

# GUILD DIGEST



"We all belong to each other.  
We all need each other. It is in serving  
each other and in sacrificing for  
our common good that we are  
finding our true life."

—King George VI

Extract from Christmas message, 1941

Under the Patronage of  
His Excellency General  
The Honourable  
**David Hurley AC DSC (Ret'd)**  
Governor of New South Wales  
and **Mrs Linda Hurley**

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Madeline Dermatossian

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**EDITORIAL COMMITTEE**

M Wilson, E Thompson,  
T Juda, J Stevens

**PUBLISHER**

War Widows' Guild of Australia NSW Ltd

**HEAD OFFICE**

Level 14, 227 Elizabeth Street  
Sydney NSW 2000

**EMAIL**

[guild@warwidowsnsw.com.au](mailto:guild@warwidowsnsw.com.au)

Telephone (02) 9267 6577

Facsimile (02) 9267 6601

Toll free numbers  
(for country members)

Enquiries and Welfare 1800 451 615

Friendship Line 1800 451 615

**OFFICE HOURS**

Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm

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*Guild Digest* has been checked thoroughly  
and to the best of our knowledge is  
correct. However, errors may occur which  
are beyond our control. If this should  
happen, we apologise most sincerely.

**Editorial**

## Help For Low Vision

We have received some wonderful feedback about our 'new look' *Guild Digest*. Thank you to everyone who took the time to call or email with their comments, it was very much appreciated.

One of our members commented that she was delighted with the new layout and format - she has significant macular degeneration and found the new design much easier to read, especially with fewer words on each page and the different font.

Macular degeneration, along with other vision problems such as glaucoma and cataracts, can have a big impact on our lifestyle. You can read more about low vision support options on page 20 of this issue. Vision Australia offers many strategies and aids to help with independence and safety.

Vision Australia also works with the Guild to provide members with an audio copy of the *Guild Digest*. If you are having problems reading the *Guild Digest*, please do not hesitate to contact us at head office and we can arrange for a CD to be posted out to you, at no extra charge. You will still receive the printed copy of the *Guild Digest*. If computers are your thing, you might like to read the *Guild Digest* online, where you can zoom in until the text is displayed at the best size for you. Visit [www.warwidowsnsw.com.au](http://www.warwidowsnsw.com.au) or we can email a PDF copy to you.

## CONTENTS

From the CEO	3	iPad Training	17
State President's Message	4	Housing Update / RSL LifeCare	18
National President's Report	5	Verna's Gift to the Guild	19
Commemoration and Events	6-7	Welfare News	20-21
Anzac Day 2018	8-9	Guild & Social Club News	22-23
Anzac Field of Remembrance	10-14	Member's News	24-25
Honouring Women	15	Friendship Line	26
Constitution Update / Invictus Games	16	Gardening	27

**OUR COVER**

**FRONT:**  
Life member  
Margaret  
Tanner placing  
a cross, Anzac  
Field of  
Remembrance  
Service, St Andrew's  
Cathedral, Sydney.



**BACK:**  
Selection of  
images from the  
Anzac Field of  
Remembrance  
Service, St  
Andrew's  
Cathedral, Sydney







## From the CEO

Thank you for the very warm welcome I've received on joining the Guild.

I would like to begin by thanking Mary Wilson for stepping into the role of Acting CEO since the beginning of the year until my appointment. Mary kept the office running smoothly and made significant progress on a number of ongoing and new projects. We are fortunate to retain her expertise as Finance Manager going forward.

Finalising the Guild's withdrawal from housing will be one of our priorities, with the forthcoming sale of our Dolls Point and Drummoyne properties. You can read an update about the residents on page 18. Please know the Guild is committed to providing ongoing support to the remaining residents to find appropriate alternative accommodation.

The Board has been reviewing the Guild's Constitution and the proposed amendments are now ready to be voted on at the Annual General Meeting in July. You will find an insert in this Guild Digest which summarises the changes. Please review the information to learn more about the proposed amendments and how to prepare a proxy vote if you are unable to attend the AGM.

I would like to highlight the excellent work our Friendship Line volunteers undertake on a daily basis reaching out to our members. Their phone calls and cards are very much appreciated and complement the work of our Community Services team. The administration underpinning these calls has traditionally been quite onerous, so it's pleasing to see steps being taken to streamline some processes. Thank you to our Friendship Line volunteers for their support of these changes – new technology can sometimes be challenging however, as expected, our ladies are proving themselves very capable.

Our 2018 Board election ran smoothly and we will welcome our new Directors Gwen Cherne and Lynne Boyd at the AGM. Thank you to all the members who nominated for the Board – your commitment to the Guild is very much appreciated. Congratulations to Rhondda Vanzella OAM on her reappointment as State President.

Please join us at our AGM on Wednesday, 25 July. I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible.

MADELINE DERMATOSSIAN  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

# FOR YOUR DIARY

## Guild AGM

10am, Wednesday, 25 July  
Level 3 Conference Centre  
Castlereagh Boutique Hotel \*\*  
169 Castlereagh Street, Sydney

## Honouring Women United by Defence Service

### Last Post Ceremony

4.45pm, Tuesday, 11 September  
Australian War Memorial, Canberra

### Dinner

6.30pm, Tuesday, 11 September  
Hotel Realm, Canberra  
*Please see page 15 for information.*

## War Widows' Walk and Picnic

Wednesday, 31 October  
Kokoda Track Memorial  
Walkway, Concord

## Christmas Party

Thursday, 6 December  
Cellos Restaurant, 4th Floor  
Castlereagh Boutique Hotel \*\*  
169 Castlereagh Street, Sydney

**\*\* Please note venue changes**

## NOTICE OF MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the War Widows' Guild of Australia NSW Ltd will be held on **Wednesday, 25 July 2018 at 10am** at the Castlereagh Boutique Hotel, Level 3 Conference Centre, 169 Castlereagh Street, Sydney. Morning tea will be available from 9.30am and the meeting will be followed by light refreshments. To allow us to provide catering, please RSVP to head office by Monday, 9 July on 9267 6577 or 1800 451 615 (country). **If required, transport assistance must be requested through head office no later than Friday, 23 June.**



## State President's Message

I would like to extend a very warm welcome to the Guild's new Chief Executive Officer, Madeline Dermatossian. Madeline's senior executive expertise and experience with organisations including Australia Post, Defence Housing

Australia and FuturePlus Financial Services will be a valuable asset as we make progress towards a sustainable future for the Guild.

