MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
OCTOBER 2026

RSL WANGARATTA

WHAT'S ON IN NOVEMBER 2026

Every Monday - Veteran's ½ Price 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
Every Sunday - Live Music 2pm - 6pm. See schedule inside
Fortnightly Thursdays - Vietnam veteran's meet at 12pm for lunch
November 1 – RSL Working Bee – 9am. See inside for details
November 10 - Veterans Morning Tea, 10-11.30am, at the RSL. Enter via the back river deck
November 11 - Remembrance Day – 10am at the Cenotaph. Light lunch follows at the RSL. See inside for details
November 14 - RSL Active - Gemstone Fossicking & BBQ. 10.30am at Reedy Creek, Eldorado. See inside for details
November 17 - Women's Auxiliary Meeting - 10.30am, at the RSL Annexe





REMEMBRANCE DAY

On November 11th we will take a moment to remember and honour the brave individuals who served our country.

At the 11th hour, we will pause to reflect, remember and pay our respects to all those who have served and those who continue to serve.



REMEMBERING OUR VETERANS

Those we have farewelled in 2026
The following is a list of veterans from our RSL community who have passed during 2026. We remember their service, their contribution to our community and the memories they leave behind.

Lou Dei-Rossi	**226140 - ARMY**	**09/01/2026**
Russell Keeys	**37949 - ARMY**	**06/02/2026**
Jake Hales	**3/772357 - ARMY**	**16/02/2026**
Brian (Bluey) Bettles	**3165059 - ARMY**	**04/04/2026**
Kevin Howard OAM JP	**3129346 - ARMY**	**21/04/2026**
David William Granger	**3714117 - ARMY**	**08/09/2026**
Brian Kensington	**RNZN2762 - NAVY**	**20/09/2026**

With sadness we farewell the following veterans and extend our deepest sympathy to their families and friends.



KEN WILLIAM PRESTON
3770141 - ARMY
01/10/2026



ROY RICHARDS
4114998 - Air Force
15/10/2026

Lest we forget

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS - JOHN DAY

John has been a valued member of our RSL for many years, having previously been a member at Box Hill. I recently had the pleasure of interviewing John and capturing a beautiful photograph of him and his wife, Diane, on the occasion of his 100th birthday.

I have always believed that every contribution made in service to one's country is invaluable, regardless of rank, position or location. John is certainly one of those individuals whose story deserves to be shared.

John enlisted in the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) in 1944, aged just 18, where he trained as a wireless operator specialising in Morse code. He went on to become the first male wireless operator at General Douglas MacArthur's headquarters at 'Frognal' in Camberwell.

Being left-handed initially presented a challenge, as all wireless key stations were designed for right-handed operators. The usual method involved operating the key with the right hand before writing down the message. John developed his own technique, learning to operate the key with his right hand while simultaneously recording the message with his left. This unique approach eventually made him one of the fastest operators using this method.

One of the most significant moments of John's service came on 8 May 1945, when he was assigned to receive all incoming messages from Lord Louis Mountbatten's headquarters in Delhi. Towards the end of a hectic night shift, a message arrived in plain language. During wartime, sending an uncoded message was a court-martial offence, making this transmission all the more unusual. The message simply read: **'War Ended Europe'.** John was the first person in Australia to receive news of the end of the war in Europe. He handed the signal to his supervisor, who took it upstairs. For the next ten minutes, nothing happened, before celebrations finally erupted. When John's shift finished, he caught a tram and then a train into the city, where everything initially seemed surprisingly quiet. Unable to share the news, he waited as the city eventually erupted in celebration. John recalls that, being in uniform, he received plenty of attention and was kissed by many very pretty girls that day!

Following his discharge from the RAAF, John joined the Herald newspaper, where he eventually worked his way up to become Sales Director. He later travelled to England, where, together with a colleague, he established the World Record Club. The business went on to achieve the highest sales of classical records in the world. Today, John calls Wangaratta home, where he lives with his wife, Diane.



It was a privilege to hear John's story and learn more about his remarkable contribution during such a significant period in our history. Reaching 100 years is an extraordinary milestone, and we are very fortunate to have John as part of our RSL community.

Bob Hayward

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT
DAVID MARONEY

This month, we are proud to shine the spotlight on David Maroney, who has been generously volunteering his time and skills to Wangaratta RSL for 6 years.

A dedicated and always willing volunteer, David plays an important role in keeping our club, grounds and facilities looking their best. From the ongoing task of oiling and polishing the outdoor tables to preparing, planting and maintaining the beautiful red poppies in the garden beds along the banks behind the club carpark, David's hard work can be seen throughout the grounds.

David has also undertaken some significant maintenance projects, including a major clean-up of the carpark drainage system and grates, making a noticeable difference to water dispersal during heavy rain. He continues to take great pride in keeping the external areas surrounding both the RSL and Annexe tidy, regularly tackling weeds, rubbish and general gardening duties.



Always happy to lend a hand, David assists with working bees, building and grounds maintenance, and many of the club's important events, including ANZAC Day, the Poppy Appeal and other commemorative services. As a veteran, his connection to the RSL community is particularly valued.

