



LEST WE FORGET
“The Price of Liberty is Eternal Vigilance”



IPSWICH RAILWAY RSL SUB BRANCH

Ipswich Railway Sub Branch Inc PO Box 2292 North Ipswich 4305
Phone 07 2800 8028 Email admin@ipswichrail.rslqld.net.au

Newsletter MAY 2023

President's Report



I'll start this newsletter report by mentioning the recent presentation made to Sub branch stalwart Doug Simonds who, in March this year, celebrated his 99th birthday. Sub branch Vice President John King arranged for Doug to sit for a formal portrait by *Mick Jones Photography* and we had the pleasure to present the portrait to Doug at the May Sub branch meeting. Doug gave a wonderful recollection of his recruiting medical in Brisbane over 80 years ago during WW2. That story included a colourful tale of WAAAFs walking past the open doorway to the induction room, where the naked recruits were undergoing their medical examinations. The WAAAFS were allegedly simply walking past, going about their “normal” duties, however, one of the young airmen recruits couldn't help wondering if they weren't keeping score cards for later comparison. Well done Doug

Moving on, things have been a bit busy since my last report, particularly in March. Railway House as usual has been a hive of activity with new members signing up and a steady flow of people seeking help from Shan and her hard working **Wellbeing Team**. In March, I represented the Sub branch at the RAAF Amberley reunion at CSI and I also presided over the election of office bearers for the RAAF Association- Ipswich Branch. Geof Kleinig and his team do a great job keeping the spirit of service alive.

In March, Sub branch members and guests enjoyed the bus trip to the Coolangatta Surf Club and, later, I attended the official opening of the Mates 4 Mates facility in West Ipswich. It will prove a great venue with many services available. The State RSL President Stephen Day was in attendance.

Later, I hosted the Sub branch Community Leaders' breakfast with about 70 in attendance. It was good to greet people who we help and those

who help us. On the of 25 March, several Board members plus partners attended a dinner at the Ipswich Turf Club to celebrate the 5th Anniversary of the formation of Young Veterans Ipswich. My congratulations to Karron and her committee for achieving so much for families in such a short time.

March closed with Spike and Vice President Bruce Graham representing the sub-branch at Pine Mountain for the dedication of the WW2 plaques which will be attached to the sides of the WW1 monument.



VP Bruce, Spike and Ipswich Sub branch Paul Rogers at the Pine Mountain dedication.

These two plaques have inscribed on them the names of the service people who resided in the greater Pine Mountain region and went away to theatres of war.

At our April meeting, Kevin Steed, Special Counsel with McNamara Law, gave an informative talk on wills, powers of attorney and other matters pertaining to estates. There's more on that subject later in the newsletter. In April, I also attended the Moreton District Council held at the Goodna RSL, as your delegate, Secretary Peter attended as a guest. There's some District news later on.

Many thanks to our members who volunteered to sell badges at the various shopping centres in the lead up to Anzac. That week was a very successful outcome for our fundraising. By wearing the green shirt, our volunteers demonstrated our commitment to community and the welfare programs of the RSL. My special thanks to Heather, Spike, Ray and John King for setting up and pulling down stalls during the campaign.



It will be on again in November, so please think about joining in as a volunteer badge seller.

Anzac Day 2023. With clearing skies, we commemorated Anzac Day at the Workshops Rail Museum. A great roll-up on the day. How good was the speech from Tayla Hohaia, Ipswich State High School Vice-Captain and the singing of Elizabeth Hargraves, Ipswich State High School Representative Councilor. Tayla's speech is reproduced at the end of this newsletter, and I commend it to readers. A visitor to our service told me Tayla's speech should be framed for prosperity.



After our service John King and I attended Pine Mountain to lay a wreath at their memorial and participate in a simple dignified ceremony. We were lauded for the donation of the Lone Pine tree which is located close to the memorial and it certainly blends in with the bushland setting.



