

# Stand To

*"The Price of Liberty is Eternal Vigilance"*



Lest We Forget



www.actrsl.org.au

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To make a contribution to the newsletter or to sponsor a page, contact the Editor by phone +61 2 6260 6344, fax +61 2 6295 1628 or email michaelis@netspeed.com.au

## From the President

Much has happened since the last time I wrote for Stand To. Of most disappointment was the fact that a fire destroyed the Canberra Services Club shortly after ANZAC Day. As you are aware the Branch had established its offices there and was working well with the club staff. However the work must go on so our offices were transferred to space with the Woden Sub-Branch for a short period before more permanent arrangements were able to be put into place. The Branch is now situated in offices located at **26 Archibald Street, Lyneham**. All other aspects of contacting the Branch remain unchanged. I appreciate the CEO of Morshead Home Ms Nikki Van Dieman for providing the Branch a new home.

Representing the Branch I attended a wreath laying ceremony at the Australian War Memorial to commemorate those lost on the AHS Centaur that was torpedoed and sunk by a Japanese submarine on 14 May 1943.

A wreath was laid at the Australian Hellenic Memorial, ANZAC Parade in commemoration of the 70th Anniversary of the Battle of Crete.

Sandra and I, along with members of the Branch attended the Vietnamese Sub-Branch celebrating the Republic of South Vietnam Armed Forces Day. After laying wreaths at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial we departed for what was to be a very warm welcome and lunch at the Saigon Restaurant.

Member's of the ACT Branch, the National President Rear Admiral Ken Doolan AO RAN (Retd) and I attended a ceremony to lay wreaths and poppies on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier prior to the Branch Congress was held at the Hellenic Club, Woden.

Sandra and I attended the Full Time GSO Graduation Parade at RMC. Staff Cadets graduated with Senior Cadet Under Officer Timothy Glover (a Tuggeranong lad I might add) awarded the Sword of Honour for exemplary conduct and performance of duty.

Mr James Davidson, CEO ACT Branch and I attended the Regional Cadet Unit at HMAS Harman to meet with Cadet Jack McInerney whom the Branch is assisting to attend the Battlefields Tour and spending ANZAC Day 2012 marching at Villiers Bretonneau. Jack and another colleague will be giving the Branch Council a briefing at a meeting upon their return. Jack will also be available to provide a briefing to Sub-Branches subject to agreeable timings as Jack still attends school.

My daughter Leonnie and I attended a luncheon hosted by His Excellency the Ambassador of Japan HE Mr Shigekazu Sato and CAPT Takuya Ito, Defence Attaché to celebrate Japanese Self Defence Forces Day. The Ambassador addressed the gathering and spoke very emotionally about the trouble that had beset his nation recently. He made it quite clear that Australia had been the first nation to assist on the ground with an RAAF flight delivering Search and Rescue, Medical Teams and supplies less than 48 hours after the earthquake. He said that Australia and its people had shown his people what true friendship means when such catastrophes occur.

**John King**  
President, RSL ACT Branch

## 6th Australian Division

# 70th Anniversary Tour for the Battle of Crete

Departing on 17 May, 2011, I flew to Athens to meet up with the tour group organised by Premium Holidays from Sydney. Premium Holidays previously organised tours for the 50th and 60th Anniversaries.

The tour party numbered 24. There were two Veterans in Jack Dihm and Des Beard, former members of the 2/2 Field Regiment and 2/11 Infantry Battalion respectively. Descendants of former members of the 6th Division, covering 2/3rd, 2/4th, 2/7th and 2/11th Infantry Battalions, 2/1st Machine Gun Battalion and the 2/2nd Field Regiment numbered 22. We were honoured to have Dr Maria Hill, author of *Diggers and Greeks* together with her husband Stuart as part of our group.

In Athens we attended the Australian Ambassador's Residence for a reception where we met up with the official Australian Government Contingent and also members of the Federation Guard.

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On arriving in Crete on 19 May, we attended a ceremony at Preveli which is famous for the monastery and the Monks who defied the Germans and assisted Allied troops.