At our AGM in July we will be voting on the proposed amendments to the Guild's Constitution. Your Board has worked hard to modernise the governance structure of the Guild and we encourage you to support these necessary changes. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call me.

Thank you to Wendy Thompson and Dot Haines who retire after six years in their roles as member Directors. In particular, Wendy's service as State President for three of these years, as well as her appointment to numerous committees, has been of enormous value to the Guild. Two of our valued non-member Directors, Chair Jenny Wheatley and Deputy Chair Laura Raymer, have also stepped down from the Board after serving three and two years respectively as Directors. I would like to thank both Jenny and Laura for the professional management and governance experience they have contributed to the Board and Guild.

It was wonderful to see so many of you at our Anzac Field of Remembrance Service in Sydney. Our most significant Guild event, the Service brings together our members with leaders from the community, political and veteran space. It is always an honour for the RSL Youth Choir to join us at St Andrew's Cathedral. I believe this special partnership between our two organisations provides opportunities to educate the next generation of young people about the sacrifices of those who have served and of the women and families left behind.

I recently attended The Entrance & Long Jetty Anzac Field of Remembrance. Well done to

Fran Brock for organising the lovely Service. Thank you also to Enid Pugh in Newcastle, Gareth Jones in Albury and the Gulgong RSL Sub-Branch for their dedication to their local Anzac Field of Remembrance Services.

Anzac Day is always special and this year was no exception. What an honour it was to join fellow Guild members as we marched through the streets of Sydney. It's so important that we, along with our families, are acknowledged for our sacrifice and service.

Which brings me to the inaugural 'Honouring Women United by Defence Service' Last Post Ceremony and dinner in Canberra on Tuesday, 11 September. As the final year of the commemorations for the Centenary of Anzac draws to a close and the new campaign of the Year of Peace begins, we need to honour those who have made the sacrifices for that peace; and for those who continue to make those sacrifices on a daily basis.

Bringing together war widows, current and ex-serving women from the Australian Defence Force and women who have been affected by the service of a family member, these events are not to be missed. Further information can be found on page 15. I hope you are able to join the Guild and our collaborating partners as we honour the service and sacrifice of women and families united by defence service.

Lastly, it has been such fun to drop in on some of our iPad training classes. With over 100 ladies enrolled across 14 locations, our trainer 'OJ' is doing a fantastic job bringing tech knowledge to our members.

I look forward to receiving many more emails and photos from our enthusiastic students!

**RHONDDA VANZELLA OAM**  
**STATE PRESIDENT**

*"We rise by lifting others"*



Dear Ladies,

Can you believe how fast this year is flying? June already and I wonder where those first months have gone.

In April, the New South Wales and ACT Guilds held their annual Anzac Field of Remembrance services. The address given by one of NSW's younger widows, Gwen Cherne, was thought provoking indeed. The US Consul General, Ms. Valerie Fowler was so moved by the address that she posted a copy on the US Consul General's Facebook page. The address ended up in the Minister's hands in France and also in the hands of the Director of the Australian War Memorial, Dr. Brendan Nelson. Thank you for your thoughtful words Gwen. (You can read Gwen's address in full, commencing on page 12).

I have attended the National Ceremony for the 103rd Anniversary of the Gallipoli Landings on Anzac Day at the Australian War Memorial, the 75th Anniversary of the Battle of the Atlantic, again at the Australian War Memorial, the 50th Anniversary for the Fire Support Bases Coral and Balmoral at the Australian Vietnam Forces National Memorial, the ACT Guild's Annual General Meeting and the ESORT Budget Briefing. Shirley Percival, ACT President, attended the National Sandakan Remembrance Day Wreath Laying Ceremony on 25 May to represent the National Guild.

I was honoured to be invited by the Honourable Malcom Turnbull MP, Prime Minister of Australia to attend the Commemorative Ceremony at the Anzac Memorial, Hyde Park, Sydney with His Excellency Mr. Emmanuel Macron, President of the French Republic. Monsieur Macron delivered a moving address which paid tribute to our young nation and our young men who fought on French soil during WWI and to those who gave the ultimate sacrifice, their lives. Also present at this ceremony was Monsieur Nicholas Crozier, French Consul General to

Australia and Monsieur Christophe Lecourtier, former Ambassador of France to Australia.



*Gwen Cherne and daughter Emily, Meg Green, Nicholas Crozier, French Consul General to Australia and Rhondda Vanzella OAM. Commemorative ceremony at Anzac Memorial, where French President, His Excellency Mr Emmanuel Macron invested three Australian World War II veterans with the Legion d'Honneur.*

The issues regarding the application by Victoria to trademark the logo (kookaburra on a branch badge) used by all State members to identify their belonging to that State Guild continues. Opposition has been filed and we are awaiting the outcome. Contact has been made with the family of the original designer of the badge and it will be necessary to have ongoing communication regarding copyright.

The Honouring Women United by Defence Service 2018 Last Post Ceremony and Dinner planning continues. These events will be held on 11 September, 2018 at the Australian War Memorial for the Last Post Ceremony and Hotel Realm in Canberra for dinner. I do hope that as many of our members as possible will be able to attend this national event.

Lastly, a small reminder to have your influenza vaccinations to prevent the dreaded flu. These vaccinations are available from your local GP and can most certainly help to prevent infection.

Ladies, till next report, take care.

**MEG GREEN**  
**NATIONAL PRESIDENT**





Meg Green and Rhondha Vanzella OAM at the rededication of the Liverpool Cenotaph.



Rhondha Vanzella OAM at the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commemoration Service, Anzac Memorial. Photo courtesy Kerrin Lovell, Anzac Memorial.



