



# MARCHING ALONG



## *WRANS - Naval Women's Association (ACT) Newsletter*

Volume 18 Issue 1

December 2023 - February 2024



Members and guests attending the lunch on Sunday 21 January to  
celebrate the 104<sup>th</sup> birthday of Merle Hare

Newsletter of the WRANS – Naval Women's Association (ACT)  
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Erindale, ACT 2903

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

# WRANS - Naval Women's Association (ACT)

## From the President:

With several social events to see out the old year we finished on a high. Christmas lunch was again at the Yowani Country Club on the 2<sup>nd</sup> December. Both the meal and company were enjoyed by all. This was followed by the monthly morning tea at Tulips on the 7<sup>th</sup> December and then the monthly lunch at the Ainslie Football club on the 18<sup>th</sup>. We like to keep in touch.

On behalf of our association, Pauline Gribble presented the Female Cadet of the Year award at the end of year Parade at HMAS Harman on the 8<sup>th</sup> December.

January started the same way we finished, with a full social calendar. This Year we have included Fridays in our monthly rotation of morning tea. The first one for the year was on January 5<sup>th</sup>. 15 women took the opportunity to catch up.

We are indeed lucky to have a very active 104 years old in our membership. We celebrated with Merle on Sunday the 21<sup>st</sup> January. WRANS, WRENS, NAA and serving members attended.

Holding just three general meetings a year and changing the meeting time and day to a Saturday morning followed by lunch has suited the membership much better. Our attendances are up meaning that more members have an opportunity to participate. Our last general meeting for the 2023 committee was held on Saturday 10 February followed immediately by the annual general meeting. All positions have been filled. Some committee members are ongoing others are new.

To both the retiring, the continuing and the new, congratulations and thank you.

For those who have not yet attended a morning tea, they are held on the first T, W, T or F of the month at Tulips in Pialligo. The next one is Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> March. The lunches are held on the third Sunday of the month at the Ainslie Football Club. Partners and family/friends also welcome.

The Association received an invitation from the new Navy Chaplain at HMAS Harman, Sonja Nugent, to attend the 48<sup>th</sup> Anniversary service for Saint Gabriel's Chapel. A number of us attended and met not just Sonja, but other Service Chaplains with interesting stories.

***For Every Drop Shed in Anguish*** - 'recognises the blood, sweat and tears shed in anguish, whether in training, deployment or operations.....' (Matt Anderson PSM, Director, Australian War Memorial). This sculpture by Alex Seton was dedicated at a ceremony in the grounds of the AWM on 22 February 2024. The marble spheres are awesome. Well worth a visit and touchable. Nearby is the memorial for the Women who have served, also worth a visit. A number of members attended this ceremony followed in the afternoon by a delicious and substantial afternoon tea at Government House. The Governor General and Mrs Hurley hosted the afternoon tea. Mrs Hurley conducted small informal tours of Government House including the upstairs which included the Royal quarters.

Wishing you all a very happy and healthy year and looking forward to catching up with you whenever possible.

*Sigi*

## Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of our association was held on Saturday 10 February 2024 at the Canberra Southern Cross Club, Woden and was attended by twenty-one members. The election of office bearers resulted in the following new committee:

**President:** Sigrid Kropp (nee Engel)

**Vice President:** Patricia Goddard (nee Thurston)

**Secretary:** Heather Milward (nee Gunner)

**Treasurer:** Pat McCabe  
**Assistant Secretary:** Judith Rowe (nee Knight)  
**Assistant Treasurer:** Rachael Milfull (nee Cooper)  
**Membership Secretary:** Judith Rowe  
**Events Co-ordinator:** Pauline Gribble (nee McCormick)  
**Welfare Officer:** Pat McCabe  
**DVA/KOC Liaison:** Pat McCabe  
**Facebook and Website Manager:** Pat McCabe  
**Newsletter Editor:** Judith Rowe and Pat McCabe

## Postal Address

Ever since the Association was formed, we have used a Post Office Box at Woden, however, over the years, the number of letters received has reduced considerably. As the rental for post office boxes has increased significantly this year, the committee has decided not to continue with the Woden post office box. Instead, we will share a post office box with a couple of other ex-Service organisations. Our new postal address is now:

WRANS – Naval Women's Association (ACT)  
Post Office Box 450  
Erindale, ACT 2903

## ANZAC Day 2024

For the last two years, our Association has marched in Queanbeyan on Anzac Day due to the renovation work being done at the Australian War Memorial (AWM). We have been assured that the parade ground at the AWM will be completed by Anzac Day so the committee has decided that we should march there this year. It means that we will be able to march behind our banner which we have not been able to do in Queanbeyan. The march in Queanbeyan is quite small and consists of a group of uniform Navy personnel from HMAS Harman followed by a group of veterans all marching together in the one group. Anyone wishing to march in Queanbeyan is welcome to do so but the majority of our members will be marching in Canberra. The march is due to commence at 0930 but more details will be provided closer to the event.

