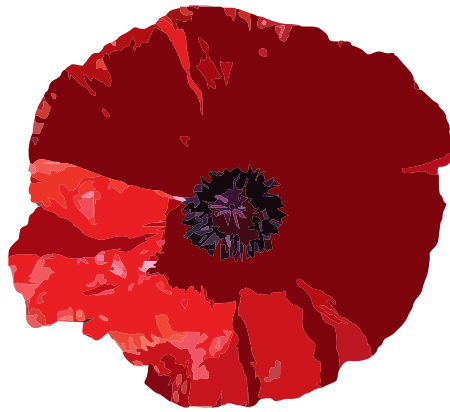


- THE GYMPIE VETERAN CENTRE -
**MARCH 2026
NEWSLETTER**



VALE

Trevor Percival Morris
DOB 27 February 1933
DOD 18 April 2024

Ronald John Stark
DOB 20 May 1930
DOD 16 February 2026

Stojan Plevcak
DOB 6 May 1945
DOD 19 February 2026

We Will Remember Them

Lest We Forget

Photograph on Front Cover

Top right

A war memorial for the Australian military forces in the small town of Kuranda.

Top Left

31 March: Formation of the Royal Australian Air Force (1921).

Bottom right and left

1 March: Formation of the Australian Army and Navy (1901).



Bismarck Sea. 1943-03-03. Japanese transport ship under attack from a Beaufighter of No. 30 Squadron RAAF, piloted by 260353 Flight Lieutenant R. F. Uren during the Bismarck Sea battle. (Film still)

Sydney, 3 March 1885.
Departure of the NSW
Contingent for the Sudan.



Military commemorations in March

1 March: Formation of the Australian Army and Navy (1901).

2 March: Anniversary of the Battle of Bismarck Sea (1943).

3 March: Anniversary of the Sudan Contingent's departure (1885).

31 March: Formation of the Royal Australian Air Force (1921).

Letter from the President

ADEL AMIN

*President of the Board of Directors,
Gympie RSL Sub Branch*



The 2026 AGM is fast approaching, and nominations for members to stand as candidates for the Gympie RSL 2026-2027 Board of Directors are open. The AGM will be held on Sunday 29 March. The annual election provides an opportunity for members to assess the credentials of all nominees, ensuring our elected Board possesses the collective skills, expertise, and personal attributes necessary to lead the organisation effectively.

Serving as a board member of an RSL sub-branch is most often driven by a deep commitment to supporting veterans, their families, and the wider community. These roles are voluntary and unpaid, and those who step forward typically do so out of service rather than self-interest. For many—particularly ex-serving members—board service provides an opportunity to remain connected to the defence family, preserve a sense of camaraderie, and continue contributing to causes that matter deeply to them.

Despite these positive motivations, the role of an elected RSL Sub-Branch Board Member is widely regarded as demanding, high-responsibility, and often thankless. It requires significant personal sacrifice, particularly in terms of time spent away from home and family attending committee meetings, board meetings, and community engagements. Board members are responsible for governance, compliance, financial oversight, strategic decision-making, and ensuring the long-term sustainability of the sub-branch—often while navigating complex regulations and competing expectations.

Unfortunately, at times, board members face intense and, at times, unfair scrutiny. Public meetings can occasionally become confrontational, with a small number of veterans or members engaging in rude or unconstructive behaviour. Decisions made in good faith and with due diligence are sometimes over-scrutinised or criticised without a full understanding of the constraints, legal obligations, or broader considerations involved. Meanwhile, the significant amount of work undertaken behind the scenes—often quietly and competently—tends to go unnoticed, with successes rarely acknowledged.

If RSL sub-branches are to continue attracting capable veterans and social members willing to serve as board members, there is a growing need for greater respect and understanding of these roles. Board members are not outsiders or adversaries; they are fellow veterans or club members who have chosen to shoulder responsibility on behalf of the whole community. Disagreements and concerns are inevitable in any organisation, but they should be raised respectfully and constructively. Members are encouraged to approach board representatives directly where possible, rather than resorting to public, abusive, or online criticism.

More broadly, those who feel strongly about particular issues might consider becoming more actively involved—by joining a committee, standing for election, or contributing time and expertise in other ways. Doing so not only helps strengthen the organisation, but also provides valuable insight into the challenges and pressures faced by those in leadership roles. Constructive engagement, mutual respect, and shared responsibility are essential if RSL sub-branches are to remain effective, sustainable, and true to their purpose of supporting veterans and their families.