Frank Cole, President Vietnam Veterans Federation of Australia, The Hon Gladys Berejiklian MP, Premier of New South Wales, Dianne Vogt, President's Representative at a reception at Parliament House, Sydney, in support of the Anzac Memorial Soil Collection Project. The project is part of an installation to be unveiled later this year at the refurbished Anzac Memorial.



Pauline James, President RSL Central Council Women's Auxiliaries and Rhondha Vanzella OAM, RSL and Schools Anzac Service, Anzac Memorial.



97th Birthday Celebration Service for RAAF and Royal Australian Airforce Association (NSW Division). Dianne Vogt, President's Representative, is pictured with Daphne Dunne, the widow of Albert Chowne, VC, MM. Joining them is Dame Marie Bashir, former Governor of NSW; Lynda Voltz MP, NSW Shadow Minister for Veterans' Affairs; Councillor Linda Scott, City of Sydney; Wally Scott-Smith, the longest serving Custodian of the Cenotaph, and Daphne's daughter, Michelle.



Rhondha Vanzella OAM with granddaughter Jacqui Vanzella, RSL and Schools Anzac Service, Anzac Memorial. Photo courtesy Daryl Charles.





Rhondda Vanzella OAM, Lady Cosgrove, Barbara Baikie, National Council of Women of Australia President, and Meg Green at a garden party hosted by Her Excellency Lady Cosgrove at Government House, Canberra.



Liverpool President Dulcie Davis with Rhondda Vanzella OAM, Liverpool Cenotaph rededication.



Meg Green, Dr Brendan Nelson AO, Director of the Australian War Memorial and Rhondda Vanzella OAM at the Ingleburn Remembrance Ceremony for the 50th Anniversary of the Battle of Coral/Balmoral. This battle was the largest and most sustained engagement of the Vietnam War involving Australian troops, culminating in the loss of 26 Australian lives.



Director Kath Arthur and National Treasurer Shirley Drysdale attended a service to commemorate the Centenary of the Gulgong District Soldiers Memorial Rotunda, believed to be the oldest rotunda in Australia. Kath is pictured with a framed keepsake to mark the occasion.



The Battle of the Java Sea and Coral Sea 76th Anniversary Commemoration Service. Dianne Vogt, President's Representative, with Mr Frank McGovern, a survivor from HMAS Perth who was captured by the Japanese, sent to Changi, and then the infamous Burma railway.



Rhondda Vanzella OAM, Ray James, Vice President RSL NSW and Magda Huynh, one of the 'Yellow Jacket Ladies' who generously donated \$500 to the Guild. Ingleburn Remembrance Ceremony for the 50th Anniversary of the Battle of Coral/Balmoral.



# Anzac Day 2018



Guild members marching with family on Anzac Day, Sydney.

## An Ode to my Grandfather

*I watch as the men with medals march by  
with the bands playing loudly and the flags  
waving high.*

*The rosemary I wear with a badge on my shirt;  
a symbol to remember the lives lost in dirt.*

*As the bugle is played we hold our heads down  
with those that are left all having a frown.*

*Remember the soldiers who fought for us all,  
We pray for these people for that is our call.*

*I look at the picture of the man in the chair  
Wearing his medals with pride and care.*

*The man I did not have the pleasure to meet  
Is the reason I march with my uniform so neat.*

*This man was my great grandfather who  
fought in the war,  
Whose spirit I carry deep down to my core.*

*We wouldn't have freedom if it weren't for them  
We wouldn't have peace for women or for men.*

*Lest we forget*

**KLANCIE FREEBODY, 11 YEARS**

**GREAT-GRANDDAUGHTER OF GUILD MEMBER**

**DOROTHY CAREY**



Guild members Jenny Ware, Fiona Duncan-White (second and third from left) with fellow Submarines Association Australia members Joan Wilson OAM, Carol Wilson, Kathie Anderson and Dorothy Hayton.



Guild member Dorothy Carey from Mudgee with her great-granddaughter Klancie, 11 years.





Gwen Cherne, Rhondra Vanzella OAM, Kelly Gardner, Jo Turner, Bree Till and family, Anzac Day 2018.



War widows with family members, preparing to march on Anzac Day.



Wollongong member Chris Findlay, Anzac Day, Wollongong.



Guild Club members marching, Anzac Day, Wollongong.



Rhondra Vanzella OAM and Wendy Thompson at the Anzac Day Dawn Service, Martin Place, Sydney.



Queanbeyan co-ordinator Grace Lane laying a wreath on Anzac Day. The club marks the day each year with a \$100 donation to a local school library to purchase books depicting the Anzac tradition.



# Anzac Field of Remembrance



Anzac Field of Remembrance, Sydney (more photos on back cover).



This year was the 67th Anzac Field of Remembrance. During the Service at St Andrew's Cathedral, crosses were placed in specially designed sandboxes which stayed in the Cathedral over the weekend, after which they were moved to Hyde Park and planted out in the Field.

Nearly 300 people attended the Service and 700 crosses were planted in the Field by the close of Anzac Day.

The participation in the Service of the RSL Rural Commemorative Youth Choir, the Army Band and the Tri Service Flag Party all contributed

to making this year's service 'the best yet' as described by many people on the day.

A number of members kindly volunteered to assist with the Kiosk in Hyde Park and hand out crosses for the public to write on and place in the Anzac Field of Remembrance. It was a wonderful opportunity for members of the public to place their own personal tributes and learn more about the Guild.

Anzac Field of Remembrance Services were also held in Newcastle, Albury, Gulgong and The Entrance.



Anzac Field of Remembrance, The Entrance and Long Jetty.



Anzac Field of Remembrance, Albury.



## Anzac Field of Remembrance

*Gwen Cherne gave the following address at the Anzac Field of Remembrance Service.*

What brings you here today? Why did you come? Was it to honour someone? To remember those we have lost? To grieve?

A husband, a wife, a father? Or are you here to support someone perhaps? Obvious answers? Maybe. But these seemingly simple questions really shed light on a few key things for me today.