Our donated Gallipoli Lone Pine pine tree being planted by John, supervised by Cr Kate Kunzelman

On Saturday 29th April we had a wonderful Sub branch anniversary dinner. A good meal, a few drinks and good company. Tracy, our entertainer, was on song so to speak. My thanks to John King for the presentation of the screen show. It made interesting viewing as backdrop for the evening.



President John chats with Rita Clarke at the Sub branch 87th anniversary dinner

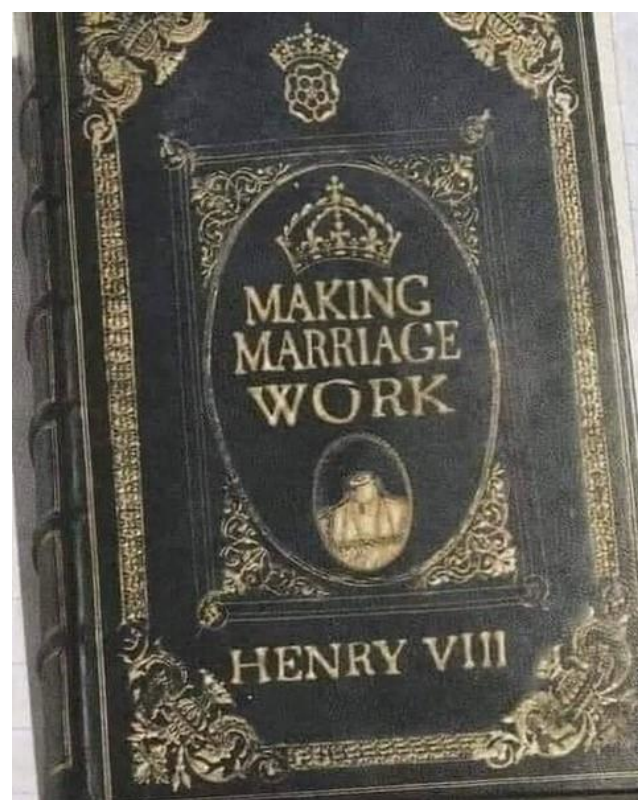
On Wednesday 10th May, Secretary Peter, Vice-President Bruce and I together with the President

and Secretary of the Ipswich Sub- Branch met with Council officers to plan a civic recognition ceremony for our Vietnam Veterans. It was a very constructive meeting and I would like to thank Councilor Russell Milligan for convening the meeting. More on that later.

And finally, while on remembrance, please take a moment to remember Sub branch members Gregory Ford and Patrick Donlevy, who passed away recently,

Lest We Forget

Yours in camaraderie
John Dredge
President.



Sub Branch News

New Members. Pres John would normally include the welcome to our new member in his report, however, given the number, they need an item in their own right. So please give a warm welcome for newly joined Ipswich Railway Sub branch Service members Charlie Bufalino, Janice Mc Farlane, Bill Hurdle, Kay Hurdle, Bill Watson, Curtis Beldon, Glenn West, Trish

Lomas, Andy Mc Cann and Peter Briese, and Associate Member Sandi Beaumont.

And to our new Non-League Social Members (NLSM), category, welcome to Carol Bond, Jeannette Dredge, Julie King, Heather Dainer, June Watherston, Debra Neal, Sandra Harle, Diane Kleinig, Narelle Bohn, Pauline Norris, Doreen Blaine, Kay Bufalino, Noelene Beldon, Molly Green, Wayne Sessargo, Dawn Swan, and Barbara Carseldine. **NLSM** membership is a new RSL membership category introduced by RSL QLD to encourage and recognise family members and community members who contribute to the league.

Non-League Social Members (NLSM) are required to pay a fee of \$5.00 and will be provided with a Sub-Branch monogrammed shirt, a name tag, and a scarf or tie, and encouraged to participate in all Sub branch activities, but will not be able to vote on Sub branch matters. If you have family or friends who are involved in our activities, who might be interested in being a social member, please contact Secretary Peter on 2800 8028.

