

# AUSTRALIAN WAR WIDOWS - NSW MERRY CHRISTMAS

The Digest December 2020

**WELCOME  
FAREWELL &  
THANK YOU**

*Delightfully  
Simple  
No Bake  
Christmas Cake*

*Celebrating  
the Future*

*10 Ways To  
Keep in Touch*

**2021**  
Exciting  
things in store





# WELCOME

Every year typically has a few defining moments, but 2020 has managed to throw almost every possible scenario at us! This year, as if the fires and drought had not been bad enough, a global pandemic COVID -19 has managed to change the world and the way we do things forever.

For our organisation, 2020 has also been a year of change with 85% of members at the AGM agreeing to change our constitution to include families of those who are serving or have served in the Australian Defence and/or Allied forces. Our expanded mission is to improve the lives of women and their families impacted by defence service through understanding their needs and advocating on their behalf. These actions are in our strategic plan which outlines the cornerstones required to achieving these goals.

2021 will see us have a broader service offering that attracts and meets the needs of you as members, women and families. We will continue to use technology to communicate with you and create opportunities for you to be involved and engaged, virtually, physically and emotionally whilst finding ways to do things differently if needed. Despite the challenges, the last few months has seen us increase our member services. The Board is very focussed on continuing to expand its services to the members. Please let us know if you have ideas that the Board might consider.

We bid farewell to Meg Green AM National President as her six year term comes to an end. Meg has been an excellent advocate for Women and Families during her term and we thank her for outstanding service and commitment. We wish her well in her future endeavours.

As we end what has been a difficult year for so many, we hope this short Christmas Digest will lift your spirits with a no bake easy Christmas Cake recipe, and something for the kids. As we say farewell and thank you to those on the team who are leaving and as we welcome our new team members and prepare for an exciting 2021.

Best wishes for joy and love this Christmas season for you and your family.

Merry Christmas

*Rhondra & Jennifer*









### Rhondda Vanzella

Congratulations Rhondda on your new role as the National President for the Australian War Widows. Rhondda will continue as the NSW State President and we thank her for her time as the NSW State Chair.



### Jennifer Collins

We welcome Jennifer Collins as our new Chair for AWWNSW Board of Directors. Jennifer has served on the Finance, Risk and Audit Committee and takes on this new challenge as we look to the future.



### Meg Green

Thank you Meg for being our National President. We wish you all the best in the future and every success as you continue to serve your community.



### Renee Wilson

Welcome Renee to the new leadership team as the GM. Renee's extensive experience in the Aust. Public Service and veteran space with families, will assist us in the growth and development of our organisation.

# WELCOME, & THANKS



### A letter from our New CEO

Many thanks for the warm welcome that I have received from the Australian War Widows NSW.

I look forward to meeting the members – CO to gain a better understanding of the organisation.

You will have noticed that the Digest is very different. I have not received a Digest since March this year and the COs in the Digest have been cancelled due to COVID. I will send out a newsletter to communicate with everyone. As our social clubs have not been meeting. We have to adapt to everyone.

Recently, AWW NSW expanded its constituency to include a segment of the veteran community, including children, and siblings of veterans. As a result, we will be developing and implementing new programs over the next few years to better support our current and future members.

In addition, we will be sending out a survey to gather the most up to date input, thoughts and comments on our new services and programs for the future. I welcome all members that need to renew their membership. Can I take this opportunity to wish everyone a Happy New Year.

Kind Regards,

*Jill*

# FAREWELL THANK YOU

## Jill Deering

Welcome, Jill! As our new CEO we look forward to benefiting from your significant experience in the health, ageing and community sectors combined with your passion to see women thrive.

have received from the Board and Staff at

COVID 19 restrictions permitting and gaining a

different. I understand that the members have  
s events and ceremonies that usually appear  
COVID. Therefore, I thought it was important to  
everyone what has been happening given the  
e called it the Digest as the name is familiar

ution to provide support to a much larger  
ng spouses/ partners parents, grandparents,  
of this significant change, the AWW NSW will  
grams and services over the coming months  
uture members.

ey early in the new year, to ensure we have  
mments from our members, as we develop  
e. We have enclosed a renewal form for any  
ship, which can be returned by email or post.  
a happy, safe and healthy Christmas and New

## Di Vogt

We welcome Di Vogt to the Board. Di has been a long time member of the War Widows NSW and has been one of the President's representatives and Club coordinator. We look forward to her valuable input as we open the next chapter.



## Queen Dunbar

We welcome Queen to the Board. Queen is one of our contemporary members. She has experienced the loss of a partner through Defence service, this will bring additional knowledge to the Board



## Gwen Cherne

Farewell to Gwen and we congratulate her on her new position as Commissioner for Veteran Family Advocacy. We thank her for her contribution to the NSW Board and we wish her all the best for the future.



