



MARCHING ALONG



WRANS – Naval Women's Association (ACT) Newsletter

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Apr – May 2021



WRANS – Naval Women's Association (ACT) – Anzac Day 2021,



Siggy Kropp (Engel), Leanne Tingey (Kimpton), Kerry Macklin (Franklin), Jill Kelly (Hildebrand), Rose Van Dijk (Wood), Rae Leechman



Amanda, Di Sell (Julian), Beth Roberts (Cozens)

Newsletter of the WRANS – Naval Women's Association (ACT)
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WRANS – Naval Women's Association (ACT)

April – May 2021

WRANS - Naval Women Association (ACT)

WRANS - Naval Women's Association (ACT) - Activities

It is important for all of us to take care of ourselves and follow Government advice on COVID – 19. Unfortunately, we still have some restrictions and State lockdowns sometimes without warning.

At least we are living in the age of technology and can reach out to people when necessary. Remember what it was like before mobile phones, the internet and many different television shows. We enjoyed reading books, sewing, babysitting and boredom.

However, enjoy the moment and do not borrow unnecessary troubles. If you require any assistance, please contact members of the Committee, or me on 0407 039 947 or via email president@wransact.org.

April

Informal morning tea

On 01 April, the monthly morning tea was held at Tulips café Pialligo. We had a catch-up before Easter and discussed our Easter plans with family and friends.

WRANS Executive meeting

On 06 April, a WRANS Executive committee meeting was held at the Southern Cross Club, Woden. Unfortunately, the President was unable to attend due to an unexpected family emergency. However, the rest of the Executive held the meeting and had dinner afterwards.

War Widows Field of the Remembrance

On 16 April, Pauline Gribble (nee McCormick), Chris Lamb (nee McNicol), Kathryn Spurling (nee Norris) and Pat McCabe attended the ANZAC Day Service at the El Alamein village in Lyneham. Pauline represented the WRANS (ACT) and placed a cross in the War Widows Field of Remembrance during the ceremony.

The Governor General and Mrs Hurley attended this service, as did many other service associations. During a relaxed late morning tea participants and residents renewed acquaintances and made new friends.



Sarra Gill, Lyn McCoy (Middleton), Kath Sutton (Cooke), Pauline Gribble (McCormick), Heather Milward (Gunner), Judith Rowe (Knight), Trish Goddard (Thurston), Leanne Tingey (Kimpton).
Front row: Merle Hare (Storrie), Gaye Doolan (Holt)





ANZAC Day March



On 25 April, due to the COVID - 19 restrictions ten WRANS participated in the National ANZAC Day march. The weather was fine and warm for the march. While the number of marchers was limited the spirit and reverence of the march was evident,



ANZAC Day lunch

On 25 April, after the national ANZAC Day march some of the WRANS shared lunch with the RANCBA – RAN Communicators Branch Association (ACT) at the Canberra Bowling



Kerry Holmes (Wallis), Carol Davey (Wilkie), Judy Hughes (Hirst), Rose Van Dijk (Wood), Chris Lamb (McNicol), Pauline Gribble (McCormick), Health Milward (Gunner), Merle Hare



Club in Forrest. Prior to the commencement of lunch, the Remembrance service was held. Everybody enjoyed the relaxed atmosphere and the opportunity to meet and renew friendships. This is a happy mix given many of the WRANS were communicators and they can enjoy lunch with their partners as well.



Celebrating WRANS 80th and 70th Anniversaries

Women's Royal Australian Naval Service (WRANS) – background

In 1939, Mrs Florence Violet McKenzie formed the Women's Emergency Signalling Corps (WESC), which offered training in telegraphic and visual signalling to men of all nationalities wishing to enter the defence forces and the Merchant Navy. All the instructors were fully trained females.

In 1940, Mrs McKenzie approached various cabinet ministers to offer trained female telegraphists to serve in the Navy but they were not interested. She then approached the Naval Board and invited them to send an officer to test the ability of her female telegraphists.