Friday 20 May was a full day of ceremonies commencing with Stavromenos in the morning, followed by Rethymnon at the Australian Hellenic Memorial and Galatas Village in the evening. This ceremony was hosted by the New Zealanders and Lt Col Sandy Thomas (then a Lieutenant) spoke about the actions that happened in and around the village. At this ceremony I met a lady who was a young girl of 5 in 1941. She had her jaw broken by the Germans and has a misshaped jaw. She has lived in the US for 50 years and returns each year for the Battle of Crete celebrations.



*Dancers at Preveli.*



*Galatas Memorial.*

All ceremonies were well attended with all Allied Nations, as well as Cretan authorities, laying wreaths.

On Saturday 21 May a ceremony was held at a village called Latzimas in honour of the local people who fought and suffered severe retribution from their German occupiers. Later in the day a service was held at the Commonwealth War Cemetery at Suda Bay. This ceremony was conducted by the British and featured a 21 gun salute from the warship HMS Sutherland which was very impressive.

Sunday 22 May attendance at a memorial church service in Rethymnon was followed by a ceremony at the Rethymnon Police Academy in recognition of the part played by the Police Cadets in the Battle of Crete. A luncheon was also held in the grounds of the Police Academy which also featured demonstrations of Greek dancing.

Later in the day a large crowd assembled at Maleme Airfield for a re-enactment and wreath laying ceremony.



*A group of veterans awaiting Ceremony at Galatas (Lt Col Sandy Thomas from NZ is 3rd from left with hat. 4th from left is Jack Dihm).*

A feature of this was a fly over and manoeuvres of a F16 fighter plane from the Greek Air Force.

Attendance at a function hosted by the Nomarch of Chania was the final official function we attended.

Our tour group also visited other centres and held our own short ceremonies of remembrance.

These took place at Sfakia and Heraklion. A visit to the German War Cemetery at Meleme was also undertaken where there are some 4,400 German War dead are buried.

A wonderful trip was enjoyed and the Cretan people are very appreciate of the efforts of the Allied troops during their short time on Crete. This was evident when we visited a village and a monument to their martyrs. Several of the tour group spoke to some of the villagers who, on learning we were from Australia, provided a tray of pastries and some chocolates which were most appreciated.

**Paul Taylor**  
Hellenic Sub Branch RSL  
(Affiliate Member)

## ACT Hellenic Sub-Branch RSL and Cretan Association commemorate 70th Anniversary of the Battles of mainland Greece and Crete

The memorial service for the 70th Anniversary of the battles of mainland Greece and Crete was held at midday on the 29 May 2011.

The ceremony was held at the National Australian Hellenic Memorial by the ACT Hellenic Sub-Branch RSL and the Cretan Association. The ceremony was attended by representatives from Greece, New Zealand, United Kingdom, Cyprus, WW2 veterans, political, diplomatic and the ADF. The Australian Federation Guard provided the Flag and Catafalque parties for the occasion.

In attendance was His Excellency Mr Alexios Christopoulos, Ambassador of Greece; Her Excellency Mrs Skevi Starropoulo, High Commissioner of Cyprus; and MajGen Martyn Dunne, CNZM, High Commissioner for New Zealand.

The Canadian High Commission was represented by Commander Paul Grimshaw, Mr Bob Highland representing the ACT Chief Minister and Ms Gai Broadtman representing the Minister for Defence.

Also lay wreaths were Air Chief Marshall John Harvey, AFC representing the CDF, BRIG Will Taylor representing the UK High Commissioner and CMDR Robyn Walker, AM, RAN representing the Chief of Navy.

RSL National President Rear Admiral Ken Doolan, AO, RAN (Retd), ACT RSL State President Mr John King, Mr Nick Vardos, OAM representing WW2 veterans and Mr George Kathakakis representing the Cretan Association also laid wreaths.

Others in attendance were members of the Greek Orthodox Community, President of the Hellenic Club of Canberra, veterans of the Greek and Crete, campaign, friend and relatives including John Macdonald, Les Cook, Norm Simper, Irene Lind and Paul Taylor.

A reception was held later in the evening at the Hellenic Club of Canberra.

### PLEASE MAKE CONTACT

Could 0315619 **Douglas Alan Rhodes**  
DOB 7/05/1944, Kew, VIC  
please contact Barry Boyce on 02 62811710  
as the matter is urgent.

