



MARCHING ALONG



WRANS - Naval Women's Association (ACT) Newsletter

Volume 17 Issue 3

June – August 2023

June – August 2023 WRANS - Naval Women Association (ACT)



From the President:

For me June, July, August have been very much self-centred as I come to terms with my new knee. However; Pauline, as usual, has kept us informed and connected. Thank you Pauline.

Please keep an eye on your emails, I expect to have more details regarding costs for our 21 October WRANS memorial luncheon shortly.

The flu and COVID have a constant presence in our lives and masks have become an accepted fashion accessory. I hope that you manage to avoid these illnesses and keep well.

Unfortunately I will miss our next morning tea and luncheon because I will be working as well as attending my grandchildren's birthday functions. I look forward to catching up with you all at the next general meeting and luncheon on the 23 September.

Regards

Sigi

President

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

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

Freedom of Entry to the city of Queanbeyan

Members of the WRANS – Naval Women's Association (ACT) participated in the Freedom of Entry to the city of Queanbeyan by HMAS Harman on Saturday 1 July 2023 to mark the 80th anniversary of the commissioning of HMAS Harman.

The parade was led by the Navy Band and a contingent from the Federation Guard followed by personnel from HMAS Harman, Naval Cadets from TS Canberra and then the WRANS (18 marchers) with



three cars for six participants who could not march.

At the end of the parade, there was an official cutting of the birthday cake by our very own Merle Hare (at 103 she is the oldest ex-Navy person in the area) and a young servicewoman from HMAS Harman, watched on by Chief of Navy, Vice Admiral Mark Hammond.

WRANS Memorial Service at HMAS Harman on Sunday 2 July 2023

The WRANS Memorial Service is usually held in October around the anniversary of the formation of the WRANS – Naval Women's Association (ACT) but for this year only, it was moved to 2 July to be part of the celebrations for the 80th Anniversary of the commissioning of HMAS Harman.

While we would have liked to have held the service at the WRANS Memorial, July is very cold so it was moved to the Bonshaw Mess. Instead of laying wreaths at the memorial, they were laid in front of the chair donated to HMAS Harman by Marion Stevens WRAN No 5. Marion was one of the first 14 women to join the Navy and arrived in April 1941 at the RAN Wireless/Transmitting Station Canberra that was later commissioned as HMAS Harman on 1 July 1943.

The chair is covered in World War II call signs sewn by hand into the fabric which took Marion 14 months to complete. She donated the chair to HMAS Harman which is recognised as the birthplace of the WRANS.



The service was attended by 42 ex-Wrans from Canberra and interstate, 10 senior female serving Naval personnel, six VIPs who laid wreaths, plus a number of personnel from HMAS Harman and TS Canberra. The Naval Cadets from TS Canberra provided the catafalque party. Judith Rowe was the Master of Ceremonies and LCDR Sue Wheeler was the guest speaker. Although hardly a guest, Sue is a long-term member of our association and is still serving full time in the Naval Reserve after joining the WRANS over 50 years ago.



The TS Canberra Naval Cadet Catafalque Party marching on. On the left is Jeremy Hanson CSC MLA, Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the ACT.

Right: Merle Hare and behind her is David Manolas, President of the Naval Association of Australia.



Left: Pauline Gribble, Rae Milfull and Janice Stewart.



Right: WO Shane O'Gradey from HMAS Harman; Ms Emma Davidson MLA, ACT Minister for Veterans and Seniors; Margaret Smith, Judith Rowe and Sue Wheeler.

HMAS Harman Ceremonial Sunset

To end off the week of celebrations for the HMAS Harman 80th anniversary, a formal reception and ceremonial sunset was held at the Bonshaw Mess on Friday 7 July. To recognise the importance of the WRANS to the history of Harman, five members of our association were invited to attend. From left to right: Pauline Gribble, Merle Hare, Sue Wheeler, Judith Rowe and Trish Goddard.



Our association's old White Ensign, the Marion Stevens Chair and a WRANS Crest were on display at the reception.

Freedom of Entry to the City of Canberra

The day after it officially became a part of the US Navy active fleet in Sydney, the USS Canberra II was given Freedom of Entry to the City of Canberra on Sunday 23 July. One hundred crew members from HMAS Canberra III also exercised their Freedom of Entry marching behind the one hundred crew members from USS Canberra. A number of our association members watched the march along London Circuit, Canberra.