## TS Canberra End of Year Parade

Pauline Gribble represented our Association at the Naval Cadets TS Canberra End of Year Parade on Friday 8 December 2023 at HMAS Harman. She presented our annual award to the Female Cadet of the Year, CDTAB Georgia Ween. Our Association has been presenting this award each year since 1987. There is a shield that hangs on the wall in the cadet building with small plaques on which is inscribed the name of the Cadet who is presented with the award each year. The successful Cadet is presented with a certificate and a book from our Association.

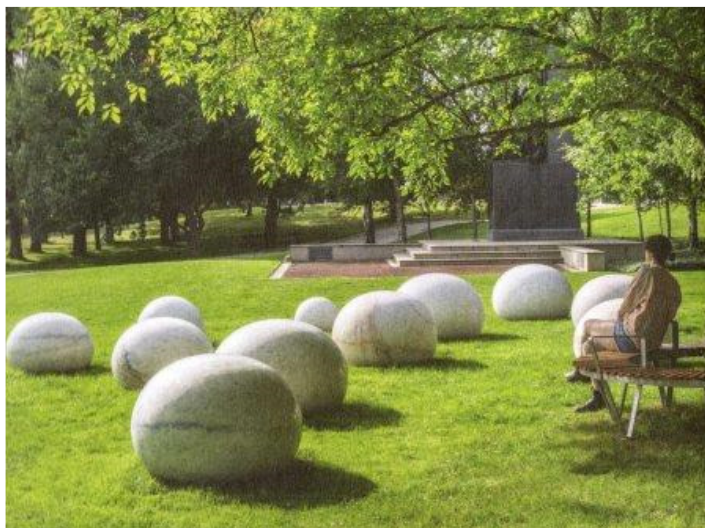


## Navy Chapel at HMAS Harman

The HMAS Harman Chaplain, CHAP Sonja Nugent invited the ex-WRANS to attend a short service at Saint Gabriel's Chapel at HMAS Harman on Thursday 15 February 2024 to mark the 48<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the dedication of the Chapel on that day in 1976. She explained that the building had previously been used as the Administration Office for the WRANS prior to it becoming the base Chapel. It is situated opposite Alexandra House which was the main accommodation block for Wrens at that time. The service was attended by Sigi Kropp, Heather Milward, Judith Rowe, Sue Wheeler, Pauline Gribble and Margaret Manley along with the Commanding Officer, the Executive Officer and other members of staff from HMAS Harman plus other Chaplains based in Canberra. Following the service most of our members plus some of the HMAS Harman staff stayed on for lunch in the mess onboard and then coffee in the adjacent coffee shop. It was a great opportunity to talk with serving members and strengthen our ties with HMAS Harman.



## Dedication of new memorial at the Australian War Memorial



On the morning of Thursday 22 February 2024, a small number of our members attended the dedication ceremony for the new memorial titled “For Every Drop Shed in Anguish” and built by Alex Seton in the grounds of the Australian War Memorial (AWM). The intent for this sculpture is to provide a place at the AWM for those who have experienced and witnessed the ongoing trauma that can result from service, and for AWM visitors to reflect on service experiences and to remember the long-term cost of war and service. It recognises those who have suffered as a result of their service, veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and physical wounds or

injuries, acknowledging that at the extreme end, it can result in death by suicide.

The sculpture is a field of marble droplets representing every drop of blood, sweat and tears ever shed by Australian military personnel and their families. Carved from Queensland Pearl Marble, the warm tones and intricate veins of the forms invite contemplation and reflection on their delicate shapes welcoming every visitor to touch their surface.

Those attending the dedication ceremony were invited to afternoon tea in the grounds of Government House in the afternoon.

