

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

JULY 2026

WHAT'S ON IN AUGUST 2026

Every Monday – 1/2 Price Veteran's Lunch – Available for all service members and their partners. 50% off a main meal each – 12pm to 2.30pm. Must present your RSL members card.

Every Monday – Craft & Games Group, 1.30pm at the RSL

Fortnightly Thursdays – Vietnam veteran's meet at 12pm for lunch

Aug 11 – Veterans and Family Morning Tea. 10.00am – 11.30am. Enter via the back river deck

Aug 11 – Hoy Day – 2pm– 4.30pm. See inside for details

Aug 18 – Vietnam Veteran's Day – 2pm – 4pm – See inside for details

Aug 22 – RSL ACTIVE Rifle Shoot – 10am at Wangaratta Rifle Club. FREE event. See inside for details

Aug 31 – Kokoda dinner and panel discussion, 7.30pm at the RSL

NOTE: There will be no Women's Auxiliary meeting in August, the next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 15th September



Cocktail of the month

RUBY ROSÉ

Vodka, Grenadine,
Chambord, Rosé and
Lemonade

only
\$17

Tuesday
PARMA
Night

Choice of 4 toppings
Includes a **FREE** drink

AVAILABLE FROM 5:30PM • TERMS & CONDITIONS APPLY •
FROM \$20



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BOB ISKOV KOKODA SCHOLARSHIP 2026

Our 2026 Kokoda scholarship winners have returned after completing an arduous nine-day trek along the infamous Kokoda Track. Fern Tucker, Beth Meisinger, Angela Keenan and Cooper Clark battled hot humid days, freezing nights, log bridges, wading through river crossings and some incredibly steep climbs and descents. They walked a total of 124 kms and climbed a total of 6,658 mts. That is double the vertical climb from Base Camp to Mt Everest.



The group trekked from Kokoda Village, southward to Owers Corner. Along the way they delivered items to village schools, played rugby with the kids and even had time for a swim in the icy clear waters of the Owen Stanley Range creeks and rivers. They visited the hauntingly beautiful Bomana War Cemetery near Port Moresby where each student visited the grave of the local soldier whose name and story they carried on the track. They laid a poppy on his grave and promised their soldier that they would live their best life in his honour.



The students commit to taking part in a number of community events and meetings to share their stories. They will now promote the 2027 Kokoda Scholarship through presentations at their schools and in media interviews.



Join us for a special Kokoda Panel Discussion at 7.30 pm on Monday, 31 August at the Wangaratta RSL. Hear from the scholarship students as they share their Kokoda experiences. Families, supporters, RSL members and the public are welcome. Bookings are essential—please contact the club.



They will speak about their experiences as the guest speakers at the 2026 Remembrance Day service at the Wangaratta Cenotaph on 11 November.

MONTEVIDEO MARU PRESENTATION

The Wangaratta RSL was pleased to host a special evening with around 70 attendees coming together to remember and learn about significant events of the Second World War.

Guests had the privilege of hearing Captain Roger Turner speak about the tragic sinking of the Montevideo Maru, one of Australia's greatest wartime maritime disasters. His presentation provided a moving insight into the events surrounding the loss of the vessel.

We were also honoured to welcome Dr Judy Balcombe and retired nurse Arlene Bennett, who spoke about the bombing of the SS Vyner Brooke and the courage of the Australian nurses, many of whom tragically lost their lives at Radji Beach on Bangka Island. Her presentation was both informative and deeply moving, highlighting an important chapter of Australia's wartime history.

The evening was well supported, and all proceeds were donated to the Muntok Red Cross Project to assist with the purchase of a centrifuge for the local community.

Thank you to everyone who attended and supported this worthwhile event. It was a memorable evening of remembrance, education, and community generosity.

CRAFT & GAMES GROUP

Looking for a friendly way to spend a Monday afternoon? Our Craft & Games Group is a wonderful opportunity to meet new people, enjoy good conversation, and take part in a range of fun activities in a relaxed and welcoming environment.

Every week, many members enjoy an afternoon of crafting, board games and cards. Some ladies like to arrive at 1pm to share a light lunch together before activities begin at 1.30pm. These afternoons are always cheerful, relaxed, and full of good company. New members are warmly welcomed. The group meets every Monday at the RSL, and there's always room for one more at the table.



RSL ACTIVE – CANBERRA BUS TRIP

July's RSL Active event saw our group embark on a memorable four-day trip to Australia's capital, Canberra, enjoying a wonderful mix of history, sightseeing and great company.