HMAS Canberra Commemorative Service

On 9 August, Pauline Gribble (nee McCormick) laid a wreath on behalf of the WRANS - Naval Women's Association (ACT).

The Memorial Service commemorates the loss of HMAS Canberra I. Representatives from the ACT Government, the USA and UK navies, the Australian Defence Force and ex-Service Organisations attended. The Memorial is located very near the lake on Wendouree Drive, Kings Park, ACT.

Centenary of Legacy Australia Relay

On Monday 28 August the Legacy relay came to Canberra and 54 local torch bearers carried the flame in relay from the Australian War Memorial to Government House. The relay began on 23 April in Pozieres in the battlefields of France and will end in Melbourne on 13 October. Our very own Merle Hare (103 year old World War II Wran) carried the torch for the leg starting at Legacy House. While she can walk quite well, Merle was pushed in a wheelchair for the relay



due to the distance to be covered. She did us

proud. Many of our members turned out to watch Merle's relay leg.

Left: Merle in her wheelchair with Di Sell on the left and Trish Goddard



Social Events

Thursday 1 June Morning Tea

Standing from left to right: Janice Stewart, Margaret Manley, Judith Rowe, Juanita Strachen, Lyn McCoy, Rae Milfull, Carol Harris, Keryn Northrope, Christie. Front row: Merle Hare, Sigi Kropp, Pauline Gribble.



Sunday 18 June Lunch

Back row from left to right: Trish Goddard, Pauline Gribble, Olwyn Anne Cook, Maureen Jeffrey, Heather Milward, Janice Stewart, Judith Rowe.

Front row: Merle Hare and Margaret Manley.

(Sue Wheeler and Dot Weston were also at the lunch but left before the photo was taken.)

Tuesday 4 July Morning Tea

Back row from left to right: Lyn McCoy, Chris Hennessy, Dot Weston, Rae Milfull, Julie Lewis, Margaret Manley.

Second row: Pauline Gribble, Judith Rowe, Alison Gillett, Liz Watts, Janice Stewart.

Front row: Merle Hare and Margaret Smith.



Sunday 16 July Lunch

Back row from left to right: Maureen Jeffrey, Joan Henstock, Kate Fennery, Keryn Northrope, Dollah West, Heather Milward, Trish Goddard, Olwyn Ann Cook.

Front row: Margaret Manley, Sue Wheeler, Pauline Gribble, Merle Hare.



Wednesday 2 August Morning Tea

Back row from left to right: Janice Stewart, Sue Shaw, Lyn McCoy, Juanita Strachan and Heather Milward.

Front row: Merle Hare and Pauline Gribble.



Sunday 20 August Lunch

Back row from left to right: Sue Wheeler, Kerry Holmes, Chris Sutherland, Dollah West, Heather Milward, Beth Roberts and Trish Goddard.

Front row: Pauline Gribble and Merle Hare.



ACT Office of Seniors & Veterans News

The ACT Office of Seniors & Veterans has many services available to Veterans in the ACT. Information on this is located at <https://www.act.gov.au/veterans/home>

DVA News

Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm Unit Citation

Australian Defence Force members who served during the Vietnam War have been recognised with the Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm Unit Citation (the Citation).



The Citation was awarded by the former Government of the Republic of Vietnam (South Vietnam) to military units that distinguished themselves in battle. The Governor-General has formally approved the awarding of the Citation to Australian military units in recognition of their service during the Vietnam War.

Historically only a limited number of Australian units were approved to accept and wear the Citation insignia.

All Australian military units who were under the operational control of the United States Military Assistance Command Vietnam are now eligible.

Further eligibility and application details can be found at <https://bit.ly/3sCzsMc>

Joint media release - A step forward for the Queanbeyan Veterans' and Families' Hub

The Australian Government has awarded RSL LifeCare Veteran Services \$50,000 in grant funding to support the development of a business case to establish a Veterans' and Families' Hub in the Queanbeyan region.

The successful application by RSL LifeCare, supported by RSL NSW, brings the establishment of a Hub in Queanbeyan, one step closer.