## Increasing your working wage on the pension

Thinking of taking-up some paid work? The Work Bonus Scheme and the Work Bonus Bank can help reduce your assessable income.

Undertaking some casual work is a great way to supplement your income, but it is important to be informed of how it can affect your pension.

The Work Bonus Scheme allows eligible income support pensioners to undertake some paid work with a reduced effect to their pension.

To be eligible, a veteran or war widow/er must be of qualifying/pension age and over and be receiving employment income. Qualifying age is 60 for males and 59.5 for females. Pension age is 65 for males and 64.5 for females.

From 1 July 2011, the first \$250 of income earned per fortnight by eligible service pensioners, income support supplement recipients and age pensioners, paid by the Department of Veterans' Affairs, will be excluded from the income test.

Any unused amounts of the \$250 concession will accrue in a Work Bonus Bank, up to a maximum of \$6,500, available to offset any future employment income.

For example, if an income support pensioner earns \$400 per fortnight, with the Work Bonus income concessions, only \$150 of employment income will be counted as assessable income. If that pensioner hasn't worked for a portion of the year, beginning 1 July onwards, they will accrue credits of \$250 per fortnight in the Work Bonus Bank. If the credit in the Bank is worth more than their assessable income, then no income will be assessed.

Pensioners must advise DVA of any new employment income within 14 days of commencing employment.

■ For more information on the Work Bonus Scheme or the Work Bonus Bank, visit [www.dva.gov.au](http://www.dva.gov.au) or call DVA on 133 254 (metro areas) or 1800 026 185 for regional callers.



## Battle for Australia Day 2011

Battle for Australia Day has been gazetted for commemoration on the first Wednesday in September each year.

Ceremonies are held around Australia to commemorate the drawn out struggle to defend Australia against Japanese forces during World War 2.

The Battle for Australia covers the period from the Malayan campaign and the fall of Singapore and the East Indies, through the Japanese invasion of Papua New Guinea, air and submarine raids on Australian towns and shipping, the 1942 battles of the Coral Sea, Milne Bay, the Kokoda Track and Guadalcanal, up to the recapture of Buna and Gona and the battle of the Bismarck Sea in early 1943.

Also remembered are those who contributed to the war effort on the home front and the subsequent campaigns to liberate New Guinea, the Pacific and South East Asia.

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In Canberra, the ACT Committee of the Battle for Australia Commemoration National Council is organising the 2011 National Commemorative Ceremony at the Australian War Memorial on **Wednesday 7 September 2011 at 11am.**

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The ceremony is arranged in conjunction with the Australian War Memorial and supported by the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Australian Defence Force. Participants usually include national leaders, diplomatic representatives from the Netherlands, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, the United Kingdom and the United States, the RMC Band, the Rugby Choir, students from primary and secondary schools and members of veteran and community organisations.

In addition to their official representatives, the attendance of all veterans and their families is warmly invited. Public seating is provided for the ceremony in the Western Courtyard of the Australian War Memorial. If you would like to attend, you should arrive by 10.45am. AWM staff will be available to assist.

### For further information:

Email: [john.jackson@bigpond.com](mailto:john.jackson@bigpond.com)  
[ceremony@awm.gov.au](mailto:ceremony@awm.gov.au)

Web: [www.battleforaustralia.org.au](http://www.battleforaustralia.org.au)

**The Media —  
it's time to have  
your say  
and win a \$1000 Prize**

The 2011 Older People Speak Out (OPSO) People's Choice Media Awards, reward You for nominating any media item, good or bad, which features Seniors and for saying in no more than 50 words why you think this item deserves an award.

Media stories on seniors, whether print, electronic or photographic, whether political, business, social or intergenerational help to inform the public and break down negative stereotypes about older people. Equally important, such stories and photos are changing the way we seniors regard ourselves and are bringing to many a new self-image.

Significantly, they emphasise the realisation that there never really is a need to "retire".

There are four categories:

- a photograph,
- any print article,
- any radio or TV item, or
- any item from online media coverage of seniors.

Entries close on 12 September 2011 and you can enter as many times as you like.