Kind Regards

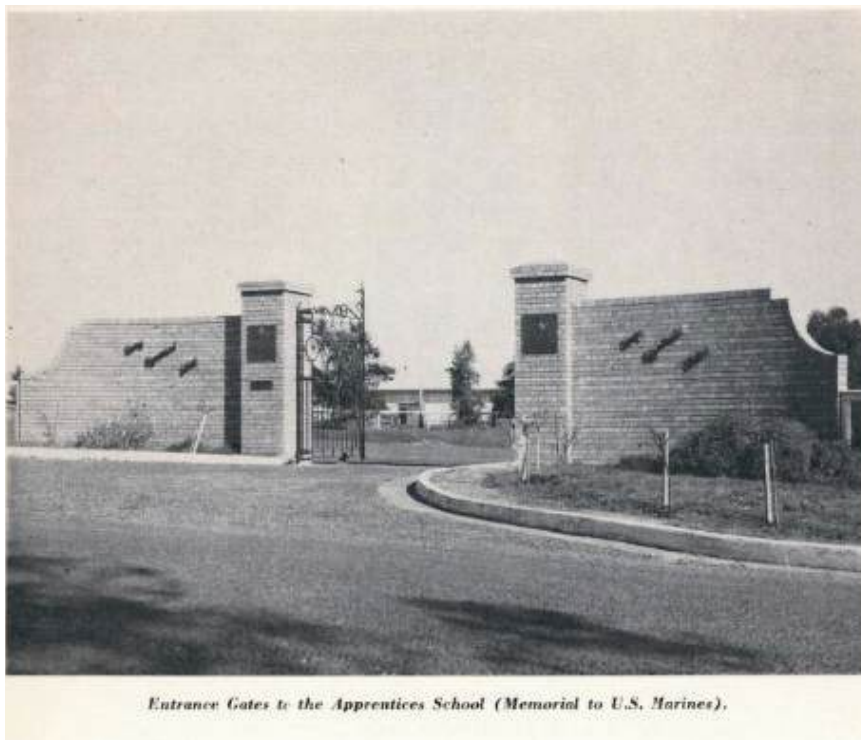
Adel Amin

As you are aware, this month's commemorations include those of the establishment of the Australian Navy, Army and Air Force in 1901, 1901 and 1921 respectively.

I was researching these momentous events and was led to recall the beginning of my military career. Not to make this about me, but to note my service began as it did for a very large cohort of servicemen and women over the years in a very particular way.

After two failed attempts to run away from home, (well, ok, this part is about me), I finally managed to remove myself by enlisting in the Army Apprentices School, located at that time, at Balcombe, Victoria which I arrived at by train from Adelaide to Melbourne and then by Army bus to said Balcombe.

I was 16 years and 1 month in January, 1961 and together with the rest of my comrades of the 16th Intake we marched through the gates, a memorial to US Marines, of what was to be our home for the next chapter of our lives.



For the next one and a half years we, in the clerical part of the intake, found ourselves wrapped in the warm embrace of the School staff.

Founded in 1948, the School provided trade training that was recognised by all states. The first intake consisted of 63 youths from all over Australia and between 1951 and 1982 more than 5000 Apprentices graduated from the School.

In December 1982 the School moved from Balcombe to Latchford Barracks at Bonegilla, near Wodonga. The Balcombe camp was decommissioned in 1983. In 1995 the last Army Apprentices graduation parade was conducted at Bonegilla.

10 December 1960/December 1961 – first graduations with the Self-Loading Rifle The 7.62mm L1A1 Self-Loading Rifle (SLR) was introduced into the Australian Army in 1959. In December 1960, the 13th Intake was the first to carry the SLR on their graduation parade. The weapons were subsequently withdrawn for Vietnam War emergency use but reissued in time for the 14th Intake's graduation parade in December 1961.

The clerical contingent of the 16th intake graduated in June 1962 at the conclusion of their 18 months' training. The, now, soldiers were posted to various corps and units. I was posted to Engineers and sent to 24 Construction Squadron at Enoggera, Brisbane.