I am Gwen Cherne, I am a contemporary widow and a member of the Guild. My late husband was Sergeant Peter Jon Cafe of the Second Commando Regiment. He served in East Timor, Cambodia, Afghanistan and Iraq to name a few. He is survived by myself, his daughter Ashleigh, and our children Tom, who is 19 and lives in Townsville and serves in the Army, Emily who is six and Lachlan who is three.

When I first heard about the War Widows' Guild, I thought it was something that didn't apply to me. It was something of the past, something old, something I couldn't relate to – or so I thought.

For better or worse, I became a war widow on the sixth of February last year.

At first calling myself a war widow, or reading it on my Gold Card, made me well up with tears. Now, it just makes every receptionist I hand my card to, burst into tears, because, let's admit – it is confronting.

Now, it is a part of my identity, and one that is a terribly painful reminder of this life I have to create without my husband by my side. But, it is a clear and powerful reminder that I am not alone in all of this.

A year ago, Bree Till - another contemporary widow - called me and told me I would be

accompanying her to a war widows event; this event. I was still so very fragile at that stage, but decided to come. I trusted Bree and knew deep down that she would make sure I was doing things that would help me heal.

As I was getting ready, I was nervous, really nervous, and not entirely sure I should come, but I decided to show up and figure the rest out when I got here.

As Emily and I walked up the steps to this very Cathedral, I felt like running away. I felt like I would be judged, unwelcome. I felt vulnerable and raw, like the nerves on my skin were completely exposed to the air.

I thought we had arrived just on time, so we could just blend in at the back, but as it turned out, we were here early. Hours and hours early. Sometimes, God has a funny way of giving us what we need, and not what we think we need.

I cannot remember who I met first. It was a blur of lovely and helpful women whisking Emily and me into the church pews and making sure we were okay. I felt welcomed and cared for, but I was still sceptical that if the truth of Pete's death was spoken, I would not be so welcome.

Meg Green came to sit with me and asked where Pete had been when he died. It was the question I was dreading, the one I felt would expose me, our story, and how I didn't belong here with all of you.

I was worried that Pete's death would not be accepted. I thought that he would be seen as a coward, and therefore his service would not be valued the same as someone who had lost their life in combat or in training. I believed this even though in Australia we lose one veteran to suicide every four days.

In that moment of such raw vulnerability, I held on to the fact that the Australian Government had recently acknowledged that Pete's death





*Bree Till, Jo Turner and Gwen Cherne placing a tribute to those killed in Afghanistan and recent conflicts.*

was due to his service. I remember steeling myself and forcing the words out of my throat. I said, “he died at home, he took his own life.”

I could literally see her heart break for me. The empathy and compassion that Meg showed me in that moment was nothing short of a blessing.

From that moment on, the War Widows’ Guild did what it does best. You wrapped a blanket of love and support around me, around my family.

Rhondda, Meg, Patricia, other staff and so many widows approached me, sat with me, held my hand, held Emily’s hand, chatted to us and included us in the ceremony.

You showed me that I belonged. You understood me, my pain, my loss, even my relief.

You understood the burdens that I will bear for all the years of my life. For you too have walked this path.

I realised during that day that I was now a part of this fabric, this beautiful club of strong women, and strong men. And, while I was amongst complete strangers, you all seemed

to know and understand me in a way that my family and closest friends simply cannot. There is a look you give, an understanding you have. No words are necessary. And when there are words, they are usually the ones I need to hear.

I had never before understood the power of being acknowledged for all we had been through and all we were going through. I had never been on the receiving end of empathy that is so healing.

I am grateful that you welcomed me so warmly into the fold. I would not be standing here without your love and support. Today, calling myself a war widow is something I wear with pride and gratitude.

The War Widows’ Guild not only wrapped me in love and support; it gave me a voice that I had all but lost.

Over the last year, the War Widows’ Guild has amplified contemporary widows’ voices in a way that was near impossible individually – and don’t think they weren’t trying.

We are grateful to the Guild for supporting our work to improve services for veterans, families, widows and widowers, for there is already enough loss, grief and heartache from death and disability due to our veterans' service.



*Gwen Cherne with son Lachlan, placing a bible on the Table of Remembrance.*

I have just been asked to be an Ambassador for the Invictus Games for ClubsNSW to help raise awareness for our wounded, ill and injured veterans, and to shed a light on the fact that not all their wounds are visible. Whether their struggles, disabilities or deaths are from combat, physical wounds, illness or mental wounds – the suffering and the trauma is what connects us, the families, their carers.

The more I learn about the War Widows' Guild, the more I reach out to other wives, husbands, widows and widowers, the more I realise the strength of an organisation like this one. And yet, the more I see there is to be done.

On behalf of myself, and other contemporary widows and families, please know we respect and honour the past, we are grateful to you for the way Jessie Vasey and all of you have paved for us. We hope you will welcome us in bringing our needs to light as the Guild continues to grow and change.

Jessie began advocating for herself and her peers in 1945. She left quite a legacy. We are in a unique moment in time where we have the opportunity to lead, to come together, to collaborate between organisations, to support one another inter-generationally and to make a mark on history.

Last year, I may have felt like I didn't belong when I first arrived, but each and every one of you whom I have met, each one of you who has shared your story with me have shown me that you too understand. You understand the pain, the suffering, the trauma.

Each and every one of those men and women who have served and whose deaths were related to their service – they all deserve our gratitude, our honour and they deserve to be remembered.

But, if we are honest with ourselves, the men and women we remember today served on the backs of our families. It was because of our love and dedication to them that they were able to do so much for this beautiful country. And for that, we should honour each and every family of those who served in the past and of those who are still serving today. They too should be honoured for their sacrifices and for their service.

So, today I say thank you. Thank you for your often overlooked service. For the time, love, patience and suffering you have endured.

My question at the beginning may have seemed simple to you. Why are you here? But for me, it was an important one to answer. I am here today to honour all those we lost, yes, but I am also here to honour all of you who have been left behind; all of you who forge on every day. I am here today to say thank you for helping to leave a legacy of love, resilience and support for those of us who have come after you and for those who will come after us.