All winners will be flown to Brisbane, accommodated overnight at a 4½ star hotel and invited to the Awards Ceremony in Brisbane on 24 October 2011 when you will be presented with **your \$1000 prize.**

You can find more about the Media Awards and download Entry Forms from our website **www.opso.com.au** or you can contact us by telephone on 07 3002 7612.

## 2011 RSL ACT Membership Subscription



Membership subscriptions are now due for Service and Affiliate members for 2011. The amount due is \$30 and may be paid in several ways.

■ **By post\*:**

The Office Manager                      OR                      The Secretary  
RSL ACT Branch    of your Sub-Branch  
GPO Box 708  
CANBERRA ACT 2601

*\*To assist in lowering expenses, please enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope if you are not paying in person.*

■ **By electronic funds transfer (EFT)\*\*:**

If paying by EFT from your bank account, please make the transfer in favour of:

BSB:                                      082 962  
Account Number: 69911 4545  
Account Name:                      RSL ACT Branch

*\*\* Please ensure that you include your name and initials in the Reference Details of the transfer otherwise your payment cannot be correctly applied. Please send an email to the office manager as a follow-up to: [manager@actrsl.org.au](mailto:manager@actrsl.org.au)*

■ **In person#:**

RSL ACT Branch Office  
26 Archibald Street  
LYNEHAM ACT 2602

- # **Please note:**
- The Canberra Services Club does not open until 11am daily.
  - A receipt may not be available at the time of payment and may have to be posted at a later date.
  - Cheques should be made payable to **RSL ACT Branch**



Lest We Forget

### To Office Manager/Sub-Branch Secretary

Enclosed is the amount of \$30 in payment for 2011 membership of the \_\_\_\_\_ Sub-Branch.

Membership number (as shown on your membership card): \_\_\_\_\_

Full name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Suburb: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

# Chaplain Mark Willis

Not too many people know how the Dawn Service began ... well, let me tell you. In a small cemetery just outside Herberton, north Queensland, is a marker beside a grave that says,

*'Here ... lies the grave of the late Reverend Arthur Ernest White, a Church of England clergyman and Padre, 44th Battalion, First Australian Imperial Force. On 25th April 1923, at Albany in Western Australia, the Rev White led ... the first ever observance of a Dawn parade on ANZAC Day.'*

Eighty-eight years of Dawn services, and still we gather to honour, as my boss Air Chief Marshall Angus Houston recently said,

*'... not only the original ANZACs ... but all Australians who have served and died, not only in combat but in peace-keeping, disaster relief and humanitarian assistance missions'.*

As a serving member, who has been to war a couple of times now, may I express my thanks to you, on behalf of my brothers and sisters in the Australian Defence Force for taking the time to remember, not only those who have served but those who currently serve their nation on operations.

It goes without saying, 'war is not a nice thing.' Even victory is hollow. So why do we come here? It has been said that 'the ANZAC legend has helped to define us as Australians'; it espouses characteristics to which we hold dearly—determination, courage, compassion, and resourcefulness, to name a few.

We do not come to glory in war, nor to celebrate and certainly not to gloat over our enemies. We simply come to remember the ordinary person and

to pay tribute to those who put freedom for others before their own interests. We call it selflessness, something I am afraid is mostly missing today.

Mal Garvin in his book, 'Us Aussies' says, that you can learn a lot about a country from the people or events they celebrate in their monuments. In the USA there is a great bronzed statue of Abraham Lincoln sitting in his mighty marble temple. Down the street is a thirty foot statue of Thomas Jefferson.

In Paris, Napoleon is alive and well.

Go across the Channel to England and you'll find Westminster Abbey filled with a pantheon of British gods. Throughout London and the country are the monuments of Wellington and Nelson.

But, when we come back to Australia and look for our great monuments, what do we have? ... A dog sitting on a tucker box. Apart from that, there are very few monuments that have much meaning for us. There is one important exception though, and today millions of Australians will gather around one. It is of course the cenotaph, central to every Australian country town, and if there is a figure on the monument, it will not symbolise or represent any great politician, general, or philosopher. No, it will be a statue that represents the ordinary serving member.

Everybody who left our shores to fight has their name hammered out in stone. Those who did not return have a star beside their name.

