

Governor-General visits veterans at Morshead Home

Vice-Regal launching of oral history project

The Governor-General, Quentin Bryce AC, declared herself “a huge fan” of *A Track Winding Back* — a digital oral history project — when she launched it at Morshead Home for Veterans and Other Aged Persons recently.

The project, now entering its second phase, “brilliantly captures so much in its generous remit: the memories of our veteran servicemen and women — in themselves priceless; recorded and preserved — not only as keepsakes but as invaluable pieces of our national heritage, shared with coming generations in contemporary and accessible ways” she said.

“These things are so important for connecting our past and present, knitting our community together and honouring our elders but the project has another dimension too. I know that you discovered, while opening up the treasure-boxes, that in their telling they opened hearts and souls, bringing healing, wholeness and freshness to the tellers.

My friends, this is a profound truth about our human nature.

Stories ... weave together our origins and experience; they tell us, uniquely and collectively, who we are.

“... I hear them everywhere: from ceremonies that crown tales of courage and heroism; to quiet conversations with people in Victoria or North Queensland, articulating their loss, retrieving fragments to rebuild a whole; to communities in the Murray-Darling or up in the Cape sharing with me the history and passage of their special places; to the speaking silence of battlefields in France ... All of these tell me who Australians are ...

And I stand today in a room full of them. Together we represent hundreds of years, thousands of narratives, not crisply shelved away but vivid and present every moment, the sum and secret wisdom of our lives.

As I do so I acknowledge your brave and honest offering with gratitude ...”.

A Track Winding Back, funded by the ACT Office for Ageing, involved recording interviews with veterans and spouses and the archiving of interviews and digital photographs to compact disc.

Recordings are given to participants, their families and friends.

Some objectives of the project were to:

- commemorate the service of ageing veterans;
- raise public awareness of the contribution of Australia’s veterans and their spouses;
- expand access to their service history;
- share the veterans’ stories online with wider, younger audiences;
- increase veterans’ sense of social and community connectedness; and
- increase the esteem and well-being of participants.



The youngest members of Morshead Child Care, Tyson Donnelly, Kasey van Diemen and Cooper Bush, present their views to the Governor-General.



Mrs June Healy OAM and Mickey Michaelis, board members of Morshead Home for Veterans and Other Aged Persons, arrive for the Governor-General's visit.



Ms Clare Phelps, Morshead's Recreational Officer (left) enjoys the launching function with Mrs Maidie Gibson.



Ms Majella Blinksell, project leader of A Track Walking Back, discusses the project with the Governor-General.



The Governor-General discusses the individual oral histories with Colin Fereday and John Ballard.



Morshead's Chief Executive Officer, Nikki van Diemen (left), at the launching with the Governor-General.

Go shopping with the RSL

The RSL has launched an exciting new shopping facility to boost the organisation’s fund-raising efforts. It will give members access to a huge range of RSL and military products, gifts and memorabilia.

National President Bill Crews says, “The RSL Shop has thousands of products ranging from clothing such as jackets, shirts, and hats to lapel pins, travel bags, golf items and many more. It also has an impressive range of products that you can add your own brand to. If you are hosting an event or conference or simply looking for that perfect gift for a friend or family member, the RSL Shop is the place to go.”

The RSL Shop will stock quality products at the lowest possible price, thus raising funds for the RSL’s continuing work on behalf of members. The new facility has been developed on the RSL’s behalf by the Australian promotions and marketing company Brandnet

and poppy fundraising products. The RSL Shop is open for business and can be found at: www.rslshop.com.au.

Hard copy catalogues are available

by contacting RSL Shop team on 1300 883 130. Staff can also provide expert advice in product selection and branding design.

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