All Guild members are invited to an exciting event which will bring together war widows, current and ex-serving women from the Australian Defence Force and mothers and families, in recognition of the enduring impact of war on Australian society.

The commemorations for the Centenary of Anzac come to an end on 11 November 2018 and the new campaign of the Year of Peace begins. In celebrating peace, we need to honour those who have made the sacrifices for that peace; and for those who continue to make those sacrifices on a daily basis.

On Tuesday, 11 September 2018, a Last Post and Wreath Laying ceremony at the Australian War Memorial will be followed by a dinner at Hotel Realm, Canberra. Both the ceremony and dinner will highlight the increasing involvement of women in the Australian Defence Force and acknowledge and commemorate the significant sacrifice made by Australian women and families, bringing them together to ensure their continued influence and advocacy into the future.

The goal of the two events is to bring together political leaders, community leaders, business leaders, and leaders in the veteran space to explore the power of women; and how, if we all work together, we can bring about better understanding of the needs of women

in uniform, and women on the home front, resulting from service to their country.

Brigadier Susan Coyle, CSC, DSM, Commander 6th Brigade, Army, will be the MC for the evening. Dr Brendan Nelson AO, Director of Australian War Memorial will provide a presentation to honour women's service, sacrifices and contributions attributed to defence service. Keynote speaker will be ex-serving woman, Rachel Ranton, who transitioned to corporate life, and is the recipient of the Prime Minister's 'Veteran Employee of the Year Award 2018.'

Country music star Lee Kernaghan will perform, along with the RSL Youth Choir and Army band.

We invite you to join us for dinner on Tuesday, 11 September 2018, 6.30pm, Hotel Realm, Canberra.

**Tickets can be purchased from [www.tinyurl.com/hwudswwg](http://www.tinyurl.com/hwudswwg) or telephone 1800 451 615.** Tickets are \$50 per person and include a two course meal and drinks.

The dinner will be preceded by a Last Post and Wreath Laying Ceremony at the Australian War Memorial, commencing at 4:45pm.

The establishment in 2012 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC), the independent national regulator of charities, ushered in a new set of obligations for registered charities, which encompasses the Guild.

The Board has been reviewing the Guild's Constitution and has identified a number of areas where updates can be made to ensure our governance structure aligns with the expectations of the ACNC and to ensure the Guild retains its status as a charity and public benevolent institution.

Proposed amendments will also reflect changes in law due to repealed sections of

the *Corporations Act 2001* which no longer apply and will include measures to allow for greater flexibility in board governance, meeting processes, terms of appointment for directors and quorums for board meetings.

Included in this *Guild Digest* is a summary of the proposed amendments to the Guild Constitution. At the AGM, members will be asked to vote on a motion to accept the proposed amendments. **The Guild encourages all members to support the proposed amendments to the Guild's Constitution.** If you cannot attend the meeting, you can vote on the motion to accept the proposed amendments by returning the proxy voting form on the enclosed notice of meeting.

## Sydney Invictus Games 2018

### 'Make Your Mark Down Under' for Invictus Games Sydney 2018

It will be Game On Down Under when Australia welcomes competitors and their family and friends for Invictus Games Sydney 2018 to be held from 20-27 October.

The Invictus Games is an international sporting event for wounded, injured and ill service men and women, both active duty and veteran.

The Games highlight the power of sport to inspire recovery, support rehabilitation and generate a wider understanding of those who serve their country. The Games also celebrate the crucial role played by family and friends in the recovery process.

As we race towards the opening ceremony, we're encouraging you to 'Make Your Mark Down Under'. There is a role for everyone in Invictus Games Sydney 2018 and 'Make Your Mark Down Under' enables you to get involved and show your support for our wounded warriors, no matter where you are or what you do.



A fantastic way to 'Make Your Mark' is to attend the Games in October and cheer on our competitors loudly and proudly from the stands.

Tickets are on sale now at [www.invictusgames2018.org](http://www.invictusgames2018.org)

Don't miss your chance to celebrate the healing power of sport and cheer on our wounded warriors over eight days of fierce competition. Be inspired. Be entertained. Be there.



## Have you ever said the words “I’m too old...”?

Perhaps you’ve read a great book, but can’t recall the title? What about those pesky words on the tip of your tongue you can’t bring to mind?

From middle age onwards, our brains slow down and are more easily distracted. Research suggests that the brain loses communication links as we age. Have you put something on the stove, walked into your bedroom, forgotten what you were looking for, then the doorbell rings and before you know it, all thought of what’s on the stove has vanished? Experts tell us this is our brain’s ‘default mode’, in which the mind wanders and finds it harder to focus. Our brain becomes more susceptible to this as we age.

Can middle age to older brains learn and grow? Is it worth pursuing new skills or are we wasting our time?

Scientists are now turning their attention to the ageing brain and its incredible capabilities, with research showing our brains have the capacity to develop and even improve as we age.

The older brain may not learn quite as fast, but recent studies have shown that a healthy mature brain is better at retaining and recognising big picture and central ideas, not to mention the ability to solve more complex problems. The brain is what they call ‘plastic’ and has an unlimited capacity to grow, not so much in size but rather in complexity, allowing for deeper understanding. You may not be racing around like you did in your younger years, but that doesn’t mean you are mentally slower! The brain, if kept in good shape can continue to build infinite neuron pathways.

How do you keep your brain in good condition? It goes without saying that looking after yourself with a good diet, exercise and sleep is

essential to good health, but the simple answer to improved brain function is to keep using it!

Here are some simple things you can do to keep your brain healthy:

1. **Keep learning.** Learning new things will not only keep your brain healthy, it will help your state of mind.
2. **Challenge yourself.** Challenge your perceptions and your beliefs. Solve the world’s problems. The older you are, the more equipped your brain is to do just that. The world needs healthy older brains.
3. **Play games.** Suduko, scrabble, crosswords and spider are some of the most popular. To increase your brain workout and add the benefits of improving your reflexes, try playing games online. If you have a computer, tablet or smartphone, there are many games to improve mental agility and coordination.
4. **Stay connected.** Keeping up your social life - either in person or through the use of technology - is essential for your mental health and ultimately, your brain’s wellbeing.