Hospitalised? We Need You To Tell US. The Sub branch recently became aware of a member who had been hospitalised, but did not receive any contact or assistance from the RSL. After investigation, it appears that this was regrettably, not an isolated incident. One of our core objects is “Care”, however, we need to know when this is needed. To that end, if you are hospitalised, please ensure your loved ones inform us as soon as possible so that we can ensure you are receiving whatever assistance you or your family might need during that confinement.



Our Annual Strategic Plan. The 2023 Strategic Plan, which outlines our activities and supporting budget through to February 2024 was recently unanimously endorsed at the March Sub branch meeting . The Plan is available at the Sub branch office in Flint St for perusal by members, so if you are interested, feel free to call in and have a look. The plan is usually formulated at a dedicated

planning conference in December each year and Sub branch members are encouraged to attend and have a say in your plan.

New Sub Branch Board Positions. At the April Sub branch meeting, a motion was passed to amend our constitution to create the new Board positions of Deputy President and Assistant Treasurer. This restructure of the Board is intended to define a clear chain of management for the Sub branch, which under the present structure, is somewhat vague. The creation of Asst Treasurer is to ensure we plan for seamless transition if or when the position falls vacant. If these changes are approved by State RSL, it is anticipated that they will be filled by election at the 2024 AGM. Interested?, start thinking about putting your name forward now.

Next Sub branch BBQ. The next Sub branch BBQ on Sunday 28th of May 11.30am for 12.00noon. To assist with numbers for catering, if you are going to attend, please let John (mobile 0499 325 463) or Peter (0499 341 541) know. Further, **if you need transport assistance to attend**, our taxi service is always available to ensure our older and non-driving members can get out for a social activity. Again, call John or Peter to book a cab.



Anniversary Dinner: Granting of the Railway Sub branch charter.

Welfare Report. The Wellbeing team recently hosted a catch up morning tea at CSI for all our Railway Wellbeing team and our volunteers, as well as Moreton District & Ipswich Wellbeing Advocates and volunteers. We have had a huge increase in our Wellbeing volunteers and thought it would be a great opportunity for everyone to meet and put a “face to the name”.

Further to the item above about advising us about hospitalisation, Bob Stack and Peter Lindgren have been very active doing the rounds of our in hospitalised members. They also notify the Ipswich Welfare team if they find any Ipswich RSL Sub-Branch members during their Wednesday morning visits. Same also for any other Sub-Branch members visited. The Wellbeing Team then follow up on any matters arising from those visits, such as any need for any further assistance from the Sub branch.

Plans are underway to utilise our expanding pool of volunteers to facilitate possible weekly morning tea and arts and crafts classes at Flint Street, and widow group events such as bi-monthly morning tea at CSI or possibly bus trips. Costs are still being calculated, and once completed, a submission put to the Sub branch Board for consideration.

While volunteers have increased, more are always needed to share the load. All Wellbeing volunteers are provided with the Wellbeing Support Officers (WSO) Handbook and the required Police/Character checks are also organised for them. Our expanded Wellbeing team has also been visiting other Sub-Branches in the Moreton District who don't have their own Wellbeing volunteers.

Sub branch Social media – Facebook. Our social media presence is growing with small numbers being admitted to the Facebook group as we go. The Sub branch Facebook Group and Page are intended to update regularly the involvement of the Sub Branch and their Club, “Club Services Ipswich”, and to notify of short notice changes. As good as Railway Sub branch Facebook presence can be, we will maintain the highest of etiquette standards and not tolerate unacceptable or inappropriate commentary that reflect adversely on the RSL. That said, we will always welcome positive commentary, even if it is critical. Want to join us on Facebook but don't know how? Please contact Vice President John King and he will assist you.

Considering Volunteering? – The Ipswich Railway Sub-Branch is calling for volunteers to assist with the staffing of the front counter at “Railway House” Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday,

and Friday 0900 – 1200. If you are interested, please see John, Peter, or Shan.