In January 1941, CMDR J.B. Newman tested 'Mrs Mac's girls' 'and lobbied for them to be employed by the Navy. The WRANS were formed in April 1941. The first fourteen women enrolled on 25 April and arrived at *HMAS Harman* on 28 April 1941. In October 1942, the WRANS became part of the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) and enlisted members of the RAN.

Over 3000 women subsequently enlisted and at its peak, there were 2600 women employed in the WRANS. In 1945, WRANS recruiting ended and the WRANS disbanded on 02 September 1946. On 30 September 1948, the last wartime WRAN was discharged.

On 18 July 1950, the Government announced the establishment of the post-World War II WRANS. On 23 December 1950, First Officer Blair Bowden was appointed Director WRANS, but she did not assume her duties until 5 March 1951. The first WRAN rating was enlisted on 5 January 1951.

From 1983, the WRANS were integrated into the RAN and were formally disbanded in 1985.

WRANS on the Australian War Memorial – Honour Roll



Petty Officer WRAN Cook Maude Veronica Hebson, WR/37, from Drummoyne, NSW, enlisted on 27 December 1941 at the age of 38 (born 5/9/1903) and died on 27 December 1943 of Hypertension at the Naval Hospital at *HMAS Penguin*. Maude is buried in Rookwood Cemetery, Sydney. She served at *HMAS Harman* and *Kuttabul*.

WRAN Writer Edna Florence Marjason, WR/1241, from Lane Cove, Sydney, NSW, enlisted on 13 May 1943 at the age of 27 (born 7 November 1916) and was killed in a motor car accident in Cairns, Queensland on 23 January 1944. Edna is buried in the Cairns War Cemetery. She served at *HMAS Platypus* and in *HMAS Cairns*. Her husband F.J.C. Marjason also served.

WRAN Motor Transport Driver Nellie Boswell Moreton, WR/2284, from Lake Bolac, Victoria, enlisted on 15 August 1944 at the age of 26 (born 10 July 1918) and died of tubercular meningitis on 3 February 1945 at the Ararat Hospital. Nellie is buried in the Lake Bolac Cemetery, Victoria. She served at *HMAS Lonsdale* Melbourne.

WRAN Cook Hilda Maud Stone, WR/158, from Rosewater, South Australia, enlisted on 26 October 1942 at the age of 19 and died of pneumonia on 29 March 1943 in the Adelaide Hospital. Hilda is buried in Centennial Park War Cemetery, Adelaide. She served at *HMAS Torrens*, Adelaide.

WRAN Stewardess Betsy McLeod Dunk, WR/1162, from Lithgow, NSW, enlisted on 5 May 1943 at the age of 26 and died of cholecystitis and cholaemia on 3 December 1943 at Rachael Foster Hospital, Sydney. Betsy is buried in Rookwood Cemetery, Sydney. She served at *HMAS Cerberus* and *HMAS Penguin*.

WRAN Writer Margaret Hall, WR/1560, from Doomben, Queensland, enlisted on 12 July 1943 and died on 26 July 1944 at Australian Women's Hospital, Brisbane of pulmonary thrombosis. Margaret is buried in Lutwyche War Cemetery, Queensland. She served at *HMAS Moreton*.

Afternoon tea at Poppy's

On 28 April, prior to the Last Post Ceremony for Petty Officer Cook Maude Veronica Hebson, a large number of ex-WRANS and uniformed personnel celebrated the WRANS 80th and 70th anniversaries with afternoon tea at Poppy's café at the Australian War Memorial.