*OJ Rushton is the founder of ABRACADABRA Learning and is managing the Guild’s iPad training project. OJ is also the Creative Director and Vice-President of the RSL Youth Choir and Director of the National Peace Project.*



*OJ Rushton with Dell Macarthur, Penshurst.*

We are pleased to advise that we have found new accommodation for the majority of our Dolls Point residents, with most ladies now settled into their new homes across Sydney.

It was an important consideration for Aged Care Placement Services (ACPS) to not only find new homes for the ladies in their preferred suburbs, but also in over 55's complexes, enabling them to be with like-minded people and enjoy the sense of community they had at Dolls Point.

Moving can be very stressful at any stage in life and can be an enormous task to undertake alone. ACPS have assisted the ladies at every step of the way, from viewing the properties, signing rental agreements, arranging utility transfers and organising removalists. All the ladies have been extremely happy with the service and assistance provided by ACPS, funded by the Guild.

We caught up with Coral Whatmore who said "she could not have been treated any better or done this by herself." She said the whole process

went very smoothly, even the bumpy truck ride over to her new home in the removalist truck, which she "thoroughly enjoyed." Coral loves her new home and said "it's a delightful little place, that's nice and quiet with friendly neighbours."



Coral Whatmore outside her new home.

ACPS has recently met with Guild housing residents at Drummoyne and will be working with them to find new homes.

## RSL LifeCare

*The Guild is very pleased that two of our housing residents have been able to find new homes with RSL LifeCare. We invited RSL LifeCare to share some introductory information for Guild members about independent living and aged care options.*

At RSL LifeCare we understand the service and sacrifice of veterans and their families. Our organisation was born from the charitable hearts and hard work of people just like you.

With over 50 retirement villages and care homes, you can choose from the sea or the trees - from picturesque Eden on the far south coast to beautiful Byron Bay in the north and across the magnificent inlands of Dungog, Dubbo, Condobolin, Wagga Wagga, Griffith and Canberra.

But if you're not ready to leave home just yet, we can come to you to make life a little bit easier. As an approved provider, RSL LifeCare at Home can deliver government-funded services



RSL LifeCare residents putting together care packages for troops deployed overseas.

including DVA Community Nursing, Veterans' Home Care services and Home Care Packages.

At RSL LifeCare we pride ourselves on our sense of community and fun, in our villages and care homes and as a dynamic part of our local communities.

RSL LifeCare – enjoy life with us.

For more information visit

[www.rsllifecare.org.au](http://www.rsllifecare.org.au) or call 9982 6666.



# Verna's Gift to the Guild

Verna Byrne's three daughters Sandra, Jennifer and Lorelle – 'Mum's girls' – recently attended the Guild's Anzac Field of Remembrance Service. Sitting in St Andrew's Cathedral, exactly one year to the day since the passing of their mother, they were making good on one of her final wishes.



*Verna Byrne with daughters Lorelle, Sandra and Jennifer.*

In appreciation for the role the Guild had played in her life for over 20 years, Verna had asked her daughters to make a donation to the Guild

in her memory. As her 'girls' shared, "joining the Guild and making many new friends was so good for our Mum."

The Guild is extremely grateful to Mrs Byrne and her daughters for their generosity.

Over the years, the Guild has been fortunate to receive many donations and bequests from our members, enabling us to promote and protect the interests of war widows throughout NSW. Should this be an option for you, please know that the Guild will use your gift to continue our support of war widows into the future.

If you would like to receive more information about including the Guild in your will, please contact us on 9267 6577 or 1800 451 615 (country members), or complete and return the form below.

## MAKING A BEQUEST

- ☐ Please send me further information about including War Widows' Guild of Australia NSW in my Will.
- ☐ Please contact me about making a donation to the War Widows' Guild of Australia NSW.

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Surname \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Suburb \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return your completed form to:**

War Widows' Guild of Australia NSW Ltd

Level 14, 227 Elizabeth Street, Sydney NSW 2000

## Green Slip Refunds



Reforms to the green slip scheme have meant that most vehicle owners who paid for a green slip in 2017 are eligible for a partial refund.

Refunds will range from \$10 to \$120 depending on the type of vehicle and whether it is registered at a metropolitan or country address. If your renewal date was early in 2017, you'll get a smaller refund. If it was closer to 1 December 2017, you'll get a higher refund. Refunds will not be issued if the balance, after the \$10 administration fee, is less than \$10.

Claim by contacting Service NSW on 1300 287 733 from 7am to 7pm, Monday to Friday or visit a Service NSW Centre. Online claims can be made at [www.service.nsw.gov.au](http://www.service.nsw.gov.au) between 5pm and 8am Monday to Saturday and all day Sunday. Claims must be made before 30 September 2018.

## Medicine Lists

Taking the right medicines, the right way, improves your health and helps you maintain your independence. Medications include prescription, over the counter, herbal and natural.

Using a medicine list can be a useful way to keep all the information about your medicines readily accessible in case of hospital admission, visiting a new doctor and to minimise possible side effects. It is important to know the correct name of any medication, its strength, how much

and when to take the medication as well as knowing why you are taking it.

National Prescribing Service (NPS) provides a free paper booklet to assist you to keep your information up to date. You can also download the MedicineWise app from Google Play or the App Store. To obtain a paper booklet, telephone 8217 8700.



## Low Vision Support

There are many causes of loss of vision including age, glaucoma, macular degeneration, cataracts and ill health.

It is recommended that if you are over 65 years of age you have a vision test each year, or every three years if under 65. This visit and any subsequent visit is covered by your Gold Card.



You may be eligible for more frequent testing under certain circumstances, for example vision history or family history.



DVA will provide new lenses and frames every two years from a select range. If there has been a significant change in your prescription, DVA may approve new lenses within the two year period. You may choose any frame or optical dispenser but you may be charged an additional fee which DVA will not cover. New glasses may not resolve all your vision issues.