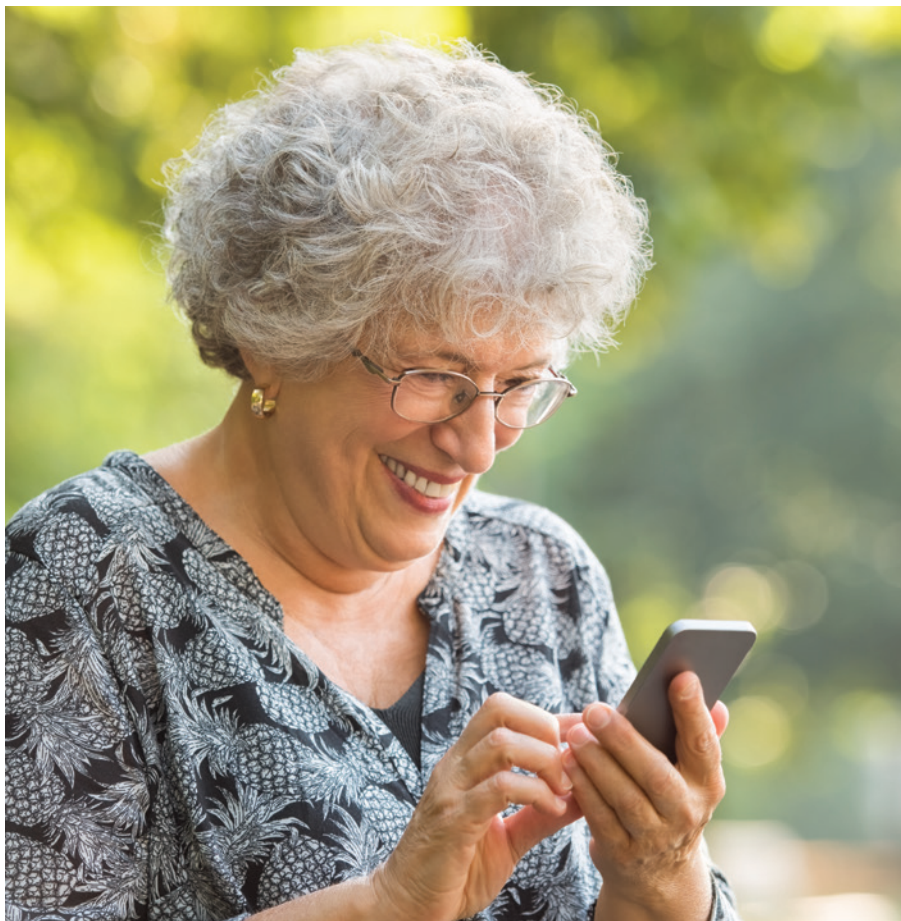
## Madeline Dermatossian

We farewell Madeline as our CEO and thank her for her years of contribution to the organisation. We wish her all the best for the future as she leaves us.





# The Friendship Line



War Widows NSW has a small cohort of 24 volunteers who facilitate and provide vital support to the 'Friendship Line', a peer-to-peer telephone support service to members across New South Wales. Our volunteers conduct two types of calls: birthday calls to members who are 90+; and wellbeing calls to those who have chosen to receive a regular social call. Both calls connect and support a member living either in their own home, with other family or in an aged care facility. Since the 'Friendship Line' started in 2001, our volunteers have made calls to members from the office, fitting the service around their many life commitments. COVID-19 changed the world of volunteering, and we had to think about how we could still contact the members that needed our support more than ever. Since mid-March, our Friendship Line volunteers have connected with our members from the safety of their home. The service remains the same but offers more flexibility for our volunteers. Each volunteer has a different passion, some love doing birthday calls, while others are discovering the flexibility to make calls at a day of their choosing across the month. The War Widows NSW volunteers make a valuable difference to their peers. We congratulate each of you for your invaluable service to members of War Widows NSW.

## EXTRA SUPPORT DURING COVID-19

Some of you may have received a call from a WSU student over the year. The students are about to finish their postgrad program in Counselling, so we wish them well. All the students enjoyed their very new experience of contacting older people and war widows in particular. The opportunity exposed the students to apply a range of counselling skills using audio, learn about the world of war widows, and ways that the group exercised resilience during the pandemic or when restricted to home due to additional risks.

## NO BAKE CHRISTMAS CAKE



### INGREDIENTS

2 1/3 cups dried fruit, finely chopped  
1/2 cup finely chopped walnuts  
3/4 cup Port wine (or fruit juice)  
6 oz chocolate chip cookies  
2 1/2 cups thickened cream  
1/4 cup powdered sugar  
1/4 teaspoon ground ginger (optional)

In a small bowl add the dried fruit. Pour the wine over it and let the fruit soak for 2-3 hours, until most of the liquid is absorbed.