After departing Wangaratta, the group stopped for lunch at the iconic Dog on the Tuckerbox near Gundagai before continuing on to Canberra. Upon arrival, a visit to Mount Ainslie Lookout provided spectacular panoramic views across the city, including the famous vista stretching from the Australian War Memorial to Parliament House.

The group stayed at Alivio Tourist Park, where the comfortable accommodation and warm hospitality from the staff made everyone feel welcome throughout the trip.

A major highlight was the guided tour of the Royal Military College, Duntroon. The visit exceeded expectations, with knowledgeable volunteer guides providing fascinating insights into the history and traditions of Australia's military officer training academy.

No visit to Canberra would be complete without spending time at the Australian War Memorial. The group explored the galleries, including the newly opened exhibitions, before attending the moving Last Post Ceremony at the Pool of Reflection—a fitting and memorable experience.



RSL ACTIVE – CANBERRA BUS TRIP

The itinerary continued with visits to several of Canberra's premier attractions, including the National Museum of Australia, the National Arboretum, home to its impressive Bonsai and Penjing Collection, and the Royal Australian Mint, where members enjoyed a guided tour and learned about Australia's coin production.

The group also visited the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House and finished the day at the National Carillon, taking in the beautiful views across Lake Burley Griffin as the evening bells chimed.

After four days of sightseeing, learning and camaraderie, the group returned home with many wonderful memories and a renewed appreciation for Australia's history and national institutions.

A sincere thank you to everyone who joined the trip and helped make it such an enjoyable experience. Special thanks also to John from Dysons Wangaratta for safely transporting the group throughout the journey.

- RSL Active Coordinator Vicki Bear



Wangaratta RSL Active invites Veterans, First Responders and their families and carers to attend a

RANGE DAY RIFLE SHOOT

Saturday 22nd August • 10.00am • FREE

WANGARATTA RIFLE CLUB
91 Rifle Range Road, Glenrowan VIC 3675

Participants can bring their own rifle, but must go through the safety protocols.



For more info or to arrange
transport contact:
Vicki Bear – RSL Active Co-ordinator
rsllactive@wangarattarsl.org.au
0419 288 695



REGISTER HERE

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

LOUISE MCKENZIE

This edition's Volunteer Spotlight shines on Louise McKenzie, a dedicated and valued member of the Wangaratta RSL Women's Auxiliary.

Louise currently serves as the Vice President of the Women's Auxiliary and is a past Secretary, generously giving her time and energy to support the many activities undertaken throughout the year. She is known for always being willing to lend a hand, with nothing ever seeming too much trouble.

Her contributions are wide-ranging. Louise coordinates with local schools when required, delivers and collects honesty boxes, helps pack and unpack them, sorts and sells badges for the ANZAC and Poppy Appeals, and is always ready to assist wherever needed. She is a reliable volunteer who can often make herself available at short notice, making her an invaluable member of the team.



If you've attended one of the Women's Auxiliary afternoon teas, there's a good chance you've enjoyed one of Louise's homemade slices or one of her delicious sandwiches. She was also a wonderful helper in the kitchen during this year's Scone Drive. While there may have been one memorable moment involving a container of cream and the kitchen floor, it certainly provided everyone with a good laugh and has become one of those stories that will be remembered for years to come!



Louise's positive attitude, willingness to help, and commitment to the Wangaratta RSL make her a truly deserving recipient of this Volunteer Spotlight. We sincerely thank Louise for everything she does for our Club, our members, and the community.

WOMEN'S AUXILIARY NEWS

SCONE DRIVE

The Wangaratta RSL Women's Auxiliary once again enjoyed a successful Scone Drive, held from 13–17 July, with volunteers baking and selling more than 67 dozen freshly made scones throughout the week.

The fundraiser continues to be a popular event, with members and the local community showing wonderful support by purchasing freshly baked scones and helping to make the week such a success. Funds raised will assist the Women's Auxiliary in continuing their valuable work and supporting the Wangaratta RSL and wider community.

A sincere thank you goes to everyone who baked, volunteered their time, and purchased scones during the week. Your generosity and support made this year's fundraiser another outstanding success.

Following the overwhelming response, the Women's Auxiliary is already looking forward to holding the Scone Drive again next year.



WOMEN'S AUXILIARY INVITES YOU TO

HOY DAY

TUESDAY 11TH AUGUST 2026

\$10

2.00pm – 4.30pm

Includes a devonshire tea,
lucky door prize and a raffle



For all bookings or information, please contact the club: (03) 5721 2501 • info@wangarattarsl.org.au



Women's Auxiliary
**FATHERS DAY
RAFFLE**

1st Prize – \$100 Bunnings Gift Card
2nd Prize – \$50 Bunnings Gift Card
3rd Prize – \$30 Bunnings Gift Card

Drawn Sep 4TH | Tickets \$1



VETERANS MORNING TEA & COFFEE

JULY MORNING TEA

Despite a cold and overcast July morning, 66 veterans, partners and family members gathered for our monthly Veteran's Morning Tea. The warm and welcoming atmosphere inside the RSL made for a wonderful morning of conversation, laughter and connection.

