

RSL WODEN VALLEY SUB-BRANCH ENEWS



May-Jun 2017

Find us at the rear of the Yamba Club at 11 Irving Street Phillip. Our office hours are 9am to 3pm.
Phone 6285 1931 or Email: admin@rslwoden.org.au Website www.rslwoden.org.au



In This Issue

- Eddison Park ANZAC and Peace Ceremony
- Milne Bay, El Alamein, Kokoda commemorations
- Navy to the rescue
- ANZAC Eve Dinner
- Budget and other news



Eddison Park Combined Schools ANZAC and Peace Ceremony 2017

WWII Australian veterans from the following battles are invited by the Department of Veterans Affairs' to attend national commemoration services at the Australian War Memorial for:

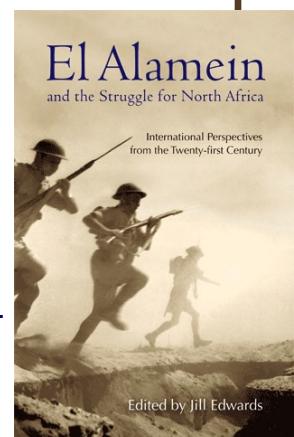
- **the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Milne Bay on 25 August 2017;**
- **the 75th anniversary of the Battle of El Alamein on 23 October 2017; and the**
- **75th anniversary of Kokoda and the Beachheads on 2 November 2017.**

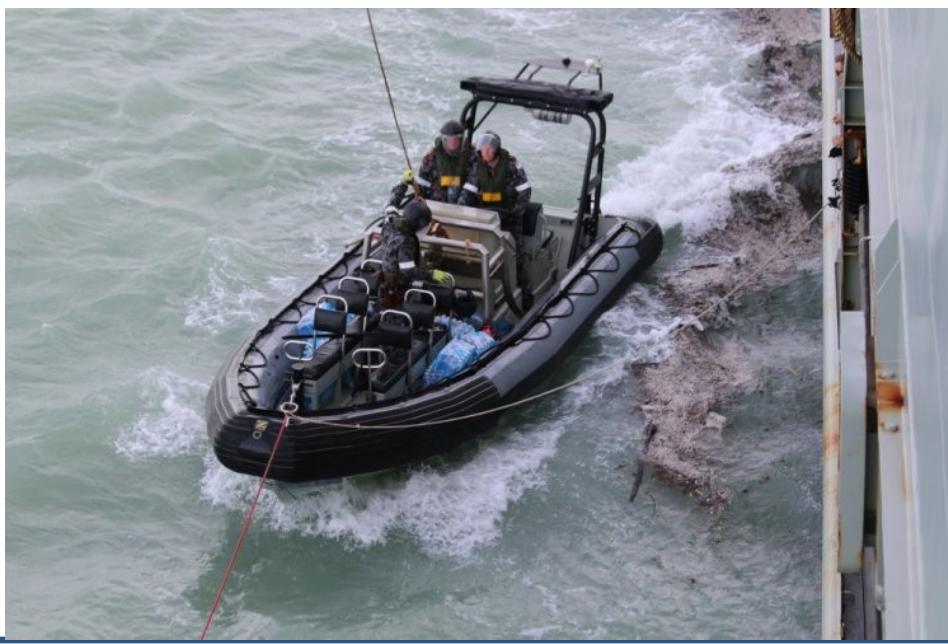


WV RSL have recently emailed the nomination forms and attachments to members so those who served in the following locations and timeframes can register for these commemorations:

- Milne Bay between 25 August and 7 September 1942
- El Alamein between 1 July and 4 November 1942
- At the Kokoda Track between 22 July and 13 November 1942 and in Buna, Gona and Sanananda during the Battle of the Beachheads between 16 November 1942 and 22 January 1943.

Those wishing to officially attend will need to complete the documentation required by DVA - for Milne Bay and Kokoda by cob Friday 16 June, for Al Alamein by cob 11 August 2017. The forms are also available on the website www.dva.gov.au. Please call the Sub-Branche if you have not received the documentation or if we can be of any further assistance with nominations.





NAVY TO THE RESCUE

More than 400 stranded guests and staff were rescued from Daydream Island off Queensland, ravaged by Tropical Cyclone Debbie, thanks to the actions of HMAS *Melville*. The hydrographic ship was operating near Townsville when the cyclone hit the Whitsunday Islands, and followed the tail end of the system through rough seas as Debbie headed south.

Melville's Commanding Officer, Commander Neil Cheverton said his crew had worked with local authorities to coordinate ferry access to Thursday Island, to evacuate the resort.

"After conducting a quick assessment of the harbour and wharf with our small boat, we were able to land a shore party to assist with the planning and evacuation," Commander Cheverton said.

"Our small boat guided the local ferries in and out of the harbour which was littered with debris."

To add to the drama, a heavily pregnant woman fainted during the evacuation and *Melville* coordinated her rescue by Chinook helicopter.