Low Vision Clinics (including Vision Australia) provide a 'living skills' assessment. The purpose is to see if the provision of aids will assist you to manage your daily tasks. Aids may include a magnifier, large print teledex, tactile marker, talking books and a machine, a white cane or TV connected video magnifiers. DVA will generally provide Gold Card holders with the most cost effective, safe and clinically appropriate aids recommended by an approved assessing Health Provider.

The *Guild Digest* is also available as an audio book. You can still receive a paper copy, if required.

## Pension Increase

There was a pension increase from March 20, 2018. The War Widows' Pension is now \$922.50 per fortnight, an increase of \$13.40.

The maximum Income Support Supplement is now \$272.60 per fortnight, an increase of \$4.10.

The rates will be reviewed again in September.

## DVA Prior Approval

The Repatriation Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme provides a wide range of prescribed pharmaceuticals and dressings at a concessional rate. Your doctor must obtain prior authorisation from DVA before prescribing a medication not usually covered by this scheme. Medications listed under this scheme are regularly reviewed. This also applies to certain medical procedures or aids and major dental work.

## Flu Shots



The 2018 flu vaccine has been developed to cover several different strains of the flu which will hopefully minimise the number of people affected this year.

The flu shot is free to all people over 65, under five, or with a chronic condition.

If you do not meet the age criteria, your Gold Card will cover the cost of the appointment but not the vaccine.

## Occupational Therapy Aids



Occupational Therapy aids can make a big difference to our mobility. One small device which is proving a big help to members is a swivel seat.

This cushioned seat glides you in and out of cars smoothly without struggling. Placed on any seat it will swivel in both directions and may help those who suffer from arthritis, leg or back pain, easing the strain on the back, hips and knees.

Please contact your Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist or GP for more information.



**Cardiff** co-ordinators Wilma Hill and Olive Shankley during a visit from the Guild's Manager Member Services, Lesley Mann.



**Parkes** members met in the Red Cross rooms for their May meeting, which was attended by CSW Adrienne Bowman.



**Macksville and District Social Club** would like to express its appreciation to Macksville Ex-Services Club for providing meeting facilities since 1989 and so willingly assisting in any requests. Macksville and District War Widows' Club formed in 1989 with Audrey Blood OAM as the first President.



Daphne Clarke, Beverley Henderson, Shirley Frazer and Norma Bailey at **The Entrance and Long Jetty** Anzac Field of Remembrance Service. Guests enjoyed lovely weather, with handmade poppies handed out to all those who attended and lunch afterwards at the Long Jetty Diggers Club.



**Cooma** members, led by co-ordinator Heather Little, were visited by Guild Community Service Worker Adrienne Bowman.



**Lithgow** members enjoying a recent social function.



**Queanbeyan's** year began in fine style with a visit from National President Meg Green and State President Rhondda Vanzella OAM. Invited guests from Council, RSL Sub branch and Legacy joined in for a splendid morning tea, catered by the ladies from CWA. From left to right, Meg Green, Venerable Dr Royce Thompson, Barbara Garland, Rhondda Vanzella OAM and Mayor Tim Overall.



Joan Joshua, Fern MacLachlan and Raewyn Bastion, enjoying morning tea at **Queanbeyan**.





*Kempsey members enjoying a recent social function.*



*Wallsend members, with new co-ordinator Janice Garth leading the first meeting for 2018.*

## Memories Day

**Bankstown** members recently enjoyed a 'memories' day where they reminisced about events from over 50 years ago. They enjoyed stories about school days, using horses for transport, life growing up in country towns and memories of time in the Forces. Old irons, wooden suitcases and even a wooden washboard were brought in to share. One story that brought laughter was from 1919, when Camden Council tried to ban kissing during the flu epidemic – one councillor was nominated to meet the trains to check people were observing the ban!

## Club Updates

Thank you to former **Gosford City** co-ordinator Val Horner for all your hard work and to Saresa Andrews for taking on the position.

The new co-ordinator for the **Hunter** Social Club is Bronwyn Wetzler, the daughter of a former Hunter Club member – thank you Bronwyn!



*Former Penshurst President Julie Taylor with Rhondra Vanzella OAM. Julie has stepped down after 15 years leading the Club. Thank you to Maureen Phillips for taking on the President position.*

After 54 years, **Penrith** and **Lower Blue Mountains** has converted to a Social Club. Thank you to the former committee, led by President Jennifer Prien, for all their hard work and to new co-ordinator Gloria Lenon, assisted by Ruth Clark.

**Coffs Harbour** has also converted to a Social Club, having formed 35 years ago. Vale to former President Betty Byrne and thank you to new co-ordinator Betty Wright.

Vale to **Yass** co-ordinator Phyllis Knox. Thank you to Joyce Grieves for taking over the position of co-ordinator.

Vale to **Bay and Basin** co-ordinator Ruth McDonald. Thank you to Eti Asplin for taking over the position of co-ordinator.

Thank you to Avis Smart of our **Dubbo** Club, for all her hard work. Welcome and thank you to Nancy Farrell who will take over from Avis.

## New Members

The Guild warmly welcomes the following new members:

Wanda Boulton, Laurieton  
Jessie Callan, Narrabeen  
Margaret Chamney, Penrith  
Shirley Christie, Miranda  
Margaret Clarke, Stockyard Creek  
Barbara Coggin, O'Malley  
Shirley Denyer, South Hurstville  
Mary Donnelly, Gunnedah  
Betty Drew, Bathurst  
Nancy Firth, Unanderra  
Betty Johnston, Muswellbrook  
Karen Marceau, Fairy Meadow  
Beverley Maurice, Berkeley Vale  
Robin McKinnon, Port Macquarie  
Sue Miller, Taree  
Margaret Paris, Hazelbrook  
Christina Saw, Penshurst  
Dianne Smith, Port Macquarie  
Lorraine Walker, Wallsend  
Caroline Wilkinson, Darling Point



**Bankstown** member Gwladys Cosgrove with a laundry bag she made for an Invictus Games athlete.



**Newcastle** member Mary Kelly will celebrate her 101st birthday in August. Mary says a red wine every day leads to a long life!