We were pleased to welcome Terri from Open Arms Wodonga (Veteran and Family Counselling), who was joined by her new colleague, Sean. It was great to have them attend and chat with members throughout the morning.

A special thank you goes to Wilma and Louise from the Women's Auxiliary for treating everyone to their delicious freshly baked scones, served with jam and cream, which were enjoyed by all.

AUGUST MORNING TEA

The next morning tea will be held on Tuesday 11th August. All veterans and family members from all regions are welcome to come along to the monthly morning tea.

For transport and all other enquiries, contact our Veteran Support Officer

Colleen Davis - 0447 217 768

Annual Veteran Morning Tea calendars are available at the Club.



Social Connections

VETERAN & FAMILY MORNING TEA CATCH UP

Please access at rear entrance

Tuesday 11th August
10.00 – 11.30AM

If you need support or transport:
☎ 0447 217 768

NAVY 125

On Sunday, 12 July 2026, Wangaratta RSL proudly hosted a special luncheon to commemorate Navy 125, celebrating 125 years of service by the Royal Australian Navy since Federation. The event brought together Royal Australian Navy veterans, along with a veteran of the United States Navy, to reflect on the Navy's proud history and enduring contribution to Australia's defence.

Guests heard from Chief Petty Officer Matthew Gauley from HMAS Cerberus, who shared insights into his own naval career and spoke about the many changes and advancements within the Navy over the past 125 years. His presentation highlighted that, while technology and capabilities have evolved, the Navy's greatest strength has always been its people and their unwavering commitment to defending Australia.

The luncheon was a fitting tribute to the men and women who have served in the Royal Australian Navy and an opportunity to celebrate a remarkable milestone in Australia's military history.

If any Navy Veteran wants to be invited to next Year's Lunch, please ring Liz Rouse Salmon on 0438 573 357.



STITCHED WITH PRIDE

One of the highlights of the Wangaratta RSL's Navy 125 commemorations was the unveiling of a beautiful commemorative quilt, celebrating 125 years of service by the Royal Australian Navy since Federation.

The quilt was thoughtfully designed by our Ceremonial Officer, Liz Rouse Salmon, and RSL Active Coordinator, Vicki Bear. Featuring images of significant naval ships and operations, it captures the rich history, traditions and achievements of the Royal Australian Navy over the past 125 years.

Bringing the design to life was no small task. Ruth Martin, wife of our United States Navy veteran Bud Martin, dedicated many hours to carefully cutting, piecing and sewing the quilt. Bud also played an important role in preparing the quilt for display, while the final quilting was expertly completed by Sharon Geddes in Corowa.

This remarkable project is a wonderful example of the dedication, craftsmanship and teamwork of our volunteers. Their combined efforts have created a lasting tribute to the men and women who have served in the Royal Australian Navy.

The quilt will remain on display at the Wangaratta RSL until 31 July and will then be displayed each year throughout July, recognised as Navy Month, allowing future generations to appreciate this unique tribute to Australia's naval heritage.

RSL MUSEUM

Step inside the Wangaratta RSL Museum and explore a fascinating collection of military memorabilia, photographs, uniforms and artefacts that help preserve and share the stories of those who have served.

The museum provides a warm and welcoming environment, making it a wonderful place to visit on a cold winter day. Each display item tells a story — not only of the men and women who served their country, but also of the families who supported them and waited for their loved ones to return home.

Our collection spans more than 100 years of military history and continues to grow through generous donations and ongoing updates. From personal items and family artefacts to unique displays such as the BSA motorbike, there is something to interest visitors of all ages.

The museum is proudly operated by our dedicated team of volunteers, who generously give their time to welcome visitors, share their knowledge and bring the stories behind the displays to life. Our volunteer team includes veterans from a range of services, ranks and roles, along with community members who share a passion for preserving our history.

We welcome visitors from near and far, and often hear wonderful stories as guests share their own experiences or family connections to the items on display.

The museum is open **Monday, Wednesday and Friday** from 11.00am to 2.00pm, with free admission. Everyone is welcome to come along, explore our local military history and discover the stories behind the collection.