We had a graduation parade and were issued with our certificates. In the evening a Graduation Ball was held and the graduates had their new corps lapel badges attached to their ceremonial uniform jackets by their respective partners. We then initiated the dancing by leading with the Military Two Step which we had been ordered to learn in the weeks prior to the Ball.

And thus ended the first chapter in our military careers. I enjoyed the experience and shall ever be grateful for having been given the opportunity to set off in life albeit as a child soldier.





*To our Members celebrating a new
decade in March:*

<i>David B</i>	<i>70</i>
<i>Robert E</i>	<i>80</i>
<i>Peter H</i>	<i>80</i>
<i>James O'P</i>	<i>80</i>
<i>Geoffrey T</i>	<i>80</i>
<i>Yvonne F</i>	<i>70</i>
<i>Elvie W</i>	<i>30</i>

*Our best wishes to you all, and to all
members celebrating birthdays this month!*

RESULTS OF QUESTIONS ASKED BY READERS IN 'LETTERS TO THE EDITOR'

In February's edition of the Newsletter the section 'Letters to the Editor' was inaugurated.

Suggestions were made and questions asked. What follows are some answers:

Elay C suggested that it would be helpful if the font size was increased to assist those who are visually challenged and you will see that the size has been increased from 14 to 15. It is hoped this helps. Your comments would be appreciated.

She also asked for more stories about animals in war. Some are included elsewhere in this Newsletter.

Lauren M asked if a biography of the teams working in the club could be included. Lauren, I have written to the person whom I presume is responsible for the staff and I have received a reply. Hopefully, your request will be satisfied.

Betty B asked about the Memorial walkway and the eternal flame here in Gympie.

Below are links to the information she asked about.

https://www.gympie.qld.gov.au/files/assets/public/v/1/services/documents/memorial_flame_and_pillars.pdf

<https://placesofpride.awm.gov.au/memorials/267389>

She also suggested puzzles might be fun and the ball was thrown back into her court. The dear lady has prepared some brainteasers for you. They appear elsewhere in this newsletter.

Thank you to those of you who wrote to the editor. I know you were sort of coerced but hopefully the ball has started rolling.

Editor

ANIMALS USED IN WAR

Historically, the war elephant's main use was to charge the enemy, break their ranks, and instill terror and fear. Elephantry is a term for specific military units using elephant-mounted troops. War elephants played a critical role in several key battles in antiquity, especially in ancient India.



Over 16 million animals served in the First World War. They were used for transport, communication and companionship.

In 1914, both sides had large cavalry forces. Horse and camel-mounted troops were used in the desert campaigns throughout the war, but on the Western Front, new weapons like the machine gun made cavalry charges increasingly difficult.

However, animals remained a crucial part of the war effort. Horses, donkeys, mules and camels carried food, water, ammunition and medical supplies to men at the front, and dogs and pigeons carried messages. Canaries were used to detect poisonous gas, and cats and dogs were trained to hunt rats in the trenches.

Animals were not only used for work. Dogs, cats, and more unusual animals including monkeys, bears and lions, were kept as pets and mascots to raise morale and provide comfort amidst the hardships of war.



A German war dog, fitted with apparatus for laying telephone wires, walking across muddy ground, 1917.



This fox cub was the mascot of No.32 Squadron.



Camels carry wounded men to safety on the North West Frontier of India in 1917.



German transport driver and horses wearing gas masks on the Western Front, 1917.



French Red Cross dogs line up for inspection on the Western Front, 1914.



A dog handler of the Royal Engineers (Signals) reads a message brought to him by a messenger dog, France, 19 May 1918.



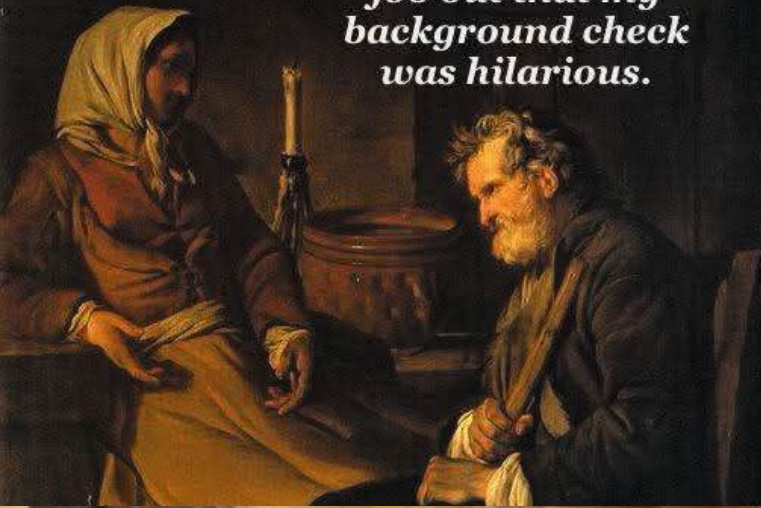
A pack horse with a gas mask is loaded up with equipment during the Battle of Pilckem Ridge, Belgium, 31 July 1917.