Presentation of Painting. The Sub branch was recently gifted a painting done by Ms Lorena Kennedy. Lorena has previously donated work to the Sub branch and in this instance we just want to share her work with all members. *Below, Director Shan presenting the painting to Pres John on behalf of Lorena*



VV Day 2023 Planning Update. Planning is now underway for a combined Ipswich City Council, Ipswich and Ipswich Railway Sub branch special event to mark the 50th anniversary of the end of the Vietnam war on the morning of the 18th of August. Preliminary concept for the event is a commemorative service and wreath laying at the Soldiers Memorial Hall, followed by a march of Vietnam Veterans or their descendants down the mall and a conclusion in Tulmer place in front of the Council chambers. A reception will then be held at CSI for all veterans and their families. CSI will host its own annual VVD commemorative service at 5.00pm, to cater particularly for those who cannot attend the morning service in the mall. More information will be released closer to the event.

Below Pres John and Sub branch Board member Dave Brown at the XXXXXX school Anzac Service



but it's only a short walk around the corner to District HQ in Pine Street.



UniSQ Scholarship Recipient. The recipient of the 2023 Ipswich Railway nursing scholarship is Anyela Rogan, a second year Bachelor of Paramedicine at USQ. Planning is underway to have Anyela attend the Sub branch to meet members and talk about her aspirations as a nurse. time.



Part of the very large crowd that assembled for tis year's Anzac Day service at the railway Workshops memorial

Moreton District AGM New Deputy President
At the recent Moreton District AGM, Railway Sub branch member Peter Dixon (left) was elected as the Moreton District Deputy President, Peter took over from Doug Cook who has stood down after many years of service as Moreton Deputy under President Les Nash. Peter will continue his Sub branch role as railway Secretary,



Moreton District president Les Nash congratulates Doug Cook on his retirement from the Deputy position

Planning Ahead. Preparing for and Coping with Bereavement. It's not pleasant conversation, but inevitably, we are all going to pass away. Would your Spouse/Partner or Next-of-Kin know what to do at the time of your death?. DVA has published a brochure with information to help your loved ones when needed, including such items as information on Having a Valid Will, Power of Attorney, Advance Health Care Planning, Respite Care, Coping with Bereavement, Home Loan Assistance, pre-planning and pre-paid funerals, funeral benefits, including surviving partner's entitlement to veteran's funeral benefit.



So, ask yourself, do you have a current Will and a nominated Executor? Have you prepared a list of contact numbers for service providers (power, phone, water, council rates etc)? Is your spouse aware of how you have been paying any such accounts? Direct Debit or when due etc. Do you have any current loans whether personal or Housing Loan? Does your partner know the details of such loans and the relevant contact numbers. Do you have a list of your Bank/Credit Union accounts and the relevant contact numbers.

Does your spouse/partner/nok know to contact the various organisations including DVA, your Banks/Credit Unions, Council (rates etc), Telephone provider, Gas, Water, Electricity providers, your states Motor Transport Department for Licences.

Does your spouse/partner/NOK know to contact the Sub-branch to advise of your death. The Sub-branch can arrange a Poppy Service as part of your Funeral Service. Do you have dependant children. If so, your spouse/partner/nok can contact the nearest Legacy Office. Members of legacy may be able to assist with such things as on-going school education for the children. Finally, it covers Office of Australian War Graves - Veterans Commemorative plaque including commemorative plaques for eligible veterans.

The Sub branch will acquire these booklets for distribution so get in touch if you think this might be of assistance to you.

Reluctant Heroes Portrait Project. Mick Jones Photography. Further to Doug Simons portrait photo above, John King facilitated that as part of a project by portrait photographer Mick Jones, Mick is himself a veteran (RAN) and has taken on the project identifying WW2 veterans and photographing them. Mick also does other portrait work on a commercial basis. If you know someone who might fill the WW2 description, or just interested in having a portrait done, then please give Mick a call on 0432 861 476 or email him at mickjonesphotography@inet.net.au



Research an Australian Veteran's War Service
If you want to know more about someone who served, advice from our historians is that retracing their footsteps might be easier than you think.

To start, you'll need to know some basic details, such as, full name, date and place of birth war, conflict or peacekeeping mission in which they served, armed force in which they served approximate year they joined. Some military service records are difficult to find if the spelling does not match or the person registered under a different name. Make sure you have the correct name by checking with state births, deaths and marriages registries.