Above: Kerry Macklin (Franklin), Rae Leechman, Jill Kelly (Hildebrand), 3 visitors from Albury, Beth Roberts (Cozens), Leanne Tingey (Kimpton), Kathryn Spurling (Norris)

Left: 2 visitors, Liz Watts, Margaret Smith



Above: Kerry Holmes (Wallis), Janice Stewart (Odgers), Judy Hughes (Hirst), visitor



Above: Margaret Maher, Di Sell (Julian), Heather Milward (Gunner), Olwyn Ann Cook, Dollah West, Lyn McCoy (Middleton), Judith Rowe (Knight), Merle Hare (Storrie), Ray Milfull (Cooper)

Last Post ceremony

On 28 April, a Last Post Ceremony to remember and pay tribute to WR/37 Petty Officer Cook Maude Veronica Hebson was held at the Australian War Memorial.

On the 5th of September 1903, Maude Wilson was born in York in England, the daughter of George and Alice Wilson. Little is known about her early life. She came to live in Australia, and in 1932 married Stanley Hebson in Sydney. Maude was an early enlistee in the WRANS, joining on the 17th of December 1941, with the service number WR37. Throughout 1942,

she served as an attendant at *HMAS Harman* and then *HMAS Penguin*, a naval depot on Sydney Harbour where *HMAS Kuttabul* stands today.



Petty Officer Cook Maude Veronica Hebson gave her life for us, for our freedoms, and in the hope of a better world.

Many WRANS and current service personnel attended the Last Post Ceremony. Wreaths were laid

by Warrant Officer Deb Butterworth, OAM, CSM and Bar, representing the Chief of the Navy, Ms Pauline Gribble,

President of WRANS ACT, Mr David Manolas, President of the Naval Association ACT, Representatives of the WRNS Ms Olwyn-Anne Cook and Ms Dollah West and Ms Kathryn Spurling, on behalf of the War Widows.

The WRANS who did not lay a wreath gathered in the cloisters and around the Pool of Reflection during the ceremony. A group photograph of the ex-serving and current serving women was taken on the completion of the Last Post Ceremony.

Coach trip to Cooma

On 29 April, the National Naval Association (ACT) invited the WRANS on a coach trip to Cooma. Heather Milward (Gunner) Judy Hughes (Hirst) and Pauline Gribble went on the adventure to explore the Cooma prison museum. We were divided into 2 groups for the tour. One group had a Prison Officer as the tour guide. While group 2 had current serving prisoners as the tour guides. It was interesting and packed with a lot of history but



more time would be needed if you went on a self-guided tour. We had lunch at the Cooma RSL where the food was very nice.



May

Women's Veteran Network - Canberra lunch

On 02 May, Heather Milward, Kathryn Spurling and Pauline Gribble attended the Women's Veteran Network VNA lunch, which was held at Poppy's café Pialligo. It was a lovely catch-up meeting old and new friends. There was a mixture of ex-service Navy and Army women.

Informal morning tea

On 06 May, the informal morning tea was held at Tulips café in Pialligo, ACT. Due to the cooler weather, we sat inside and enjoyed the company. Morning tea is always fun because you never know who will come along. The atmosphere is relaxed and conversations are lively.



During the past few months, this has been a good opportunity to voice thoughts and concerns in a safe environment. This event is always the first Thursday of the month at 1000 hours and everybody is welcome – family and friends.

Sue Shaw (Waugh), Merle Hare (Storrie), Lyn McCoy (Middleton), Leanne Tingey (Kimpton), Kathryn Spurling (Norris), Judith Rowe (Knight), Pauline Gribble (McCormick), Keryn Northrope (Porter)

WRANS General meeting

On 10 May, a general meeting was held at the Southern Cross Club Woden. A presentation on breast awareness was provided by Bosom Buddies representatives and discussed examples of women and men contracting breast cancer.

The 2020 secret Santa money of \$445 was donated to Bosom Buddies charity. This organisation has supported our members and families during these trying times. We have at least seven of our members who have survived breast cancer.

Twenty-one members attended the meeting and stayed to enjoy dinner with friends.

Prior to the meeting, a presentation was made by Cheryl and Heather from Bosom Buddies on breast awareness. There are at least seven of our members who have survived breast cancer.