"I am extremely proud of the way my team worked with the local authorities, in horrendous conditions, to help our fellow Australians," Commander Cheverton said.

HMAS *Choules* then arrived to provide more equipment and supplies to supplement the work started by HMAS *Melville*.

RAIDERS TICKETS

Members may recall that the Raiders club extended to RSL members a special offer of discounted tickets to the last home game in Canberra.

Due to the late notice and the necessity of a minimum of 10 members taking up this offer, it fell by the wayside.

However, Raiders have now extended the offer to all home ground matches this season.

Group tickets (minimum of 10 members) are being offered at \$20 for general admission and Silver Grandstand and \$30 for Gold Grandstand. The cost is reduced by \$5 for juniors (under 16yo).

Remember we can only obtain these ticket prices for groups of 10 or more, so you will need to register your interest

WV RSL would really appreciate a volunteer stepping forward to organise these tickets for home games for WV RSL members on a regular basis.

Please contact us at admin@rslwoden.org.au or 62851931 if that volunteer opportunity sounds like something you would like to do.



Sandakan Commemoration 2017

The 2017 Sandakan Wreath Laying Ceremony will be held at 2pm Friday 26th May at the Sandakan Memorial, Australian War Memorial.

The address will be given by Richard Moxham, the son of a Sandakan Death March survivor. The traditional Dame Mary Gilmore poem extract will be read by Janice Schroder, great niece of Walter John Hancock. Walter John Hancock died at Sandakan on 15th August 1945.

Major General A.J (Jim) Molan, AO, DSC (Retd) will recite the Ode.

Sergeant Hancock will be commemorated during the Last Post ceremony commencing at 5pm on the same day in the Pool of Reflection courtyard.

The Royal Military College Band and the Australian Rugby Choir will be in attendance at the Sandakan Wreath Laying Ceremony.

PRESIDENT JIM GILCHRIST ON ANZAC EVE DINNER

Nearly 70 Sub-Branch members and guests gathered at the Canberra Southern Cross Club for our Annual ANZAC Eve Commemoration and Rededication Dinner. While some regular supporters of this important event were unable to attend, a solid core of members included five former presidents, many former Sub-Branch leaders and a range of perennial volunteers. We also welcomed several guests, including several younger veterans.

The recently appointed CEO of the National Office, Ms Georgie Macris, spoke of her earliest recollections of ANZAC Day and recounted some family recollections and other memories that have contributed to make this day special to her. Georgie also outlined her association with the RSL and why she is committed to her work with the League.

The Sub-Branch Patron, His Excellency, Mr Chris Seed, replied to Georgie's address. Having thanked her, Chris noted some of the reasons he has a similar respect for and commitment to the Veteran Community. He also reminded us of the NZ contribution to the meaning of ANZAC and of the special relationship between our two Nations.

The Master of Ceremonies, Jack Aaron, made another major contribution to the success of this night. With the assistance of former President, Bill Smith, and others, Jack ensured that members met the formal goals of the dinner. Guests also found time for the camaraderie that makes our dinners special and ensured that all our visitors were made welcome.

On behalf of all who attended, I thank our office staff, particularly Joyce O'Brien and Florence Sofield for organising the dinner, the Southern Cross Club for providing an excellent venue and meal, and for all who either helped or just attended on the night.

Pictured below left: Ray Aitchison chats with MC Jack Aaron, Georgie Macris and partner Adam at the ANZAC Eve dinner.



ANNUAL ANZAC ESSAY COMPETITION A POPULAR TRADITION

The Woden Valley Sub-Branch has conducted the ANZAC and Peace Ceremony for local primary schools for 27 years—since 1990—and the associated Essay Competition for 15 years—since 2002.

This year, nine schools submitted 56 entries to the Essay Competition for which the topic was “**What ANZAC means to me**”. Schools are requested to submit their best essays, so that we are not overwhelmed with entries.

The essays were considered by a panel comprised of four members of the Woden Valley RSL Sub-Branch and a representative from the ACT Government Education Directorate.



As always, the standard of the essays was very high, but the judging panel decided on the three place-getters.

Prizes were awarded to the following students and presented at the ANZAC and Peace Ceremony in Eddison Park on 5 April:

Third Prize went to Annemieke Brown from Mawson Primary School.
Annie was awarded a medallion and \$125 towards her future education.
Second prize went to Josephine Dendrinos from Holy Trinity, Curtin.
Josephine was awarded a medallion and \$125 towards her future education.
First prize went to Shiori Ishikawa from Farrer Primary School.
Shiori was awarded a plaque, a medallion and \$250 towards her future education.

Points of interest about two of this year's place-getters are:

Josephine was placed equal third in last year's competition.
Shiori's essay was judged the best essay by **all five** of the judges, something which has never been achieved before in the history of the competition.

We congratulate all three of the place-getters for their outstanding efforts.