Depending on when they served, the person's defence records might be available online or on request from either the National Archives of Australia or the Department of Defence. DVA

(Department of Veterans' Affairs) (2023), Research an Australian veteran's war service, DVA Anzac Portal, accessed 15 May 2023, <https://anzacportal.dva.gov.au/veteran-research>

50th Anniversary End of Vietnam War Commemorative Medallion



The Government has launched a commemorative medallion to honour those who served in the Vietnam War. The medallion is a small but meaningful way to honour the service of

Vietnam veterans and to recognise the sacrifice of those who never returned home and that of their families. The medallions are available for every veteran, and can be applied for by Vietnam War veterans, widows of veterans and other family members of veterans. For more details on the commemorative medallion, including how to apply, or for more information about the other commemorative events planned, visit the DVA website: www.dva.gov.au/vietnam50.



Save The Steam Tug HMAS Forceful. Brisbane's beloved steam tug Forceful is at risk of being sent to the scrap yard by no fault of her own. Qld government authorities have deemed her a "potential" future flood risk so she is not allowed to return to her long standing home at the Queensland Maritime Museum at Southbank. Ipswich & West Moreton Sub Section Inc has advised that an electronic petition has been created a show of support to preserve Forceful and ensure she sees her 100th birthday in tact and with a permanent home. Forceful is currently being housed temporarily on a hard stand in Hemmant

but due to several reasons she cannot stay there much longer. Please feel free to support this important piece of Queensland history. To sign the petition go to <https://chnq.it/Fj5D9jBzVQ>



Our volunteer badge sellers at Brassall shopping center.

Further Investments To Support Veterans and Their Families. The Government has announced an additional \$328.1 million in the 2023-24 Budget to support the more than 340,000 veterans and dependants accessing services through the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA). This includes \$64.1 million to retain more than 480 DVA staff who are working to deliver frontline services to veterans and families and \$254.1 million over four years to modernise and sustain ageing IT systems, and ensure more timely payments and access to services for veterans and families through DVA.

The Government says that Australia's Defence Force personnel and veterans make a solemn commitment to serve and defend our nation. Their families also make significant sacrifices to support them. It is our duty to repay this in kind by providing effective transition, health and wellbeing support.

Better Access To Information for ADF Personnel and Veterans. The Government has implemented a further five recommendations from the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide's interim report. Changes have been made to improve information access from the Department of Defence and Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) for members of the

Australian Defence Force (ADF), veterans and their families.

This includes the establishment of Information Access Units within the Department of Defence and DVA, additional education material on the information access process, how and why redactions occur, and updates to both Departments' websites. The new Information Access Units will serve as a single point of contact for information requests, and will provide dedicated support to applicants if needed. The teams are already working closely together to facilitate requests quickly and seamlessly.

Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Defence Personnel, the Hon Matt Keogh MP, recently noted that "the Royal Commission's Interim Report was clear, as was the veteran and family community, that the information access process wasn't fit for purpose" Since then, the Government has been working on a comprehensive co-design process with Defence personnel, veterans and their families, DVA and Defence are implementing a raft of improvements to make sure the system is easier to navigate.

For more information about accessing information held by Defence or the Department of Veterans' Affairs, visit their websites.

National Reconciliation Week 2023 27 May - 3 June



Learning about Indigenous military service in Australia. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have served in every conflict and commitment involving Australian defence contingents since Federation, including both world wars and the intervals of peace since the Second World War

It's estimated that between 1,000 and 1,200 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people served in World War I from 1914 to 1918, and many as 6,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people served in World War II from 1939 to 1945. They volunteered despite regulations that discouraged their enlistment. They served on equal terms for the rank they held, but none held a commissioned rank. However, after the war, Indigenous veterans and their families faced discrimination in civil liberties, education and employment.