Informal monthly lunch

On 16 May, the WRANS monthly lunch was held at the Ainslie Football club. A mixture of WRANS and WRNS attended and there was much laughter and friendly banter. It is a great place to meet because there are many menu options and offers places to sit and chat no matter what the weather.

TC Canberra presentation

In December 2020, at the annual TC Canberra Cadets parade CDT Able Seaman Ella Grech was named the top female cadet 2020. However, Able Seaman Grech did not attend the annual parade to receive the award. So, on 28 May, Pauline Gribble attended the TC Canberra Cadets parade to present the belated award to Able Seaman Grech. However, once again Able Seaman Grech did not attend the parade.



Back: Olwyn Ann Cook, Dollah West, Beth Roberts (Cozens), Heather Milward (Gunner), Margaret Maher, Linda Neil, Judith Rowe (Knight).
Front: Rosemarie Millar, Merle Hare (Storrie) Pauline Gribble (McCormick).

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President	Pauline Gribble (McCormick)
Vice President	Heather Milward (Gunner)
Correspondence Secretary	Judith Rowe (Knight)
Minute Secretary	Judith Rowe (Knight)
Treasurer	Leanne Tingey (Kimpton)
Assistant Treasurer/Membership:	Christine Lamb (McNicol)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Events Co-ordinator:	Kerry Holmes (Wallis)
Catering Sub-committee	Kerry Macklin (Franklin) and Trish Goddard (Thurston)
DVA/KOC Liaison:	Pat McCabe
Welfare Officer:	Jill Kelly (Hildebrand)

The full list of elected officials is on the WRANS website.

SUBJECT: Simplification of VEA disability pension re-assessments

Purpose:

To inform CBD staff of new assessment options that relate to VEA disability pension re-assessments.

Key Points:

- From 31 May 2021, the OAM allows delegates to use previously obtained medical evidence for accepted condition(s) when a client advises that the condition(s) have not worsened.
- Delegates undertaking re-assessments of VEA disability pensions are authorised to use previously obtained medical evidence in subsequent re-assessments if clients opt not to have a previously accepted condition re-assessed.
- The OAM is not recommended for use in the following circumstances:
 - where newly accepted or disallowed conditions possibly affect the body parts that are required to be re-assessed, or that may impact any aspect of the current re-assessment; and
 - accepted conditions that are subject to Offsetting Provisions.
- Delegates are still required to investigate the claim to their reasonable satisfaction. They will have to determine if the medical evidence is appropriate to use in the re-assessment or if new medical evidence is required to clarify the current level of impairment.

Background

On 14 May 2021, the Commissions agreed to a procedural change aimed to improve veteran satisfaction and claims processing efficiency under the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (VEA), for the re-assessment of disability pensions, by providing claimants with a greater level of input into the assessment process.

Currently, under the VEA, when a client is already in receipt of a disability pension lodges an application for increase (AFI) or has a new condition accepted as service related, delegates are required to obtain new medical evidence to re-assess all of a client's accepted conditions. Some veterans who have many accepted conditions were required to undergo multiple medical appointments and tests in order to have the necessary DVA paperwork completed.

This requirement has now been removed, and clients can inform the department which accepted conditions have worsened since the previous assessment. Delegates are to consider these requests on a case by case basis, and consideration is to be given to use previously obtained medical evidence.

This businessline provides greater consistency and further aligns the investigation process undertaken by staff who conduct assessments using GARP V (Guide to the Assessment Rate of Pensions 5th Edition) and GARP M (Guide to Determining Impairment and Compensation).

Further information

Information about the simplification of VEA disability pension re-assessments is available in the Consolidated Library of Information and Knowledge (CLIK) at: *Military Compensation Reference Library > VEA disability pension re-assessments* or access via the following link [VEA disability pension re-assessment – optional assessment model](#)

Contact

Any enquires regarding this businessline should be directed to Greg Ross on extension 471 654.