Just ordinary people doing their job. Ordinary men and women who were prepared to make personal sacrifices for the freedom and quality of life that we enjoy today. They believed strongly in a cause—freedom—and so they gave

up their ordinary lives in the peace and quiet of the bush and cities of pre-war Australia because they felt it was their duty.

Our two latest VC winners have both echoed the sentiment of the first World War digger who said, 'It's a dirty job, some mug has to do it, so let's get into it and clear out as soon as we can'. A popular song of the World War One Digger confirms this ordinariness about them:

*We are the rag-tag army,  
the A-N-Z-A-C,  
We can't shoot, we won't salute,  
What bleeding good are we?  
  
And when we get to Berlin,  
The Kaiser he will say,  
'Mein gott, what a rotten looking lot,  
the A-N-Z-A-C.'*

The trouble though with ordinariness is that it can be easily forgotten.

So how do we remember them? This A-N-Z-A-C? How can we keep the memory of the sacrifice made by brave Australians, relevant for the next hundred years?

I have a suggestion and it is illustrated by a Jewish feast. I could have talked about the Lord's Supper and how it is a remembrance of Christ's death that humankind might have true freedom, but no, I have chosen this particular feast, The Feast of Purim, because there is a unique aspect to it.

The feast of Purim celebrates the Jews deliverance from a holocaust, it celebrates their freedom to worship God and the freedom to live in peace. It is a wonderful piece of history, which I will not go into today, suffice it to say, that out of this terrible holocaust came the Jews most cherished ideals,

that of their integrity as a nation and their relationship with God.

The events remembered at Purim took place, roughly 2500 years ago, yet since that time this feast has remained a central part of Jewish life.

## Why is it so?

Simply this, the legend is passed onto the children—a great feast, a party where gifts are exchanged, role plays are acted out, the story is retold with great gusto, it is a happy and joyful time. No wonder the memory lives on as they grow older.

My plea today is that we continue to give the ANZAC story to the young ones, young adults like Mark MacInnees, James & Jeremy; young children at school ANZAC services; and littlies like my grand-daughters, Ava and Scarlett, who are awake and here this morning.

But, we need to pass it onto them in ways they will understand, and if we do, then the ordinary person will not be forgotten.

Oh, I almost forgot to tell you, Rev Arthur White, a humble ordinary person; his tombstone is simply a cross with only the words, 'A Priest' written upon it. Almost forgotten, but for some friends who made the effort to place the marker beside his grave.

As we remember him and all others, and honour them for their courage and sacrifice, let us pray that God would also give us the desire and courage to serve Him and our country until life's end.

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May you enjoy your freedom and may God bless our troops.

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## More Bang for No Bucks – self-propelled artillery used by Australian cavalry in Vietnam 1967-68

by Colin Campbell

Paperback, 116 pages, includes 24 pages of colour photographs.

ISBN: 978-0-9870720-0-9.

Visit: [www.m108cav.com](http://www.m108cav.com)

\$31 including postage to anywhere in Australia.

Foreword by Steve Gower, AO, AO (Mil), Director of the Australian War Memorial.

This book describes the unique story of armoured, artillery and infantry soldiers drawn together in Vietnam in 1967-68 to form 6 Troop, A Squadron, 3rd Cavalry Regiment. This mixture of Army corps in a small combat unit is very rare. Because of casualties and unit rotations, 35 men served in the Troop. The Troop served in six M108 self-propelled howitzers, loaned at no cost from the US Army. It is believed that it is the only time Australia has used self-propelled guns on active service. The book records why the Troop was formed.

It describes how it was raised and trained in-country, deployed under tight restrictions and overcame many obstacles to achieve the success that it did. The soldiers learnt a greater variety of skills and displayed a level of responsibility and initiative not normally required of their peers. 6 Troop demonstrated an ability to adapt which, history shows, occurs time and again with Australian soldiers at war.