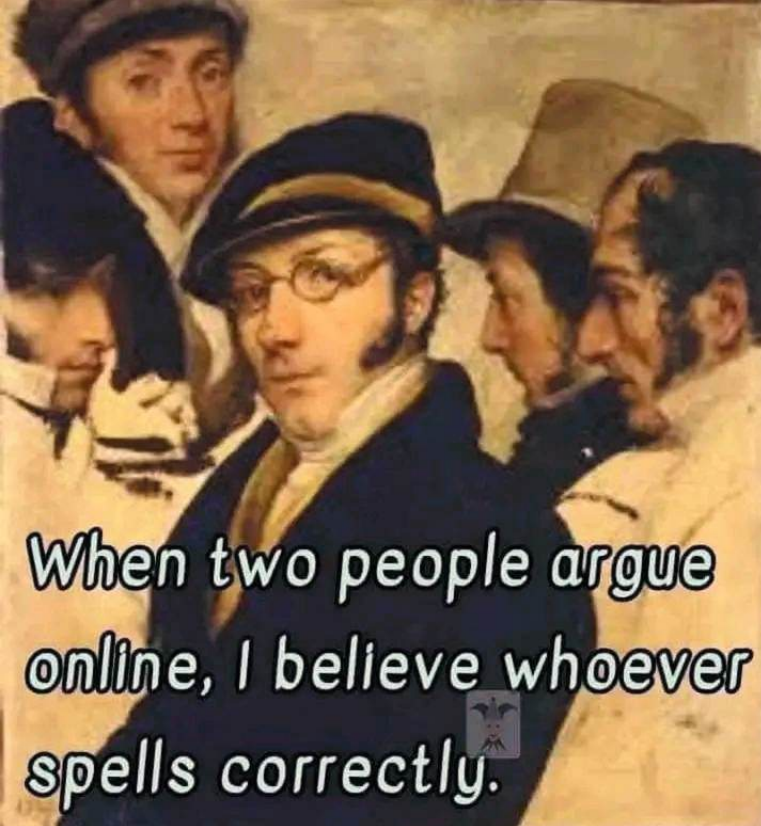
An Australian demonstrating the docility of his camel

by putting his wrist in its mouth, Egypt, 17 September 1917.

*They said they're
sorry I didn't get the
job but that my
background check
was hilarious.*



If you're already late,
take your time.
You can't be late twice.



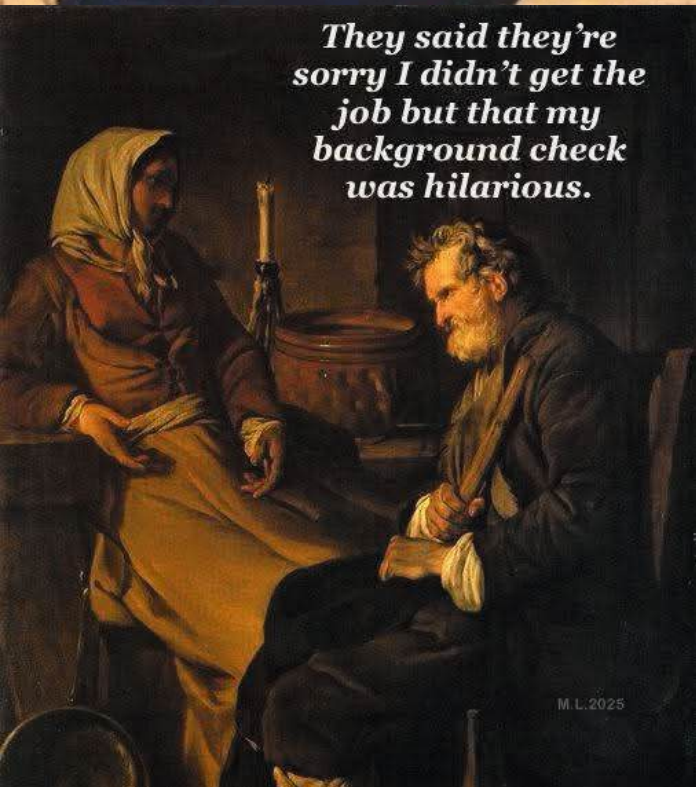
When two people argue
online, I believe whoever
spells correctly.

