



April 2024

ANZAC DAY BULLETIN

ALISON BYRNES MP FEDERAL MEMBER FOR CUNNINGHAM

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In my **2024 Anzac Day bulletin** I wish to acknowledge the service of veterans and tell their stories.

In this bulletin I would like to particularly acknowledge the service of women and veterans as illustrated by the lives of **Irene Walker** and **Lachlan Stevens**.

LOCAL VETERAN STORIES

Irene Walker

Irene Walker migrated to Australia from the UK with her family in 1964. She met her husband during World War II.



He was a merchant navy captain and she a leading Wren. Like many people who lived through that era she married her husband after the war ended in October 1945. Hers had been an active service.

In 1942 Irene enlisted in the Women's Royal Navy Service, fondly known as the Wrens.

She trained as a wire-splicer, a role in which amongst other things she attached torpedo nets to merchant navy ships. This was done to protect them from enemy submarines. Irene was initially posted to Portsmouth, a major naval base.

Irene was promoted to Leading Wren and then transferred to Port Edgar Naval Base in Scotland where she worked as a Wren recruit instructor. She taught fellow Wrens the skills and lessons she had learned during her service. After this she was transferred to Newcastle where she continued to serve until the end of the war.

Irene will celebrate her 102nd birthday on 23 March 2024, a milestone few of us reach. She is one of the many brave women who joined the Wrens seeking a more dynamic role in the war effort. She offered to both serve her country and protect her family. Her example is one for us all.



Photo courtesy of City of Wollongong RSL Sub-Branch and NEG Photography.
Irene attending Victory In The Pacific (VP) Day at Wollongong Cenotaph on Saturday 3 June 2023.

Lachlan Stevens

Lachlan Stevens was a member of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) for more than six years where he served as a combat engineer or "sapper".

A sapper is one of the most hazardous roles in the ADF, often working around live explosives and improvised explosive devices (IED's). It is a vital job that protects other Australians from potentially deadly situations.

Lachlan was deployed to Afghanistan in 2010 and again in 2012. While deployed his job was to detect IED's. This role places extreme levels of stress, danger and uncertainty on the sapper and claimed the lives of multiple heroic Australians over the duration of the conflict. Their service shall not be forgotten, and we will remember them.

Upon leaving the army Lachlan realised that many veterans needed support and he diverted his passion and intelligence to his mental health support group the **"Barstool Brothers"**.

This group aims to promote conversations around mental health to men in a safe environment at free accessible events. The second innovative aspect of this group is that it provides an education initiative for the purposes of providing a mental health training program for people within the hospitality industry.

Lachlan continues to support his country as a veteran, a pioneer in mental health services, and an innovative and highly motivated small business operator.



Lachlan Stevens with Alison Byrnes MP and Member for Wollongong Paul Scully MP at ANZAC Day 2023, where Lachlan's small business was selling bacon and egg rolls to raise money for the RSL NSW Veteran Support Fund.

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City of Wollongong RSL Sub-Branch

\$5,000 ANZAC Scholarship Available for University of Wollongong Students

The City of Wollongong RSL Sub-branch is thrilled to announce the opening of applications for the ANZAC Scholarship offering a generous \$5,000 per year for three years to deserving students pursuing their undergraduate studies at the University of Wollongong (UOW).

This scholarship is dedicated to supporting individuals with a connection to the Australian or New Zealand Defence Force, whether through their own service or that of a parent, or grandparent in an operational or peacekeeping role.

APPLICANTS MUST MEET THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA.

- ▶ Enrolled full-time in an undergraduate degree program at UOW.
- ▶ Enrolled in any year of their undergraduate studies.
- ▶ Reside in the region and hold Australian citizenship or permanent residency in Australia.



Photo courtesy of City of Wollongong RSL Sub-Branch and NEG Photography.

Alison with City of Wollongong RSL Sub-Branch President John Sperring and Honorary Secretary Peter Lipscomb.

The ANZAC scholarship presents a unique opportunity for students to receive financial assistance while honouring the legacy of our servicemen and women. By investing in their education, we aim to empower the next generation of leaders and advocates.

Interested candidates are encouraged to reach out to the Wollongong RSL Sub-Branch at WollongongSB@rslnsw.org.au to request further information and application details.

Saluting their Service Grants

The Saluting Their Service (STS) Commemorative Grants Program, funded by the Department of Veterans' Affairs, is designed to commemorate the service and sacrifice of Australia's service personnel and their families in wars, conflicts and peace operations.

Up to \$3.5 million funding, split across three batches, is available each financial year.

THERE ARE TWO CATEGORIES OF GRANTS AVAILABLE:

Community Grants of up to \$10,000 are available for locally based projects and activities.

Major Grants of between \$10,001 and \$150,000 are available for major commemorative projects and activities that are significant on a broader regional or national perspective.