### For enquiries contact:

Colin Campbell

PO Box 701, MAWSON ACT 2607

Mobile: 0408 442 186

Email: [info@m108cav.com](mailto:info@m108cav.com) OR [colinrcampbell@bigpond.com](mailto:colinrcampbell@bigpond.com)



## To Fight and Do Our Best

by Cate Clark

**To Fight and Do Our Best** is the final product of nearly three years of research into the 1st Australian Armoured Division during WW2. Framed around the time the Division was in the North West Region of NSW the book is an informal look at the veterans who comprised, what was at the time, the most highly trained Division in Australian military history.

**To Fight and Do Our Best** comes complete with original photos and cartoons supplied by veterans and is laced with descriptions of day-to-day experiences of both the veterans and the residents of the towns that hosted them. With smatterings of poetry from the time, written by some rather laconic wits, the book is as much a social history of the time as it is a military one.

Released on the Anzac Day long weekend in 2011, **To Fight and Do Our Best** celebrates the 70th anniversary of the creation of the Armoured Corps in Australia with the long overdue story of the 1st Australian Armoured Division AIF.

To join our mailing list visit [www.writerightmedia.com.au](http://www.writerightmedia.com.au)

### For enquiries contact:

Cate Clark

PO Box 136, GUNNEDAH NSW 2380

Tel: 02 6742 3524 | Email: [info@writerightmedia.com.au](mailto:info@writerightmedia.com.au)

# Highland Pipe band invited to play at Ypres Tattoo, Flanders, Belgium

The RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe band from the city of Mount Gambier, South Australia has been invited to play at the Ypres Tattoo, Flanders, Belgium in September 2012.

Whilst in Flanders the band is to play at the nightly MENIN GATE "Last Post Ceremony" which is a Wreath laying ceremony with up to eight Ypres Buglers with wreath layers from Military units, associations and public from all over the world. Crowds of several thousand are not uncommon. The Ceremony began in 1928 and has been held at 8pm every night since. To be invited to be the Pipes and Drums for this ceremony is prestigious and a very great honour.

The MENIN GATE has upon it the names of 54,800 WWI Commonwealth soldiers who were killed in the Ypres salient, Flanders and have no known grave. Of these, 6,300 are Australian. Australia sent 50 Infantry Battalions and supporting units to Flanders. In total over 20,000 Australians were killed. We will also be playing at other Memorials including the New Zealand memorial at Messine.

To assist with the band's expenses, for A\$50 we are offering to place wreaths on behalf of the Australian public remembering nominated WWI soldiers who fought on the Western Front. The wreaths are to be laid by the Australian ambassador to Belgium and Band members.

Wreaths are to be made of Australian Flora (or imitation) inseting a Roll of Honour including the Soldier's and contributors name. A photo will be sent to each contributor upon our return.

Nomination forms and payment details can be obtained from the Band's website

**[Rslbluelakehighlandpipeband.yolasite.com](http://Rslbluelakehighlandpipeband.yolasite.com)**

The cut-off date is 31 December 2011.



*MENIN GATE Ypres, Flanders, Belgium and the RSL Blue Lake Highland Pipe Band, Anzac Day 2010.*

The band is sponsored by the Mount Gambier Community RSL and has in its playing ranks five ex Service and other RSL members. Of the 30 players, half will be under 20, with eight of these under 18. It will be a once in a lifetime experience musically, culturally and historically for these young Australians.

Any surplus funds will be directed via the State Branches to Legacy.

Please use whatever info you wish but please include the Wreath laying information for our fundraising.

## **For any queries or assistance contact:**

**Barry Ward**

Tel: 08 8725 5661

Mobile: 0458 255 666

Email: [jaybee03@bigpond.com](mailto:jaybee03@bigpond.com)

*Many thanks, Barry Ward.*

## An invitation to

all ACT RSL Sub-Branches and eighteen Regional NSW Sub-Branches  
The AFC and RAAF Association ACT Division | The Royal Naval Association (Canberra Branch)  
The Australia-Britain Society (ACT) | The English in Australia Association (ACT)  
The Canberra Welsh Society and the Burns Club

*The Battle of Britain Commemoration Sub-Committee (ACT)*  
*invites all interested persons to the*  
2011 ACT and Region Commemorative Ceremony  
for the  
Battle of Britain's 71st Anniversary

**Venue:** Western Courtyard of the Australian War Memorial

**Date:** Thursday 15 September 2011

**Time:** 10.30am (Guests should be seated by 10.15am)

The ceremony will include the laying of wreaths by/on behalf of the Diplomatic Corps, the Chief Minister of the ACT and representatives of the Armed Forces and ex-Service and community organizations.