My Dentist
told me I need
a crown.

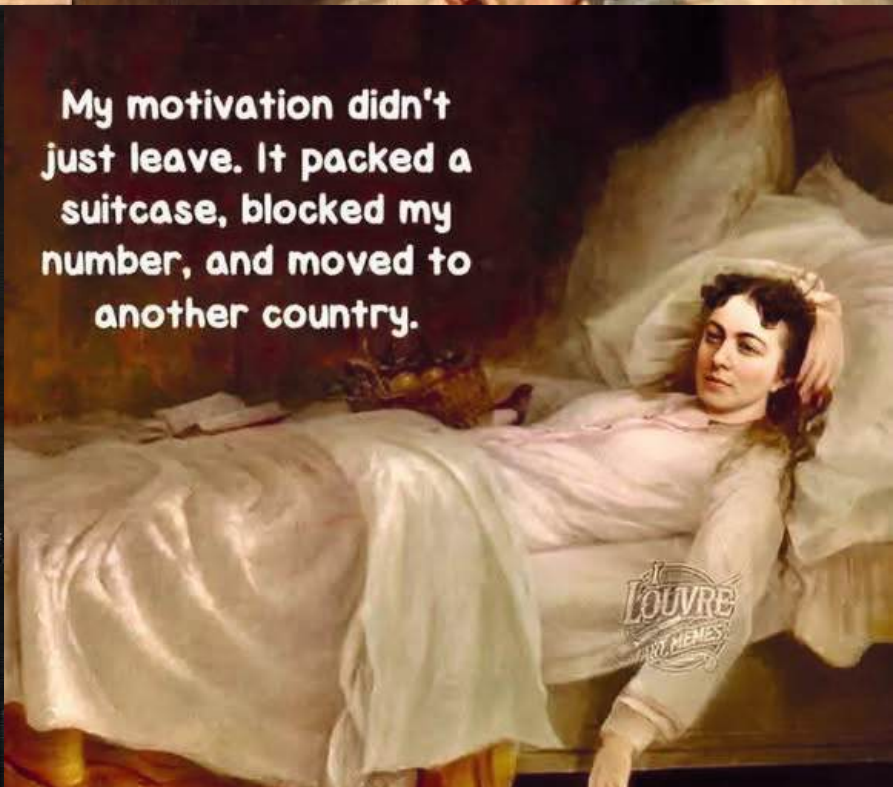
I was like,
"I know,
right?"



*They said they're
sorry I didn't get the
job but that my
background check
was hilarious.*



My motivation didn't
just leave. It packed a
suitcase, blocked my
number, and moved to
another country.



AUSTRALIANA QUIZ

Try using your own knowledge and not Google's

1. How many states and territories are there in Australia?
2. Name the capital cities of each one
3. What is the meaning of the name Canberra?
4. What does a platypus and an echidna have in common?
5. Which of these two Australian creatures has poisonous spurs?
6. What is the scientific name of these two creatures?
7. What is the name of the largest sand island in the world?
8. What is the name and location of the largest living coral reef in the world?
9. Who is the Architect of the Sydney Opera House and what was the date of opening?
10. What is a marsupial?
11. Name 4 of them that are native to Australia.
12. What is the name of a baby platypus, and the name of a group of platypi?