THE DATES FOR LODGEMENT OF APPLICATIONS FOR THESE GRANTS ARE:

Batch 1:	OPENS	27 February 2024
	CLOSES	20 June 2024
Batch 2:	OPENS	21 June 2024
	CLOSES	3 October 2024
Batch 3:	OPENS	4 October 2024
	CLOSES	5 February 2025

Illawarra ANZAC DAY Commemorative events

WHERE	WHEN
Vietnam Veterans Association- Illawarra Sub-Branch	ANZAC Eve Commemoration Service Sunday 21st April at 4.00pm at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Flagstaff Hill, Wollongong.
Austinmer-Thirroul RSL Sub-Branch	Dawn Service 6.00am – Austinmer Memorial, Austinmer Beach. Dawn Service 6.00am – Thirroul Memorial, Woodward Park, Thirroul.
Dapto-Port Kembla RSL Sub-Branch	Dawn Service 6.00am – Allan Street Memorial, Port Kembla.
City of Wollongong RSL Sub-Branch	Dawn Service 5:30am – Wollongong Cenotaph, MacCabe Park, Church Street, Wollongong. March at 10.00am – Wollongong Mall.
Coledale RSL Sub-Branch	Dawn Service 5.30am – 731 Lawrence Hargrave Drive, Coledale.
Corrimal RSL Sub-Branch	Dawn Service 6.00am – Anzac Grove Memorial Park, Railway Street, Corrimal.
Helensburgh RSL Sub-Branch	Dawn Service 5.45am – Charles Harper Park, Helensburgh.
Vietnamese Community in Wollongong	ANZAC Day Service 10.30am – MacCabe Park, Wollongong.
Woonona-Bulli RSL Sub-Branch	Dawn service 5:30am – Woonona-Bulli RSL Memorial, Woonona.

The 2024 Wollongong City ANZAC Day March will commence at 10.00 am.

The Wollongong City ANZAC Day March will commence at 10.00 am and will follow the following route: contingents will form up in Crown Street Mall Wollongong, facing Kembla Street, then turn right into Kembla Street, then right into Burelli Street, then turn left into Church Street. After passing the Wollongong Cenotaph marchers will turn right into MacCabe Park behind Pioneer Hall where they will disperse.

The March will include some vintage cars carrying veterans who are unable to walk, Australian Defence Force personnel, members of Illawarra RSL Sub-Branches, representatives of other ex-Service organisations and veterans' groups, and contingents representing community organisations. Local bands will provide musical support.

Spectators are welcome to attend the March, and line the route to show their support for our local veterans.



Nareena Hills Successful in Saluting their Service Grants 2024

Nareena Hills Public School's Parents & Citizens (P&C) Association have secured a \$10,000 grant to establish a dedicated ceremonial space on their school grounds to undertake ANZAC ceremonies and to conduct educational activities to deepen students understanding of Australian history and the sacrifices of Australian servicemen and women.

The proposed ceremonial space, which was designed in conjunction with City of Wollongong RSL Sub-Branch, will provide an opportunity for the wider school community to pay their respects by attending ceremonies, honouring the memory of those who have served, and instil a sense of unity, patriotism and gratitude.

CONGRATULATIONS!



Alison visiting Nareena Hills Public School with Principal Crossingham and P&C President Angies Howes.



ANZAC DAY
SCHOOLS'
AWARDS
2024

Discover
the stories
of veterans
in your local
community

The 2024 Anzac Day Schools' Awards

The 2024
Anzac Day Schools' Awards
are calling on schools across
the country to explore the theme

**Discover the stories of veterans
in your local community.**

This year's theme aims to deepen students' understanding of Australia's wartime history by encouraging them to connect with local veterans. It provides a special opportunity to recognise significant events like Anzac Day and Remembrance Day, while honouring the sacrifices made by veterans.

For more details about how to enter and the selection criteria go to anzacportal.dva.gov.au/adsa

The Anzac Day Schools' Awards recognise the work of students, teachers and schools who engage with veterans and commemorate Australia's wartime history. The theme for the 2024 Anzac Day Schools' Awards is *Discover the Stories of Veterans in Your Local Community*.

Interview local veterans, use the Anzac Portal, and access a range of additional sources to support students as they learn more about the men and women in their local community who have served in Australia's Defence Forces. To enter the awards, schools need to show how they have commemorated the service of their local veterans.

PRIZES

National, State & Territory Awards

National Winner \$5000
State & Territory Winners \$3000

Special Categories

Award for Veteran Involvement \$2000
Award for Innovative Commemoration \$2000
Award for Creative use of Technology \$2000
Remote Schools Award \$2000
Specialist Educational Settings Award \$2000

ENTER

For more details about how to enter and the selection criteria go to anzacportal.dva.gov.au/adsa

Entries close **Friday 31 May 2024**.

**ALWAYS
HERE
TO HELP**

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Alison Byrnes MP

FEDERAL MEMBER FOR CUNNINGHAM

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or email

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