RSL LifeCare Veteran Services will now work in partnership with RSL NSW, alongside local ex-service organisations and veteran charities across the region to establish a business case for a new Hub, designed to deliver the services and supports veterans and families need, close to home.

Important Dates

Royal Commission started –	8 July 2021
Rent Assistance Eligibility for TPIs begins –	1 January 2022
Royal Commission Interim Report – DONE	11 August 2022
Royal Commission Hearings – Sydney –	20 November 2023
Royal Commission Private Session Requestions –	28 April 2023
Royal Commission Submissions close –	13 October 2023
Royal Commission Final Report –	17 June 2024

For further information call 1800 331 800

OPEN ARMS
Veterans & Families Counselling

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

WRANS – Naval Women’s Association (ACT) Calendar of Events for 2023

Month	Day	Date	Time	Event	Venue
September	Sun	17	1200	Lunch	Ainslie Football Club
September	Sat	23	1100	General Meeting and Lunch	Canberra Southern Cross Club, Woden
October	Tues	3	1000	Morning Tea	Tulips, Pialligo
October	Sun	15	1200	Lunch	Ainslie Football Club
October	Sat	21	1200	Lunch for 20 th Anniversary of the Association	Bonshaw Mess HMAS Harman
November	Wed	1	1000	Morning Tea	Tulips, Pialligo
November	Sun	19	1200	Lunch	Ainslie Football Club
December	Sat	2	1230	Christmas Lunch	Yowani Country Club
December	Thur	7	1000	Morning Tea	Tulips, Pialligo
December	Sun	17	1200	Lunch	Ainslie Football Club
Jan-24	Fri	5	1000	Morning Tea	Tulips. Pialligo
January	Sun	21	1200	Lunch	Ainslie Football Club
February	Tue	6	1000	Morning Tea	Tulips, Pialligo
February	Sat	10	1100	Annual General Meeting & Lunch	Canberra Southern Cross Club, Woden
February	Sun	18	1200	Lunch	Ainslie Football Club
March	Wed	6	1000	Morning Tea	Tulips, Pialligo
March	Sun	17	1200	Lunch	Ainslie Football Club
April	Thur	4	1000	Morning Tea	Tulips, Pialligo
April	Sun	21	1200	Lunch	Ainslie Football Club

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President	Sigrid 'Sigi' Kropp (Engel)
Vice President	Vacant
Correspondence Secretary	Judith Rowe (Knight)
Minute Secretary	Judith Rowe (Knight)
Treasurer	Rachael 'Rae' Milfull (Cooper)
Assistant Treasurer/Membership	Christine Lamb (McNicol)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Event Co-ordinator	Pauline Gribble (McCormick)
Catering Sub-committee	
DVA/KOC Liaison	Pat McCabe

EX-OFFICIO POSITIONS:

Webmaster:	Pat McCabe
Facebook Manager:	Pat McCabe
Welfare Officer:	Pat McCabe – 0417 291 546
Scrapbooking:	
Newsletter Editor:	Judith Rowe (Knight) & Pat McCabe
Librarian:	Sigrid 'Sigi' Kropp (Engle)

Have you changed your email address yet!

If you have a Grapevine, IINET, TPG or Bigpond email address (there may be others) you will need to obtain a new email address as these providers are closing down their email services. Most of these changes are occurring in the last quarter of 2023.

You may wish to try Gmail, or Hotmail (they don't allow attachments) or any other provider that may still have email services.

Can you please advise your new email address as soon as you can!

MEMBERSHIP DUES 2024

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 –

**NEW MEMBERS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME JOINING FEE IS \$10.00 PLUS
THE ANNUAL \$20.00 SUBSCRIPTION
(Application Form on website)**

Payment can be made 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 2024

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

INVITE YOUR NAVY FRIENDS ALONG TO OUR MEETINGS!

Personal Details New email address – have you moved?

Note - All the Grapevine and Homemail email addresses closed on 31 May 23 so if you have been using this, please let us know your new email address as soon as possible.

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 forward to secretary@wransact.org or hand it in at the next General Meeting.

PERSONAL DETAILS – UPDATE

Surname Given Names

Address

Telephone (Home) (Work)

(Mobile)

(Email address)