1. 6 States, 2 Territories
2. Brisbane (QLD), Sydney (NSW), Melbourne (VIC), Hobart (TAS), Adelaide (SA), Darwin (NT), Perth (WA), Canberra (ACT)
3. Meeting Place
4. Both are egg-laying mammals
5. The male Platypus
6. Ornithorhynchus Anatinus (Platypus), Tachyglossidae (Echidna)
7. K'gari (Fraser Island)
8. Great Barrier Reef (off the QLD Coast)
9. John Utson, completed in 1973 (after 14 years of construction)
10. Premature birth of young and further development in the mother's pouch
11. Kangaroos, Wallabies, Wombats, Possums, Koala, Quokka
12. Puggle (baby Platypus), a Paddle (group of Platypi)

ANSWERS

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Hi Dion,

I attended the Bangka Island Commemorative Service on Sunday. Attached are three photos of St Augustine's Memorial Church. These are just three of the stained glass windows, nicknamed the "Jewel Box."

Regards Wuzzy



EDITOR

Greetings Wuzzy, thank you for your letter and accompanying photographs. I'm sure that the readers will be pleased to see them.

Dear Editor,

I shall prepare an article for the August edition of the Newsletter to coincide with the commemoration of the Battle of Long Tan. It won't be about the battle itself but rather one of the consequences of it. The awards known as the Long Tan Youth Team Leadership Awards. I am so proud of the fact that 2 of my grand-daughters each won the award, one of them twice. My article will relate the consequences of them winning the award and I look forward to having the article published.

Kind regards, Ian Mcl

EDITOR

Greetings Ian, I really look forward to publishing your article. We so often hear and read about the young in ways that are not complimentary to say the least so, it will be a delight to publish a positive article and I thank you in advance for your work.

THE TRAGEDY OF AUSTRALIA'S FIRST WWII MARITIME LOSS

The untold story of Australia's first Royal Australian Navy wartime loss: revealed in full for the first time.

While the thunder of overseas battles often dominates the narrative of Australians in World War Two, a forgotten tragedy unfolded in the quiet waters of Port Phillip Bay. In 1940, less than 100 km from Melbourne, the humble minesweeper HMAS Goorangai was on a vital mission, clearing German-laid sea mines in Bass Strait, when she was catastrophically struck by the much larger merchant vessel, MV Duntroon.

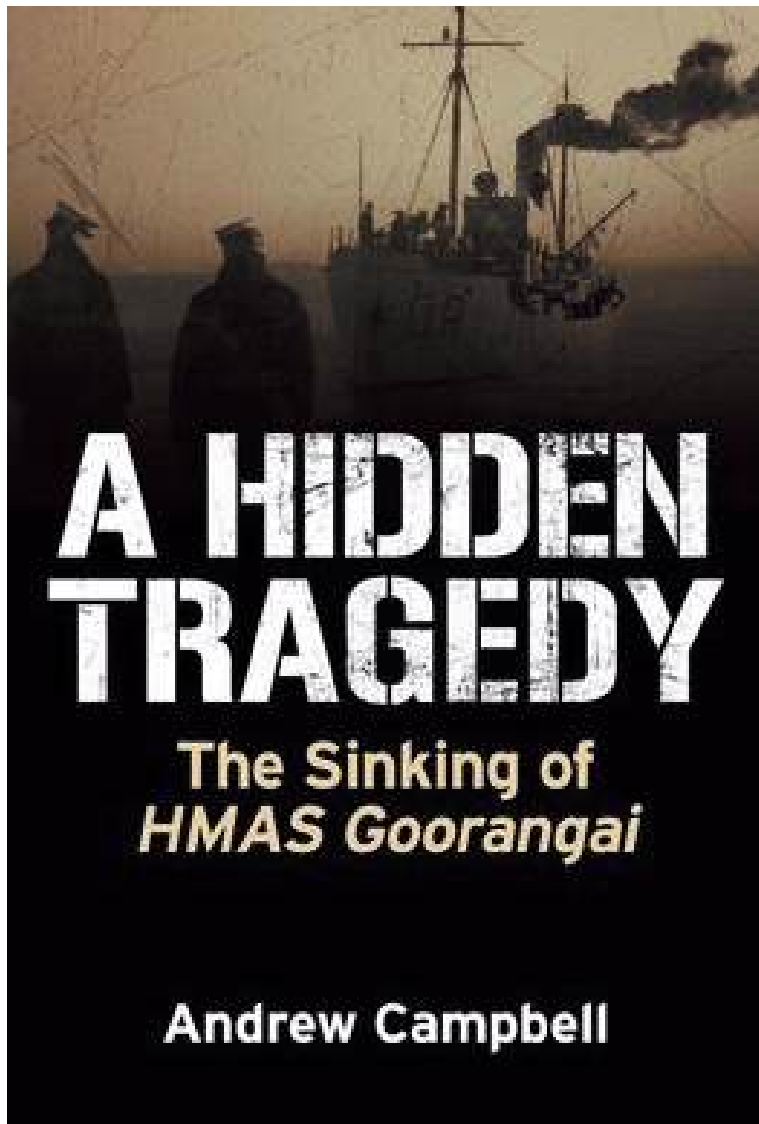
Within minutes, the Goorangai was gone, taking all 24 of her crew to their watery graves. This little-known collision, often overlooked or misrepresented, is finally brought to light in a meticulously researched and fully referenced account.