It's difficult to understand that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples served Australia in support of the British Empire during both world wars. At the time, they were, not recognised as the traditional owners of this land, not permitted to vote, not eligible for veterans' benefits. These are just some of the many injustices suffered by Indigenous veterans, their families and communities.



Indigenous diggers of the WW2 2/23 Battalion

The Australia War memorial (AWM) has created a hub to share information about people of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent who enlisted, or attempted to enlist for service in conflicts including the Boer war, the First World War, the Second World War, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, as well as more recent conflicts and peace keeping operations. In doing so, the AWM honours the contribution these Australians have made, and continue to make, to the Australian Defence Force (ADF), and this acknowledgement of service is part of the ongoing process of recognition and reconciliation

Vietnam – 50 Years On

The Battle of Coral–Balmoral 12 May to 6 June 1968. On 12 May 1968, Australian and New Zealand forces set up **Fire Support Base (FSB) Coral**, about 7 km north of Tan Uyen. It was an area the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong used to launch attacks on Saigon. The soldiers at FSB Coral would intercept and disrupt enemy forces approaching or withdrawing from Saigon. Helicopters were delivering soldiers and equipment to the site throughout the day.

The enemy was watching and attacked FSB Coral in the early morning of 13 May. Australian artillerymen, mortarmen and machine gunners in the direct line of the enemy's attack came under intense fire. On 24 May, some Australian soldiers moved about 4.5 km north of FSB Coral to set up **FSB Balmoral**.



A view of Fire Support Base Coral, looking towards the East, at the time of the Battle of Coral. In the foreground are the hoochies or temporary shelters of 102 Field Battery, Royal Australian Artillery. On the far left is the Battery's No. 4 gun, a 105mm M2a2 Howitzer, in the background, the Centurion MKV/1 tanks of C Squadron, 1st Armoured Regiment, which have just arrived from Nui Dat, are moving into defensive position

FSB Balmoral was attacked twice by the enemy. Patrols continued in the area until the Australians withdrew on 6 June. Between 12 May and 6 June 1968, 25 Australian lives were lost, with many more wounded. These actions made up Australia's most costly and protracted battle of the Vietnam War.

Remembering Australia's First Fab Four Nurses. The Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Matt Keogh MP, recently said that during this 50th anniversary year of the end of Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War, it is important to remember the service and sacrifice of Australian medical staff.

“The first four nurses posted to Vietnam in May 1967 became known as the ‘Fab Four’, making do serving in Field Ambulance units on the ground before the hospital was built



The 'Fab 4' nurses in their quarters in civilian clothes. Identified left to right: Captain Amy Pittendreigh; Lieutenant (Lt) Colleen Mealy; Lt Margaret Ahern; Lt Terrie Elizabeth Roche

The 1st Australian Field Hospital opened in Vietnam in 1968, expanding on the medical support which had been provided by the 2nd and then 8th Field Ambulances up until that time, staffed by the Fab Four”. “Once built, the hospital staff was made up of 125 personnel, providing care and comfort to Allied soldiers, enemy troops and civilians.

“We say thank you to all the men and woman who served, and saved lives, at the field hospital,” Minister Keogh said.

Mates for Mates Ipswich Family Recovery Centre now open!

Last month saw the opening of the new Mates 4 Mates Family Recovery Centre in Ipswich. At Level 1, 260 Brisbane St, West Ipswich. The friendly team are ready to help support veterans and their families in the community through our mental health and physical rehabilitation services plus our popular social connection activities

Whether you need a coffee and a chat, access to support and rehabilitation services, or you just want to meet others who understand what you're going through, you're welcome at Mates4Mates. At the Ipswich Family Recovery Centre you'll find a community of like-minded current and ex-serving Defence Force members who have been impacted by service, and their families. The staff and Mates understand what you're going through and are here to help – with no judgements or expectations. To book an appointment with one of the psychologists or exercise physiologists, you will need a Medicare or DVA referral from your GP.

or all other services, you will need to join Mates4Mates by filling out an application form. Once you have joined, you are welcome to come and go as you need for appointments, programs and social connection activities. The Family Recovery Centre is open from 8.30am to 4.30pm, Monday to Friday. Talk with our Family Recovery Centre staff about activities which may occur outside of regular opening hours, phone 1300 462 837



Volunteer Badge sellers Stan and Pam Dick on the job at Silkstone shopping village wearing their personalised badge seller aprons

Club Report



Important Message For All Sub Branch Members

Membership of Club Services Ipswich (CSI). Some of our newer members might not be aware that CSI is still an RSL Club and that Railway Sub and Ipswich Sub branch actually own the business. Profits from the Club go to directly to funding our combined RSL welfare activities.