More recently, David has taken on an additional role within the RSL Museum, joining the regular volunteer roster and helping with general upkeep and day-to-day tasks. He also ensures the Veteran Support section is stocked with photocopying paper and is always checking in to see if there is anything else that needs doing.

David is often joined in his volunteering efforts by his daughter, Galaxcia, who lends a helping hand along the way.

We are incredibly grateful for David's 6 years of commitment, generosity and continued support. His willingness to simply turn up, lend a hand and get things done is what makes volunteers like David such an important part of our Wangaratta RSL community.

Thank you, David, for everything you do!









RSL ACTIVE

TARGET CLAY SHOOT
RSL Active enjoyed another fantastic day on Saturday, 10 October, with a clay target shoot bringing together 15 shooters and 9 spectators for a great day of friendly competition.

The sun came out to play, making for perfect conditions and plenty of excitement throughout the day. There were some impressive shots on display, with the competition so close that three shooters had to take part in a shoot-off to determine the eventual winner. Congratulations to Jack Peacock from Wodonga, who took out the win!

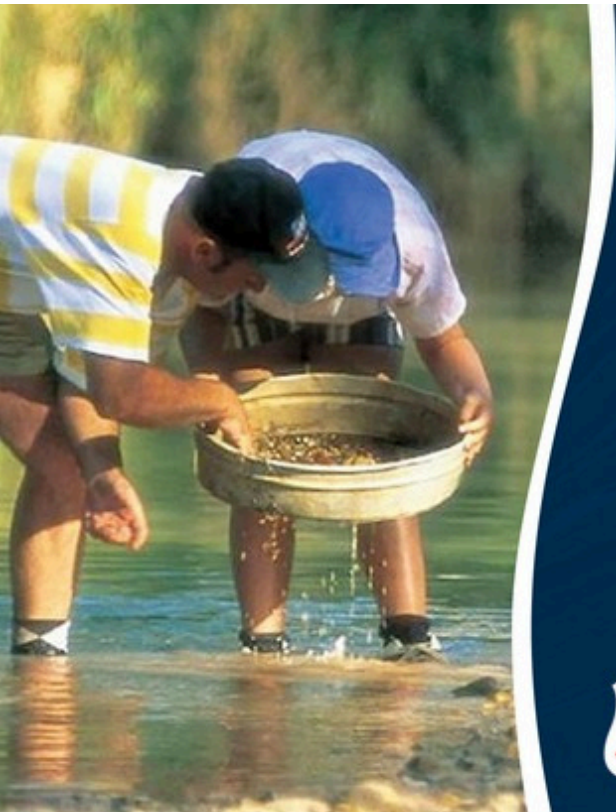
A big thank you to everyone who came along to participate or support the event. It was a wonderful day enjoyed by all.

METAL DETECTOR FOR HIRE
RSL Active has a metal detector available for veterans to hire, whether you're experienced or simply keen to give it a go! A $50 deposit is required when collecting the detector, which will be fully refunded when the detector is returned in its original condition.

For more information or to arrange a hire, please contact our **RSL Active Coordinator - Vicki** on 0419 288 695.





Wangaratta RSL Active invites Veterans, carers and their families to attend a day of

GEM FOSSICKING

with Kyle from ***Crystal Cove Prospecting***

SATURDAY 14TH NOVEMBER • 10.30AM • FREE

Reedy Creek, Eldorado • Meeting at Eldorado Park, opposite McEvoy Tavern, ELDORADO VIC 3746

BBQ lunch and refreshments provided.
Please bring your own digging tools and equipment.

RSL Active

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

REGISTER HERE

VETERANS MORNING TEA & COFFEE

OCTOBER MORNING TEA
Another great turnout was enjoyed at this month's Morning Tea, with veterans, family members and special guests coming together. We were pleased to welcome Stuart, Manager of Wellbeing Navigation and Support at RSL Victoria; Kirren, Operational Lead at the Wodonga Veterans Hub; and Terri and Brad from Open Arms Wodonga.

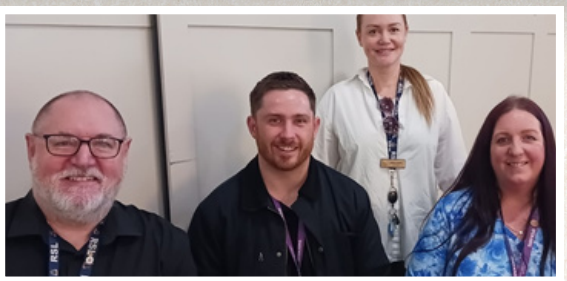
It was also wonderful to see our President, Ash Power, back up and about, enjoying morning tea and catching up with fellow veterans, wives and partners, as well as several first-time attendees

NOVEMBER MORNING TEA
The next morning tea will be held on Tuesday 10th November. All veterans and family members from all regions are welcome 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.













WOMEN'S AUXILIARY NEWS

MONTHLY MEETING

Our Women's Auxiliary (WAUX) members recently gathered for their monthly meeting, taking the opportunity to catch up, share a few conversations and enjoy some time together.