**RSVP:** by 8 September 2011

We ask that members of your Sub-Branch/Association/Society who wish to attend notify us in order that seating and other arrangements can be made. Please supply estimated numbers and any special requirements (eg wheelchair access) to:

Sqn Ldr Mal Davies | 32 Osmand Street | WANNIASSA ACT 2903  
Tel: 02 6231 6074 (H) | Mobile: 0419 230 605 | Email: [carmal@grapevine.net.au](mailto:carmal@grapevine.net.au)

We look forward to your attendance



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10

### Great value health cover

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Because of your service, you, your partner, your brothers and sisters, children and grandchildren are all eligible to join Defence Health. Your military service is your family's link to competitive health insurance. It's easy to join or to switch from another fund.

Call Defence Health on **1800 335 425** or visit **[www.defencehealth.com.au](http://www.defencehealth.com.au)** to see how your service can serve your family.



## The Last Knight A biography of Sir Phillip Bennett AC, KBE, DSO by Robert Lowry

Sky publishing; 409 pages including photographs, maps endnotes and bibliography.

The Last Knight — so titled because Sir Phillip Bennet was the last Chief of the General Staff (now Chief of Army) to be knighted, Lowry's book is an interesting, eminently readable and fascinating account of Sir Phillip's life, particularly so as, happily, he is still with us, not always the case in biographies of senior military commanders.

Born in Mount Lawley, Perth in December 1928, what was to be Bennett's stellar military career got off to a somewhat shaky start.

His interviews following his application to enter the Royal Military College (RMC) completed in October 1945 only rated him as 'doubtful'. However he was accepted and entered RMC in 1946 for a three-year course, graduating in 1948.

In the steady rise to the top that saw him finish his military career as commander of the Australian Defence Force Bennett served in two of Australia's most significant (I don't like 'iconic') battles since the Second World War – Kapyong in Korea and Coral in South Vietnam.

At Kapyong he served as OC 3 RAR's Mortar Platoon and fight off a number of squad sized attacks on battalion HQ and his own position, and at Fire Support Base Coral in 1968, as CO of 1 RAR, he was in command when Coral came under sustained human wave attacks from the North Vietnamese Army.

He was Mentioned in Despatches (MID) for his service in Korea and was awarded the Distinguished Service Order (DSO) for his command on 1 RAR in Korea.

Post Vietnam Bennett rose steadily through the ranks and was appointed Chief of the General Staff in the rank of lieutenant general in February 1982. Two years later he was promoted general and took command of the Australian Defence Force.

The chapters of this book which cover these years are in many ways more fascinating than those which dealt with the early part of his career. Indeed they take up a large part of the book.

In his two years as head of the Army Bennett put his stamp on the Army. He fought for kits interests in the senior defence committees and successfully consolidated the policy directions for the structure of the Army established by his predecessor.

In command of the ADF what could be described as 'the committee' war continued, at a high level and the tensions between the department and the ADF occupied much of his time.

All this makes fascinating reading.

Bennett's distinguished career did not end with his retirement from the ADF and in October 1987 he became Governor of Tasmania, again a position he filled with distinction.

**RSL ACT Branch Office**

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LYNEHAM ACT 2602

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CANBERRA ACT 2601

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**President:** Mr John King  
john.king@csiro.au