## Australian Servicewomen’s Memorial

After visiting the new memorial, you should consider visiting the nearby Servicewomen’s Memorial. It was unveiled on 27 March 1999 and is dedicated to all women who served. A riverbed of black granite bisects the mosaic top with one side representing the pre 1945 era and the other side, post 1945. Although it has been in the grounds of the Australian War Memorial for nearly 25 years it is not very well known.



## Social Gatherings

### Christmas Lunch on Saturday 2 December 2023



*From left to right: Di Sell, Merle Hare and Joan Henstock.*



*From left to right: Dollah West, Margaret Manley and Carol Harris.*



### **Morning tea on Thursday 7 December 2023**



*From left to right, back row: Rae Milfull, Juanita Strachan, Heather Milward, Pauline Gribble, Sue Wheeler, Sue Shaw and Lyn McCoy. Front row: Judith Rowe, Merle Hare and Dot Weston.*

### **Lunch on Sunday 17 December 2023**

*From left to right, back row: Pauline Gribble, Rae Milfull, Keryn Northrope, Heather Milward, Trish Goddard, Olwyn-Anne Cook, Judith Rowe, Maureen Jeffrey (at back), Sue Wheeler and Margaret Manley.*

*Front row: Beth Roberts, Janice Stewart, Merle Hare and Dot Weston.*



### **Morning tea on Friday 5 January 2024**



*From left to right, back row: Maureen Jeffrey, Gaye Doolan, Dot Weston and Tina Davey. Second row: Judith Rowe, Heather Milward, Shirley Maughan, Janice Stewart and Kerry Holmes. Front row: Pauline Gribble, Trish Goddard, Carol Harris Merle Hare, Sue Wheeler and Lyn McCoy.*

### **Lunch on Sunday 21 January 2024**

Our regular monthly lunch for January was also a celebration of the 104<sup>th</sup> Birthday of our oldest member, Merle Hare. It was a larger gathering than usual as a lot of people wanted to join in the celebration. A total of 35 attended including Peter Cook-Russell and Alex McGowan from the Naval Association and AB Sophie Marriott representing HMAS Harman.



*From left to right, standing:* Peter Cook-Russell, Christine Lamb, Alex McGowan, Janice Stewart, Marian Schubert, Shirley Maughan, Rae Milfull, Dot Weston, Beth Roberts, Trish Goddard, Dollah West, Keryn Northrope, Judith Rowe, Heather Milward, Olwyn-Ann Cook, Rosemarie Millar, Natalie Read, Di Sell (partly obscured) Carol Harris, Margaret Manley, Sigi Kropp, Kathryn Spurling, Maureen Jeffrey, Sue Wheeler and AB Sophie Marriott.

*Seated in chairs:* Gaye Doolan, Heather Schmitzer, Merle Hare and Joan Henstock.

*Seated on the floor:* Chris Sutherland, Felicity Gribble, Pauline Gribble and Judy Hughes.



Merle cutting her cake.

## **Morning tea on Tuesday 6 February 2024**



*From left to right, back row:* Heather Milward, Sue Shaw, Juanita Strachan, Kerry Holmes, Janice Stewart, Chris Hennessy, Maureen Jeffrey, and Alison Gillett. *Front row:* Judith Rowe, Olwyn-Anne Cook, Julie Lewis (sitting), Di Bodsworth with her grand-daughter, and Pauline Gribble.

## **Lunch on Sunday 18 February 2024**

*From left to right, back row:* Judith Rowe, Heather Milward, Sue Wheeler, Rae Milfull, Trish Goddard and Maureen Jeffrey.

*Front row:* Joan Henstock, Janice Stewart, Merle Hare and Beth Roberts.



## Happy Birthday

January	February	March	April	May
Kristy Davis	Judy Hughes	Lyn McCoy	Chris Hennessy	Vicki Chin
Alison Gillett	Jill Kelly	Heather Milward	Keryn Northrope	Carol Harris
Merle Hare (104)	Rae Milfull	Judith Rowe	Marian Schubert	Florence Heller (100)
Kerry Holmes			Margaret Smith	Joan Henstock
Shirley Maughan			Chris Sutherland	Kerry Macklin
Pat McCabe				Sue Shaw
				Sue Wheeler

A belated but sincere Happy Birthday to all our members who have already had birthdays this year.  
and  
Happy Birthday and best wishes to all our members who are having birthdays in the next three months

## 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

### Hearing


Department of Health and Aged Care has developed an online survey to gather client feedback, and have sent DVA a flyer with a QR code and information for veterans to participate. Once the survey opens on 19 February 2024, veterans will be able to access and complete the survey until it closes on 1 April 2024.