Following the meeting, the ladies enjoyed coffee together, providing a lovely opportunity to relax, socialise and strengthen the friendships that make the Auxiliary such a valued part of our RSL community.



A big thank you to all our WAUX members for their continued commitment, support and contribution to Wangaratta RSL. Their time and dedication are greatly appreciated!

The next monthly meeting will be held on November 17th at 10.30am. If you're interested in getting involved, contact the Women's Auxiliary President, Wilma Bright on 0407810497.

HOY DAY

Our Women's Auxiliary recently hosted another wonderful Hoy Day, with 30 players attending for a fantastic day. Everyone enjoyed a delicious morning tea featuring cheese, date and pumpkin scones, followed by a lovely two-course lunch including chicken, ham and salads, with fruit salad and ice-cream to finish.
There were also plenty of opportunities to try their luck, with a lucky door prize and several raffles adding to the day's excitement.
A special thank you goes to Vicki for taking on the role of caller and keeping the games running. It was a great day enjoyed by everyone, and we look forward to welcoming everyone back to the next Hoy Day!















RSL MUSEUM

The Wangaratta RSL Museum continues to welcome visitors from across Australia, with veterans, families and visitors to the region regularly popping in to explore our wonderful displays and learn more about our military history.

Behind the scenes, there is plenty happening to keep the museum looking its best. Thanks to the ongoing efforts of our Memorabilia Officer, Michele, the displays continue to be updated and enhanced for visitors to enjoy.

Ron, Greg and David have also been busy undertaking a range of projects, including mounting the weapons display and making improvements to the working and storage areas at the rear of the Annexe. Their hard work and dedication are helping us continue to develop the museum and make the most of the available space.

Our dedicated team of volunteers continues to welcome visitors every Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 11am to 2pm.

We are always looking for more museum volunteers! If you have a few hours to spare each month, enjoy a friendly chat and meeting new people, we would love to hear from you.

To find out more or join the volunteer roster, please contact Craig Iskov at **volunteer@wangarattarsl.org.au** or on **0428 737 788.**



WORKING BEE

With Remembrance Day just around the corner, we're holding a working bee on Sunday 1 November from 9.00am to give the Club a general tidy-up. We'll be working around the club, carpark and garden beds, making sure everything is looking its best ahead of Remembrance Day.

If you're able to lend a hand, please bring along a rake, broom, cobweb brush and gloves. And, of course, no working bee is complete without a little morning tea! Coffee and cake will be provided at 10.15am, before some volunteers head off to the Remembrance Day briefing with Ceremonial Officer Liz Rouse Salmon at 10.30am.

We'd love to see plenty of volunteers there to help get the club looking its best. Every helping hand makes a difference! For more information or enquiries, contact our **Volunteer Co-ordinator, Craig Iskov** on 0428 737 788

CRAFT & GAMES GROUP



Looking for a fun and friendly way to spend your Monday afternoon? Our weekly Crafts & Games Group continues to bring people together at the Wangaratta RSL for an afternoon of creativity, games and good company. Meeting every Monday from 1.30pm, the group offers a relaxed and welcoming environment where participants can enjoy a range of craft activities, try their hand at different games, share a few laughs and catch up with friends.

Whether you enjoy knitting, getting creative, playing cards or simply having a chat over a cuppa, there is something for everyone. New faces are always welcome to come along, meet some friendly people and enjoy a relaxing Monday afternoon with us.

VETERAN SUPPORT TEAM



The Veteran Support Team recently celebrated Coordinator Colleen Davis's birthday with a lovely homemade chocolate cake and a beautiful posy of flowers. A special way to celebrate and show appreciation for Colleen!

DAY TOUR – TOCUMWAL & BYRAMINE HOMESTEAD

Eldorado and Wangaratta Senior Citizens Club are organising a day tour to Byramine Homestead and Tocumwal on Wednesday, 10 February 2027.

The day will include a visit to the historic Byramine Homestead and Brewery, followed by a trip to Tocumwal, where participants will enjoy lunch at the Golf Club before visiting the Tocumwal Aviation Museum.

For pricing and further information, or to make an enquiry, please contact **Tour Coordinator Judy Scoullar** on **0429 354 783.**

POPPY APPEAL

The 2026 Poppy Appeal is now underway, with our dedicated Wangaratta RSL volunteers already working hard behind the scenes to get everything organised.

Our volunteers have been busy setting up collection points and selling Poppy Appeal badges throughout the community, helping to raise important funds in support of veterans and their families.

A big thank you to everyone who has generously given their time to assist with this year's appeal, as well as to those in the community who support us by purchasing a badge or making a donation. Every contribution makes a difference, and we are grateful for the continued support of our local community.











SUNDAY SESSIONS

LIVE AND FREE
Sunday Sessions are back! Join us every Sunday from 2pm to 6pm for an afternoon of great live music! Bring your friends and enjoy the music, with food and drinks available all day! Check out this month's schedule below!

NOVEMBER SCHEDULE
1st - Euan Hart
8TH - Euan Hart
15TH - Headline
22nd - Jonno
29th - Locky Routledge

Any updates or schedule changes will be posted on our website and socials!



BISTRO - OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK





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.