Discover the untold story of the collision, the desperate search, the challenging salvage operations, and the puzzling aftermath. Uncover why the Duntroon's master, despite causing the disaster, evaded all charges, and why one sailor remains unidentified to this day. This book cuts through the inaccuracies and vested interests of past accounts, offering a compelling and definitive narrative that reveals the true events of that fateful night.

Andrew Campbell served with the Royal Australian Naval Reserve for over 40 years, including work in Mine Warfare Group 54, the same group from which the HMAS Goorangai's ship's company was drawn. A technical naval specialist, he has worked in defence procurement and explosive ordnance for the Department of Defence.

He is the recipient of the Orchard Prize and a commendation from the Captain of HMAS Cerberus for his research into Goorangai's unidentified sailor.

Big Sky Publishing (sales@bigskypublishing.com.au)



HMAS Goorangai



MV Duntroon



Members of Goorangai's crew photographed on the morning of her collision with MV Duntroon, 20 November 1940.

LA SAMBA ROSSA

COMMUNITY
DRUMMING GROUP

Join the rhythm! La Samba Rossa plays Brazilian Samba along with West African and Middle Eastern rhythms.

No experience is required, just a desire to have fun. Instruments are provided if you don't have one.

Rehearsals:
Wednesdays 6:00pm-8:00pm
Veteran Centre Meeting Room

Brenden: 0459 506 424
Dion: 0414 798 214
Or visit Dion at the Veteran
Centre on Wednesdays,
9:00am - 3:00pm



La Samba Rossa drumming group would be delighted to welcome anyone who can play the bagpipes and is new to the area. Though it may seem counterintuitive, bagpipe music and samba drumming rhythms made a wonderful combination, we've done it but unfortunately, the pipers we played with are not able to continue with the group so, if you're a piper and would like to play in a new combination please consider joining the group.





RSL
Gympie Sub Branch

MARCH 2026
THROUGH
MAY 2026

AUTUMN

HEALTH & WELLBEING PROGRAM

GIRLS DAY OUT

Every 3 weeks
Contact for more
information

Day trip adventures for female veterans and partners of veterans.

GLENWOOD SWIM & GYM

Sunday-Friday
(closed Saturday)
6am to 6:30pm

For Veterans, Partners & Carers. Membership \$20/ month.

CHOIR

Tuesdays
From 5:30pm

Open to all members of the Gympie Community with any voice type and experience.

BREATHWORK

Weekly gentle
breath flows.
Contact for more
information.

Relax and reset through your breath.

LIIV WELL PILATES

Thursday
11am to 11:45am
\$5 per person

Reformer class on Thursday. Limited spaces bookings essential.

FIT TOGETHER

Wednesdays
1pm to 2pm

Free for Veterans Partners & Carers. Gympie Aquatic Recreation Centre (Gympie ARC).

CHAIR EXERCISE

Thursdays
1pm to 2pm

Free for Veterans Partners & Carers. Gympie Aquatic Recreation Centre (Gympie ARC).

SPLASH AEROBICS

Fridays
1pm to 2pm

Free for Veterans Partners & Carers. Gympie Aquatic Recreation Centre (Gympie ARC).



For more information, call 5483 7707 or email reception@gympiersla.com.au

In the 1980's, A&W tried to compete with McDonald's Quarter Pounder by selling a 1/3 pounder at a lower cost. The product failed, because most customers thought the 1/4 pounder was bigger. This is why I don't argue online.

I'm not bossy!
I have skills...leadership skills!!
Understand?



A police officer called the station on his radio. "I have an interesting case here. An old lady shot her husband for stepping on the floor she just mopped." "Have you arrested the woman?" "Not yet. The floor's still wet."