*Pictured: Halle and Grandfather
Graeme Selwood*



*Pictured: Volunteer Nigel
sharing stories with a
visitor*



*Pictured: Peter Styles, Ken
& Sharon Godwin*



*Pictured: MAJ Nony Baldwin,
Charlie & Hugh Carter*

MUSEUM VOLUNTEERS

No previous experience or specialist knowledge is required—just an interest in our local and military history and a willingness to help. As the museum offers free entry, there is no money handling involved, and every shift is shared with another volunteer, so you'll always have someone to work alongside.

If you have three hours to spare on a Monday, Wednesday or Friday, we'd love to hear from you.

Craig will arrange a brief on-site induction to help you become familiar with the museum and ensure you feel comfortable in your new role.

We are always grateful to welcome new volunteers to our team.

Volunteer Coordinator
Craig Iskov

volunteer@wangerattarsl.org.au
0428 737 788.



LIBRARY

Our library is continually expanding through generous donations, ensuring there is always something new to discover. If you haven't visited yet, we encourage you to drop in, have a browse and see what the library has to offer. You may just find your next great read.

Thanks to the dedication of our librarian, Fay, the library's extensive collection has now been comprehensively sorted and catalogued, making the collection more accessible and enjoyable for everyone.

The library is located at the RSL Annexe – 10-14 Templeton Street.
For any enquiries about the library, please contact Fay on **0439 861 774**

WELFARE SUPPORT TEAM

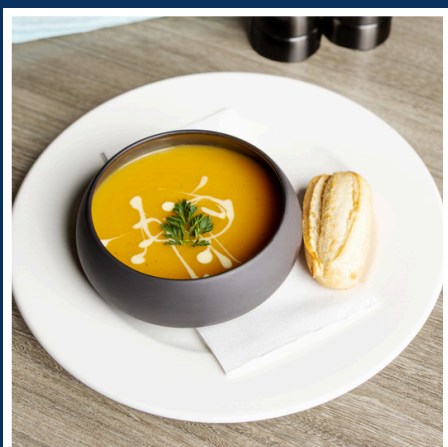
The Wangaratta RSL Welfare Support Team continues to provide invaluable assistance to veterans and their families throughout our community. Whether it's offering a friendly conversation, helping connect people with support services, or providing practical assistance when needed, the team is dedicated to ensuring no veteran feels alone.

Working quietly behind the scenes, our volunteers make a real difference through their compassion, commitment and willingness to help. Their ongoing efforts reflect the RSL's enduring commitment to supporting those who have served and their families.

If you or someone you know could benefit from welfare support, or if you would like to learn more about the services available, please don't hesitate to contact the Wangaratta RSL



BISTRO – OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK



VIETNAM VETERANS DAY

(Formerly known as Long Tan Day)

COMMEMORATIVE SERVICE

WHEN: Tuesday 18th August 2026,
2.00pm – 4.00pm

WHERE: 2/24th Battalion Function
Room, Wangaratta RSL

All Vietnam veterans, wives,
partners, families, RSL members and
the public are invited to attend

Afternoon Tea will follow the service



VETERAN SUPPORT

VETERAN SUPPORT TEAM

Every Wednesday morning, team members continue to make courtesy phone calls to veterans to check on their wellbeing, have a chat and offer help and assistance where needed. Any concerns are immediately passed onto Colleen for her to follow up. Team members also update veterans of any upcoming events or activities that they may be interested in.

- Services offered by our Veteran Support team include:
- Weekly telephone support calls
- Financial support when necessary
- Hospital and home visitation
- Funeral officer available
- Solar Panel cleaning
- Lawn mowing and gardening
- Gutter cleaning
- Heating/Cooling service
- Appliance test and tag

For any additional services or information, please phone our Veteran Support Officer **Colleen Davis – 0447 217768**.

Office Hours: Wednesday 10am – 1pm

By Appointment: Mondays & Tuesdays

EXTERNAL ASSISTANCE

Beyond Blue – 1300 224 636 (fee call) 24 hours/7 days a week

OPEN ARMS – VETERANS & FAMILIES COUNSELLING

Open Arms provides free and confidential counselling and support for veterans & their families, offering a range of programs and services including:

- difficulty adjusting to normal life
- challenges transitioning to civilian life after leaving the ADF
- difficulties with relationships
- managing anger
- depression and anxiety
- substance and alcohol misuse
- past trauma and PTSD

For free support, 24 hours a day, call Open Arms on 1800 011 046.

If you have an article or a story that would be interesting to our readers, please send it in to the email below and we may include it in the newsletter. Just sending a paragraph about it and a photo could help us keep our members informed, and maybe even entertained.

E: newsletter@wangarattarsl.org.au

Thank you to Julia, Craig and Colleen for their valuable contributions to the newsletter, and those who submitted articles.