," Mr Warren said.

"He was integral in protecting our nation from enemy forces during WWII – and that is something we as a nation we will be eternally grateful for.

"It was an honour to present Mr Tipper with a small token of appreciation and to mark the occasion of his 100th birthday.

"Congratulations again on reaching an incredible milestone, Mr Tipper.

"And also thank you again Mr Tipper for your service to our nation during our time of need."

This year also marks 80 years since the bombing of Darwin.

According the Australian War Memorial, the first bombing occurred on 19/02/1942 and involved more than 260 Japanese aircraft.

Two hundred and fifty two allied service personnel and civilians were killed as a result.

Further raids were carried out on multiple occasions, with the last one occurring on 12/11/1943. ■



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TOUR DESK: 02 9230 3444



Anson W2472 undergoing restoration by History and Heritage – Air Force's Restoration Support Section.



This photo of CPL George Beardow (right) and his mates features in the George Beardow's War in the Pacific exhibition at the Amberley Aviation Heritage Centre.

War from the perspective of a carpenter



Faithful Annie restored

The team of reservists and volunteers at History and Heritage – Air Force’s (HH-AF) Restoration Support Section (RSS) is currently restoring a historic Avro Anson prior to putting it on display.

RSS has been restoring Anson W2472 since February 2017, starting with stripping the aircraft back to its bare frame.

Warrant Officer in Charge RSS WOFF Darren Whitford said while work was significantly hindered by COVID-19 restrictions, the project progressed.

“2020 was a year of major progress for us,” WOFF Whitford said.

“The team fitted the wing spars, engine nacelles, engines and undercarriage, allowing W2472 to stand alone for the first time in many years.”

RSS has since also fitted the nose section, along with a mock Vickers machine gun on the pilot’s side, and is now working to complete the cockpit fit-out, radio operator station, navigator station and upper gun turret.

The RAAF first ordered Ansons in 1935 for maritime patrol duties as part of its modernisation program.

In 1940, the Empire Air Training Scheme began to use Ansons as training aircraft for observers and navigators.

To meet this commitment, the RAAF received 937 Anson Mk 1s between 1940 and 1944.

In all, the RAAF operated 1028 Ansons, more than any other aircraft type.

OIC Amberley Aviation Heritage Centre (AMB AHC) WGCDR Clive Wells said the Anson was affectionately known as “Faithful Annie”.

“Each aircraft flew with its original British serial number,” WGCDR Clive Wells said.

Anson W2472 arrived in Australia in August 1941 and began operations in September 1941 with No. 6 Service Flying Training School, Mallala, South Australia.

After World War II, the aircraft was put into storage until it was sold in 1954.

W2472 was photographed lying in a paddock near Kingaroy, Queensland, circa 1965/66.

In July 2010, it arrived at RAAF Base Amberley after the AMB AHC bought it from Aviation Air Parts in Roma, Queensland.

The restoration of Anson W2472 – which will be rebadged as AW655 from 71SQN – is expected to be completed next year.

“The aircraft will then join the impressive and ever-growing fleet on display at the AMB AHC,” WGCDR Wells said.

**WGCDR CLIVE WELLS
& WOFF DARREN WHITFORD**

An Air Force carpenter who served in the Pacific Theatre during WWII is the subject of a unique photographic exhibition at the Amberley Aviation Heritage Centre.

The temporary exhibition, *George Beardow’s War in the Pacific*, was compiled by Queensland psychologist and researcher Juanita Muller.

On display since May 3, it depicts the experiences of CPL George Beardow, who enlisted in the Air Force in 1942 at the age of 46 and served as carpenter general with 30SQN (Bristol Beaufighters).

Dr Muller said the photos provided a different perspective on the war.

“Most people think of infantry soldiers, pilots and battle when they envisage the war, but there were many other important roles,” Dr Muller said.

“What clearly comes through is the camaraderie of George and his mates, despite the background of war.”

The heritage centre is a fitting location for the exhibition because CPL Beardow served the remainder of his military service at RAAF Base Amberley after he returned from the Pacific.

The centre’s OIC, WGCDR Clive Wells, said the exhibition linked to one of the centre’s larger displays in the WWII hangar.

“This display outlines the RAAF’s involvement in the Pacific Theatre, in particular, Milne Bay and Goodenough Island,” WGCDR Wells said.

George Beardow’s War in the Pacific is expected to be on display at the centre for a year.

To register to attend the Amberley Aviation Heritage Centre, including the *George Beardow’s War in the Pacific* exhibition, visit: raafamberleyheritage.gov.au.

For information about Juanita Muller, visit: juanitamuller.com.au.

FLTLT KARYN MARKWELL