Newer members might not be aware that as an RSL Sub branch member you are entitled to a higher level of membership on joining the Club. So please check your Club membership card and ensure that is annotated “**Railway Life**”, and if it's not, take it to CSI reception to have that corrected to ensure you receive your correct level of discounts when in the Club.

CSI Staff Star April

[Picture of Rose here](#)

Last word. As mentioned above by John above, we'll leave the last word to young Tayla Hohaia who delivered the Anzac Day address this year.uy

Railway Workshops 2023 Anzac Day Address Tayla Hohaia, Ipswich State High School Vice-Captain

Hello, thank you so much for the opportunity to speak here this morning.

Something that I am very passionate about is the sport, Volleyball. Unfortunately, I am short, but that's ok, I train to be able to measure up to the other players in my own ways. I still have a lot to learn about the sport, but every day that I am able to train and play with my team is a day I am doing what I love. I can indulge in my passions because of the sacrifices and services from caring and loving ANZACs who have made this life a reality for not only myself, but youth just like me in my community, in my school, and across Australia. This is why we are here today.

When I was asked to speak today, I was only asked one question, "what does ANZAC Day mean to you?" and well, after quite a bit of thinking, my answer to that question is, that it's a day to show my appreciation for all Australian and New Zealand soldier's service. Appreciation for what they do today, what they have done in the past, and appreciation for those who will follow in their footsteps.

Our ANZACs have, and continue to serve us and others time and time again, whether it be when defending our country, providing support in natural disasters or just by being kind and caring people. As a result of their commitment and dedication, myself and many other Australian and New Zealand citizens are able to do what we love and live a safe and peaceful life today. These members are quite simply the backbone of our society.

As time goes on, people forget the past and just focus on their future ambitions, and at times I myself am guilty of this. This is why today is so important. We cannot forget our past for it has made us and our country who we are. But it goes deeper than that. Until you have been in a defence family, you don't necessarily understand the complete sacrifices that are made by the soldiers or their family members. The missed dinners, birthdays, anniversaries and life events. The turmoil of doing what you know is best for the country you love, while walking away time and

time again from the family who loves you. All to give those in your community the life they deserve.

It is very rare that we stop and think about the sacrifices that are made on our behalf everyday by defence members and their families, without us even asking for it. It is why today we are all here. To thank them for their service, to thank them for everything they have missed and will miss, to thank them for being strong enough to make the difficult decisions that we cannot. To thank them for their endless sacrifices.

I spent some time trying to think about what my life would be like without the sacrifices from ANZAC soldiers, and their families. To be honest it was really difficult to imagine because of just how drastically different my life would have been. Would school be the same? Would I be able to play volleyball? What about my dreams of becoming a dentist? Instead, due to the sacrifices of many, some who are here with us today, some who are no longer here, my life and those of everyone else here today have endless possibilities.

We have a country that has been inspired by our ANZACs and has developed a culture of courage, loyalty, mateship, and selflessness. It is why our ANZACs are remembered today worldwide. Without their example, Australia would no doubt be a less compassionate and courageous place. I am so unbelievably proud of the country I have been born and raised in, and of the ANZACs and their families who made this possible.

Today as you leave, I want you to reflect on the impact our defence forces and their families have had on your daily life. To reflect on the sacrifices, both large and small. But mostly to give thanks for all they have done in the past, are doing currently, and will do in the future. You have all my gratitude, you have all my appreciation, and you have all my heart. On behalf of the youth of today, thank you for everything