Eddison Pictured right: Rev Mick O'Donnell, Shane and Wilhemus Van Duren at the Eddison Park Combined Schools ANZAC and Peace Ceremony 2017

Pictured below: Mick O'Donnell's jeep Betty Boo is always a magnet for the children at the annual Combined Primary Schools ANZAC and Peace Ceremony.



2017 ANZAC DAY BADGE APPEAL

We would like to thank all members and volunteers for their time this year selling badges during the lead up to ANZAC Day.

This year Jan Properjohn coordinated the appeals for both Cooleman Court and Woden Plaza—thank you to Jan for all her efforts in making this years appeal so successful.

A special thank to Shane Van Duren for assisting with sales at Woden, which sold more badges than in previous years.

Pictured (right) is Logan Properjohn who helped out on the Saturday with his Dad Dave (pictured)—we certainly start them young!



DVA BUDGET AND REIMBURSEMENT NEWS FOR VETERANS

- Veterans can now claim up to **\$1,000 reimbursement for medical expenses** when they apply to the Veterans' Review Board (VRB) or the Specialist Medical Review Council (SMRC) review process. The reimbursement amount had been increased from \$467.50 to \$1,000 for each medical condition to encourage the early submission of medical evidence. "This measure ...will encourage veterans applying for a review at the VRB to get any necessary medical evidence as soon as possible to help speed up the review process," Minister for Veterans Affairs, Dan Tehan said. "Increasing the amount that can be reimbursed will ensure those applying to the VRB are appropriately remunerated for any relevant out-of-pocket medical expenses incurred as a result of obtaining evidence for VRB hearings."
- The Government will **expand the range of mental health conditions** current and former Australian Defence Force (ADF) members can seek treatment for on a non-liability basis as part of the 2017–18 Budget. VVCS eligibility applies to any partner, dependant or immediate family member to have access to the services and support provided by VVCS, including counselling and group programs. Former partners of ADF personnel will also be able to access VVCS up to five years after a couple separates, or while co-parenting a child under the age of 18.
- The Government will provide a **Gold Card** to cover the health care costs of the **1,800 surviving participants of the British Nuclear Test program and approximately 1,100 surviving veterans who served as part of the BCOF** will be able to access treatment for any condition under DVA arrangements, whether service-related or not.
- Mr Tehan said \$9.8 million would go to **pilot new approaches to suicide prevention** and improve care and support available to veterans. "The Mental Health Clinical Management Pilot will assess the benefits of providing intensive clinical management to help meet a veteran's complex mental health and social needs on discharge from a mental health hospital." Also as part of the pilot program, an expansion of the successful Coordinated Veterans' Care (CVC) program to improve support for veterans with both chronic physical and mental health conditions as a result of their service."
- \$9.1 million has also been allocated for **accelerated access to rehabilitation services**, streamlined access to Incapacity Payments, and improved access to the Totally and Permanently Incapacitated disability pension for veterans working past the age of 65, while \$18.0 million as part of the Government's *Energy for the Future Package* so more than 235,000 DVA clients will receive a one-off payment for energy bills
- The Government has committed an additional \$19.6 million over two years to **support domestic and international commemorative activities for the Anzac Centenary and Century of Service**, and the 100th anniversary of the Armistice of the First World War on Remembrance Day, 11 November 2018.
- One off payment of \$75 (single) or \$62.50 (partnered) for **energy assistance** will be paid in the week commencing 3 July 2017 to income support and compensation recipients. Compensation recipients will receive the single rate.
- **Wife pension under the social security law will cease to be paid in March 2020.** Recipients will need to qualify for an alternate income support payment (e.g. Age Pension).

ACT Senior Spectacles Scheme

The ACT Seniors Spectacles Scheme provides eligible ACT residents a \$35 rebate towards the cost of spectacles every two years.

Eligible people for the scheme must be residents of the ACT and hold an ACT Seniors Card. Applicants are required to pay for the total cost of their spectacles/contact lenses less the \$35 Government subsidy, which is payable to the optometrist/optical dispenser at the time of collecting their spectacles/contact lenses.

The subsidy available through this Scheme **cannot** be used in conjunction with the ACT Spectacles Subsidy Scheme.

Application forms are available from any of the registered optometrists as listed on the [Seniors Spectacles Scheme](#).

Once the application form has been completed the provider will process the application in conjunction with the ACT Revenue Office.

For more information please contact ACT Spectacles Subsidy Scheme, ACT Revenue Office.

Call (02) 6207 0028 - Select Option 6, ACT Community Assistance Scheme

Email: actspectaclessubsidyscheme@act.gov.au

Contact Us



Woden Valley
RSL office is
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day to Friday

Phone: 6285 1931

Admin:
admin@rslwoden.org.au

Memberships and
Renewals:

[http://www.actrsl.org.au/
wvrl-membership](http://www.actrsl.org.au/wvrl-membership)

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Pictured right:
Patron of WV RSL
HE Chris Seed,
NZ Ambassador
to Australia,
responding to the
speech by
Georgie Macris,
CEO RSL
National, at the
ANZAC Eve
dinner.