The survey will take approximately 15 minutes to complete and responses will help inform the review.



**Have your say**

Use the QR code to go to the survey or  
visit our website and click the survey link  
[health.gov.au/hear](https://health.gov.au/hear)



Advise your Audiologist that there is a new Hearing Aid Prior Approval Form – DVA Form D9398

### Legislation Reform

The Government has today the commencement of public consultation on proposed changes to simplify veterans' entitlements, compensation and rehabilitation legislation.

The Government is seeking comments on the draft Veterans' Entitlements, Treatment and Support (Simplification and Harmonisation) Bill 2024 that, if passed by Parliament, will reform more than a century of veteran compensation legislation.

Further information can be found at <https://bit.ly/3uRWPmD>



## Booked Car with Driver

### Can you access\* the Booked Car with Driver service

when travelling for approved treatment under the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986*?



**Full access if you are either:**

- ✓ Aged 80 years and over **OR**
- ✓ Living with dementia (any age) **OR**
- ✓ Legally blind (any age)



**Access if you are 79 years or younger and you are:**

**Travelling to a specific treatment location**

- Former Repatriation General Hospitals
- Public and private hospitals, including outpatient services
- Providers of prosthetics, surgical footwear and orthotics
- Office of Hearing Services accredited providers
- Medical specialist rooms  
\*General Practitioners excluded
- Radiology, imaging and pathology services

**YES, AND**

**Meet one or more specified medical conditions**

- Frailty that severely limits your independence
- Recent surgery or treatment severely affecting your capacity to use public transport
- Conditions that make travelling on public transport challenging (such as incontinence)
- Respiratory insufficiency severely limiting independent activity
- Amputation severely limiting independence
- Arthritis severely limiting independence
- Significant trauma
- Recent coronary occlusion severely limiting independence
- Peripheral vascular disease severely limiting independence
- Cardiac failure severely limiting independence
- Psychosis
- Hemiplegia
- Ataxia

**You can access\* the Booked Car with Driver service.**  
**Call 1800 550 455 to book or discuss your eligibility.**

\*Veteran White Card holders must be travelling for treatment of a condition covered by their Card to be eligible.

[www.dva.gov.au/bcwd](http://www.dva.gov.au/bcwd)

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### 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 –	4 March 2024
Royal Commission Private Session Requests –	28 April 2023
Royal Commission Submissions close –	13 October 2023
Royal Commission Final Report –	9 September 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](http://www.OpenArms.gov.au)*



## WRANS – Naval Women’s Association (ACT) Calendar of Events for 2024

Month	Day	Date	Time	Event	Venue
March	Wed	6	1000	Morning Tea	Tulips, Pialligo
March	Sun	17	1200	Lunch	Ainslie Football Club
April	Thu	4	1000	Morning Tea	Tulips, Pialligo
April	Sun	21	1200	Lunch	Ainslie Football Club
April	Thu	25	TBA	ANZAC Day March	TBA
May	Fri	3	1000	Morning Tea	Tulips, Pialligo
May	Sun	19	1200	Lunch	Ainslie Football Club
May	Sat	25	1100	General Meeting and Lunch	Canberra Southern Cross Club, Woden
June	Tue	4	1000	Morning Tea	Tulips, Pialligo
June	Sun	16	1200	Lunch	Ainslie Football Club
July	Wed	3	1000	Morning Tea	Tulips, Pialligo
July	Sun	21	1200	Lunch	Ainslie Football Club
August	Thu	1	1000	Morning Tea	Tulips, Pialligo
August	Sun	18	1200	Lunch	Ainslie Football Club
September	Fri	6	1000	Morning Tea	Tulips, Pialligo
September	Sun	15	1200	Lunch	Ainslie Football Club
October	Tue	1	1000	Morning Tea	Tulips, Pialligo
October	Sat	19	1100	Memorial Service	HMAS Harman
November	Wed	6	1000	Morning Tea	Tulips, Pialligo
November	Sun	17	1200	Lunch	Ainslie Football Club
December	Thu	5	1000	Morning Tea	Tulips, Pialligo
December	Sun	15	1200	Lunch	Ainslie Football Club

For further information on the WRANS – Naval Women’s Association (ACT)  
see [www.wransact.org](http://www.wransact.org)