**CEO:** Mr James Davidson  
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**Barton—Capital**

TBA

**President:** Mrs June Healy OAM  
(02) 6247 6580 (H)(Fax)  
0419 822 934 (M)  
junehealy2@bigpond.com

**Secretary:** Mrs Jan Ormerod  
+61 2 6248 7199 (BH)  
0401 354 487 (M)  
business.manager@rsl.org.au

**Meeting:** 1st Tues every second month  
5.30pm (from Feb)  
12.30pm (June & August)

**Venue:** Canberra Services Club

**Belconnen**

PO Box 147  
JAMIESON CENTRE ACT 2614

**President:** AVM Mac Weller AM (Ret)  
(02) 6262 4878  
emweller@ozemail.com.au

**Secretary:** Mr Dennis Wilkes  
(02) 6254 0609 (H)  
0416 180 936 (M)  
wilkesda@bigpond.com

**Meeting:** 2nd Tues each month  
7.30pm (Oct–Apr)  
11am (May–Sep)

**Venue:** West's Rugby Union Club

**British**

TBA

**President:** Mr Malcolm Davies  
(02) 6231 6074 (H)  
0419 230 506 (M)  
carmal@grapevine.net.au

**Secretary:** Mrs Barbara Samuel-Pope  
(02) 6299 5722 (H)  
bipope99@yahoo.com.au

**Meeting:** 3rd Wed each month, 2pm

**Venue:** Canberra Services Club

**Campbell—Russell**

PO Box 1073  
BELCONNEN ACT 2616

**President:** Mr Robin Vickery  
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ravickery1@bigpond.com

**Secretary:** Mr Tom Roberts  
(02) 6178 5142  
0409 304 572 (M)  
tomroberts1@bigpond.com

**Meeting:** Last Thurs each month, 12.30pm

**Venue:** Yowani Country Club, Northbourne Ave

**City of Canberra**

27 Bragg Street  
HACKETT ACT 2602

**President:** Mr Jan Paulga  
(02) 6241 4965 (H)  
0417 421 941 (M)  
paulga@bigpond.net.au

**Secretary:** Mr Paul Bohun  
(02) 6161 1314 (H)  
0418 978 614 (M)  
pbohu2@grapevine.com.au

**Meeting:** 3rd Wed each month, 11am

**Venue:** The Cottage, The Braddon Club,  
Cnr Donaldson and Torrens Sts, Braddon

**Gungahlin**

11 Mawalan St  
NGUNNAWAL ACT 2913

**President:** Mrs Christine Coultard OAM  
(02) 6241 8587 (H)  
0408 745 662 (M)  
c.coultard@bigpond.com

**Secretary:** Mr Rod Bennett  
(02) 6253 9903  
rmbennett4@bigpond.com

**Meeting:** 1st Wed each month, 7.30pm

**Venue:** Lakes Community Club

**Hellenic**

PO Box 1063  
WODEN ACT 2606

**President:** Mr Peter Tsikleas  
(02) 6286 3341 (H)

**Secretary:** Mr Paul Taylor  
(02) 6252 6203 (H)

**Meeting:** Periodically

**Venue:** Hellenic Club, Woden

**Peacekeepers**  
TBA

**President:** Mr Gary Brodie OAM  
0412 628 695 (M)  
gbrodie@alphalink.com.au

**Secretary:** Position vacant

**Meeting:** Periodically

**Venue:** Canberra Services Club, Manuka

**Tuggeranong**

PO Box 351  
ERINDALE ACT 2903

**President:** Mr David Knight  
(02) 6291 1052  
jdknight@tpg.com.au

**Secretary:** Mr Graeme Slattery  
(02) 6291 5542 (H)  
0402 313 906(M)  
graemeslattery@grapevine.net.au

**Meeting:** 3rd Wed each month, 7pm

**Venue:** Erindale Rugby Union Club

**Vietnamese**

PO Box 7107  
CANBERRA MAIL EXCHANGE ACT 2910

**President:** Mr Nang Do-Quang  
(02) 6255 5494(H)  
captrans@homemail.com.au

**Secretary:** Position vacant

**Meeting:** Periodically

**Venue:** Migrant Resource Centre

**Woden Valley**

PO Box 1637  
WODEN ACT 2606

**Tel:** +61 2 6285 1931

**Web:** www.rslwoden.org.au

**President:** Mr Peter Collas  
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**Secretary:** Bryan Pannell  
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0420 866 925 (M)  
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**Meeting:** Last Tues each month, 7pm

**Venue:** Southern Cross Club, Woden

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**Secretary:** Mr Dallas Drake  
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**Washington**

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KINGSTON ACT 2604

**President:** BRIG Rod West

**Secretary:** Mr Dave Ward  
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**Meeting:** 1601 Massachusetts Ave N.W.  
WASHINGTON DC 200036, USA