Dot Sullivan's 100th birthday party. From left to right: Audrey Blood OAM, Dawn Wellfare, Dot Sullivan (front), Pat Connell, Marcia Evans. Dot was Secretary at **Petersham** Guild Club from 2004 to 2016.

## Happy 100th Birthday

Jessie Ayling  
Jean Finnane  
Dorothy Mann  
Leila Richards  
Jean Roberts  
Doris Tickle  
Dulcie Willing





Glad Fernley still enjoys her twice-weekly tennis matches. Photo courtesy Manning River Times.

### Glad's still great on the tennis court

It's not every day you meet a sprightly 89-year-old who has the capacity to wipe the tennis court clean with just about anyone who steps up to take her on. Glad Fernley not only does this twice a week, but she barely breaks a sweat doing it.

"It's all about hitting the ball where your opponent isn't, like in chess," she explained.

Alongside her tennis commitments, Glad spends a lot of time in the garden and walks her dog for an hour every day.

"I've always been active, I just can't imagine why people don't want to be active, it doesn't make sense to me." Glad said.

The fierce sporting determination is a gene Glad passed on to daughter Robyn, who captained the Australian hockey team in the 1984 Olympics and is one of the game's greats.

Source: Manning River Times, Friday, 13 April 2018, page 3. A more complete version of Glad's story was featured in the April 18 edition of Mid North Coast Now magazine.



Betty and Cheryl Forbes.

### Planning a fine farewell

Betty Forbes has been an enthusiastic member of our Camden club since 1992. Her daughter Cheryl is part of the Picaluna group; a network of independent professional Funeral Celebrants and Planners who seek to offer a more authentic and personal way to plan someone's farewell. Cheryl acknowledges it can be difficult and confronting for some people, but it's important to have that conversation.

"I'd like to help the war widows realise how Picaluna can offer a meaningful funeral, something that's very authentic. While some take comfort in the tradition of a church or a chapel, others are thinking differently and holding the ceremony in a location meaningful to them, such as in a garden, a park, a beach or a bushland setting. Everyone has a story, and being able to bring out that story in a ceremony is so important." For more information about Picaluna's services, contact Cheryl Forbes on 0437 895 328 or [cheryl@cherylforbescelebrant.com.au](mailto:cheryl@cherylforbescelebrant.com.au)

### VALE

Vale to Pearl Sutton. Pearl had been a life member of the Guild since 1998.



Hello dear friends,

It is lovely to be able to have another 'chat' with you via the print media. How quickly the year is passing. It doesn't seem any time since we were looking forward to the real hot weather easing and enjoying the coolness of autumn and the beauty of the gardens with the changing colours of the trees and the falling leaves – and now we have arrived in winter. Fortunately our winters aren't usually too severe, however we do need to take care of ourselves. Please make sure you have your annual flu injection, check your electric blankets and heaters before reusing from the previous season and wear warm clothing.

I think it is always a good time when we can indulge in eating some comfort food – nice thick soups, some old fashioned stews, hot puddings and then not feel too guilty when we have a couple of chocolates still remaining from Mothers' Day. I hope you all enjoyed our own special day and that you had some contact with your loved ones, whether by visiting, mail or telephone.

Following on from the recent Guild survey that was conducted, we have received 150 requests from new ladies requesting calls. All the volunteer members who look after this service

are delighted that there was such a strong response from Guild members. I am sure all the new ladies who receive calls will be appreciative of the calls they receive as much as we will enjoy talking and chatting with them. We hear many and varied stories from bygone days. One I recently recall was from a lady who on her 95th birthday had her GP call and when he arrived he was wearing a kilt, had his accompanying bagpipes and sang Happy Birthday. I can't recall but I am sure she came from a country town as I cannot imagine that happening in the city.

Just recently we had a meeting at Head Office of all the volunteers on the Friendship line. About 20 ladies were present and it was an interesting and productive meeting. We were able to discuss ways in which we could improve the service, such as frequency of calls, extra care calls, length of time spent on calls, etc.

Privacy and confidentiality are of paramount importance to us but if at any time you have a story you would like to share with other members please always let the caller know.

I hope you survive the winter months without too many colds and flu and hopefully when we chat again the nice spring weather will be here.

Until next time,

**WENDY**

### Guild Friendship Line

1800 451 615

10am – 3pm, Mon-Fri

*All members may register for calls*

Veterans' and Veterans'

Families Counselling Service

1800 011 046

(24 hours/7 days week)

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

May you live as long as  
you want, and never want  
as long as you live.

*Irish Blessing*



# Fruit for Small Spaces



We used to think that the only way to grow fruit was to have part of the garden designated as ‘the orchard’, but now we realise we can mix our fruit trees among the ornamentals and they won’t look at all out of place.

Fruit varieties have been bred so that many can now happily grow in pots. Dwarf citrus are good examples. These bear full-sized fruit on smaller trees that don’t take up nearly as much space as the old types. Generally, look for a label that says ‘mini’ or ‘dwarf’. Many citrus are grafted onto a dwarfing root stock call ‘Flying Dragon’, which reduces the growth of the top part of the plant.

Potted citrus require a good sunny position, eventually

a large pot – even up to half wine barrel size – and top quality potting mix. But what could be better than having a couple of cumquats, mandarins or Meyer lemons flanking either side of a pathway where they’ll look attractive, have perfumed flowers and produce decorative fruit in the cooler months?

Citrus hate wet feet so make sure the pot drains well. If you must catch the overflow, put the base of the pot on pot feet or gravel within a saucer so that the water doesn’t escape but it can move out of the potting mix.

Some fruit will grow in even smaller spaces. Blueberries do especially well in pots but, to ensure good cropping, it’s

always better to have at least two blueberries of different varieties. Feed blueberries with azalea food as they like similar acidic conditions.

Don’t forget strawberries, too. Packaged, virus-free strawberries are available at this time of year and they can even be grown in a good-sized hanging basket. Watch out for birds, though. You can imagine how tempting they would find a ripe, dangling strawberry!

*Judy Horton is the editor of Our Gardens, the Garden Clubs of Australia quarterly magazine, and a radio gardener on the ABC. She also travels as a guide with Botanica World Discoveries.*