Line a 9-inch springform with plastic wrap. Leave 3-5 inch of plastic wrap hanging on the sides.

In a food processor add cookies and the nuts. Pulse a few times until finely chopped. Set aside.

In a mixing bowl add the double cream. Whisk at medium speed until soft peaks form. Slowly add the sugar and the spices. Continue whisking until firm peaks form. Mix the dried fruit with the cream. If there is still wine left in the bowl, add it to the cream as well. With a spatula stir gently until combined.

Sprinkle almost half of the cookie nut mixture on the bottom of the prepared pan and arrange with your fingers to evenly cover the bottom the pan.

Spoon half of the fruit cream mixture on top of the cookie crumbles. Gently spread it evenly without disturbing the cookie crumbles.

Sprinkle more cookie nut crumbles on top of the fruit mixture, leaving just about 2 tablespoons aside for decorating.

Spoon the remaining fruit cream mixture and spread it evenly.

Sprinkle the reserved cookie crumbles over the second layer of fruit cream and cover with the plastic wrap.

Freeze the cake for at least 8 hours.

Before slicing it, leave the cake for 15 minutes at room temperature. With a sharp knife, slice the cake.

# 10 Ways to Stay in Touch Using Technology

Staying in touch online is not as hard as you think. Use these ideas to connect with friends and family using a computer or device like a phone, iPad or tablet

1. Hold a family Zoom conference
2. Use Facebook Messenger to have morning tea with a friend
3. Watch a video with friends on Zoom
4. Hold a Zoom Christmas Party
5. Join one of our online classes
6. Video call on your phone
7. Host a Zoom book club
8. Start a watch party on Facebook
9. Send someone a virtual hug (emoji)
10. Start up an email conversation

## FOR THE KIDS

This variation on a family tree is a fun way to get the whole family involved. Trace everyone's hands on green paper and cut them out. Arrange them in the shape of a tree, with the smallest hands on top and largest on the bottom.

Add some green and red dots on the hands as baubles to decorate your tree and add a gold star and red ribbon to complete the look.



## 2021 Exciting Things Ahead

### MOVEMENT THROUGH DIGITAL LEARNING

The War Widows' Annual General Meeting provided the perfect backdrop for an introduction to digital learning. We initially supported members to learn about Zoom so that they could participate in the AGM. We then moved to online activities which started on 29 September with one member doing chair yoga. This was followed by modified singing, modified dance, and online craft tutorials (no-sew mask, Christmas ornaments) all done from the comfort of one's home. Today we have several members doing any one of these three activities which will continue until mid-November. Funded by *Good Things Foundation*, the online activities have proved a hit for some members who live outside metro Sydney, and opened their world to even more choices of activities. Digital learning has created new friendships, and much laughter across the digital world!

Here's a picture of our member, Bethany who participated in our Christmas ornament tutorial. She named her felt llama, Larry!! Bethany wants to do more craft as she has really enjoyed the online craft sessions with Diana.



### OUR NEXT ISSUE....



Do you have ideas for our next issue of the Digest? Please send your recipes, photos, articles, stories and ideas to: [admin@warwidowsnsw.com.au](mailto:admin@warwidowsnsw.com.au)  
Are you on Social Media? Like and follow us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/WarWidowsNSW>





# Happy Birthday!

To everyone who has celebrated a birthday this year so far, we wish you health and happiness with many happy returns! For those who turned 100, we especially want to send our congratulations. You are an extraordinary person with a heart of gold and a century of wisdom. You have been through joy and sorrow and, like a modern-day superhero, you have witnessed the good and the bad with lived experience of over 10 decades. May you continue to be an inspiration to us and those around you.

## **Congratulations to our members who have turned 100!**

Madge Boddam-Whetham  
Edith Taylor  
Marie Cahill  
Stella McFarlane  
Marjoire Harbottle  
Patricia Chamley  
Lorna Howe  
Joan Jarman  
Violet Highett  
Margaret Tanner  
Grace Park  
Joyce Martin  
Irene McIntyre  
Joan Meade  
Dorothy Martin

Gwendoline Wilson  
Ethel Haydon  
Kathleen Catterall  
Winsome Martyn  
Grace Banning  
Mary McGuigan  
Betty Cruwys  
Barbara Jones Joan Bryan  
Joyce Lee  
Norma Davies  
Eva Bellman  
Valda Wirrell  
Joy Hattersley  
Jeanette Harry-Medhurst  
Mary Nisbet

Joyce Davies  
Dorothy McLean  
Marie Tucker-Evans  
Joan Flanagan  
Doris Lewis  
Mary Chelman  
Holda Fosdilke  
Doris Wills  
Phyllis Austin  
Joan Mills  
Patricia Schofield  
Joan Fitzgibbon  
Anita Mabel (turns 101)