Natasha Cole
First Assistant Secretary
Client Benefits Division

Australian War Memorial to honour the veterans we lost to suicide

Following three years' work with veterans, their families, ex-service organisations and the Departments of Defence and Veterans' Affairs, a new sculpture will be placed on the grounds of the Australian War Memorial recognising the sufferings of war and service.

Minister for Veterans' Affairs Darren Chester said the sculpture would provide a permanent place at the Australian War Memorial in recognition of those who have experienced and witnessed the ongoing traumas that can result from military service.



"I have spoken with many veterans' families and friends, including those who have lost someone to suicide, about how military service has affected them and how this can be better recognised at the Australian War Memorial," Mr Chester said.

"This project has been driven by the ex-service community, particularly Karen Bird and Connie Boglis, and I am proud that the Government will provide the \$1.2 million to ensure its place at the Australian War Memorial.

"This sculpture will be an enduring recognition for those affected by military service and serve as a reminder to us all of the about impact of service on some of our personnel and their families, but importantly, provide them with hope and healing."



Members of the stakeholder committee unanimously selected artist Alex Seton's proposal, every drop shed in anguish.

Sculpture commission committee member Karen Bird, the mother of the late Jesse Bird who tragically took his own life, said she sincerely believed that Alex Seton would enhance our ability to continue the conversation we have begun within the walls of the Memorial — this story must be transferrable to the national discourse — a truth telling of how war does come home and how accumulative service does have consequences.

"Alex's vision while speaking to this truth opens the horizon to hope and new promise. The Australian veteran community and most

significantly, their families, need to know and feel this hope and new promise," Mrs Bird said.

The commission will take two years to craft and be a significant work of site-specific, contemporary art and a major addition to the Memorial's National Collection. Alex Seton's proposal, every drop shed in anguish, will be a field of sculpted Australian pearl marble droplets in the Memorial's Sculpture Garden.

"Every droplet has a unique shape, defined by its delicate surface tension, as if about to burst. Their rounded liquid forms suggest blood, sweat or tears — for every drop ever shed in anguish," artist Alex Seton said.

"Most importantly, when touched these forms reveal themselves to have an inner strength and resilience that provides hope and promise of healing."

Subject to final approval by the National Capital Authority, the installation is expected to be completed in the second half of 2023. (*DVA Ministerial Media Release – 16 June 2021*)



Open Arms – Veterans and Families Counselling, provides support for current and ex-serving ADF personnel and their families. Free and confidential help is available 24/7.

Phone 1800 011 046 (international: +61 1800 011 046 or +61 8 8241 4546) or visit www.OpenArms.gov.au

MEMBERSHIP DUES 2021

Membership renewals are now due so if you have not already done so, could you please pay your annual membership subscription of \$20.00 before the next Annual General Meeting either by –

cash or by cheque made out to the WRANS – Naval Women’s Association (ACT) and forwarded to

The Treasurer,
WRANS – Naval Women’s Association (ACT),
PO Box 402,
WODEN ACT 2606

or if you prefer you could pay online by direct transfer. The account details are –

BSB Number 633 000
Account number 120 827 027
Account name WRANS - Naval Women’s Association (ACT)

Payee Reference – your Surname/Mship 2021

**NEW MEMBERS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME JOINING FEE IS \$10.00 PLUS THE ANNUAL \$20.00
SUBSCRIPTION**

(Application Form on website)

INVITE YOUR NAVY FRIENDS ALONG TO OUR MEETINGS!

Personal Details - New email address – have you moved?

We need to continually update our contact details so if you have changed address, email etc., would you please complete the following and either return it to the Membership Secretary, PO Box 402, Woden ACT 2606 or hand it in at the next General Meeting.

PERSONAL DETAILS – UPDATE

Surname Given Names

.....

Address

.....

...

Telephone (Home) (Work)

(Mobile)

(Email address)