Did you know that 14 muscles are activated when opening a bottle of wine? Fitness is my passion 😎



Girls Day Out

SCHEDULE

TUESDAY MARCH 3

OP Shopping Caloundra/
Noosaville

Depart: 8.15am
Return: 3.30pm

FRIDAY MARCH 27

Mooloolaba, shops
and beach walks

Depart: 8.15am
Return: 3pm

WEDNESDAY APRIL 15

DFO Brisbane

Depart: 7.45am
Return: 4pm

WEDNESDAY MAY 6

Eumundi Markets

Depart: 8.15am
Return: 2.30pm

MONDAY MAY 25

The Ginger Factory

Depart: 8.30am
Return: 3pm



www.gympiersl.com.au



RSL
Gympie Sub Branch



**FOR
VETERANS
& THEIR
PARTNERS/
CARERS***

Glenwood SWIMMING & GYM

**ALL DAY ENTRY (6AM-6:30PM) SUNDAY-FRIDAY (CLOSED SATURDAY)
VILLAGE SWIM & GYM | 348 ARBORFIVE RD**

*Children of Veterans welcome upon application at Veteran Centre; must show DVA, RSL Membership &/or Veteran Centre Family Card upon entry

For more information, call 5483 7707
or email vcadmin@gympiersla.com.au



www.gympiersl.com.au/welfare



RSL
Gympie Sub Branch

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SERVING, VETERANS AND A PLUS ONE
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- ◆ Every Tuesday | 6–7pm
- ◆ Kahuna Mist 5/38 Reef St, Gympie
- Bookings available at reception



“I have been attending Breathworks sessions for the past eight weeks. As I have emphysema and suffer from a shortness of breath, and low stress levels, these exercises classes are a tremendous help. The instructor Chantal is amazing every session is different and so worth doing. Each time I attend it helps my breathing and stress levels decrease significantly, I leave so relaxed. I would like to encourage veterans also anyone who suffer from anxiety, or breathing problems to give it a go you have nothing to lose.”

-Brian Trickey



FREE

Nurse-led walk-in clinic

2/21 Exhibition Road, Gympie

Nurse-led walk-in clinics offer free treatment to all adults and children aged over two years for non-life-threatening injuries and illnesses.

No booking or referral is needed.

In the case of an emergency, call Triple Zero (000).

From personal experience, this is an excellent service. Dion Channer

About the clinic

Our nurses can assess, treat, and provide advice for non-life-threatening injuries, illnesses and common health concerns. Clinics are:

- available to adults and children aged from two years old
- free for Medicare and non-Medicare card holders
- open from 10.00am – 6.00pm, Monday – Saturday, closed Public Holidays

No appointment is needed, just walk in.

You will be seen in turn or prioritised on clinical urgency.

Our services

We can help with:

- fevers, coughs and colds
- earache and sore throats
- infections and rashes
- minor eye issues
- minor cuts and burns
- minor head injuries
- strains and sprains
- gastroenteritis
- urinary tract infections
- women's health concerns
- emergency contraception

Nurse practitioners

A nurse practitioner is a registered nurse with the experience, expertise, and authority to diagnose and treat people of all ages with a variety of acute or chronic health conditions.

Nurse practitioners have completed additional university study at master's degree level and are the most senior and independent clinical nurses in the Australian healthcare system.

They can:

- refer patients to hospitals and specialists
- order X-rays
- order and do a range of pathology and blood tests
- prescribe short-term medicines such as antibiotics, anti-inflammatories, and emergency contraception
- do tests such as pregnancy testing, urine testing and blood glucose levels.



RIFLEMEN'S LUNCH

All Corps and services are welcome!

1ST FRIDAY OF EVERY MONTH AT MOOLOOLABA SLSC

Gympie RSL Sub Branch's Veteran Centre provides a free bus for this event each month.

**Please RSVP by text message to
Wuzzy (0437 552 965)**

The Learner Dance Group Inc

Long Flat Hall - Gympie

Contact: 0494 135 998



**Dancing every
Saturday Night**

\$10 entry

7:30pm start

BYO Supper

1st & 5th of the month is mix of Old Time & New Vogue

2nd & 4th Saturday of the month is - Old time.

3rd Saturday is - New Vogue.

Treatment programs and workshops

Open Arms offers a range of free group programs to assist the serving and ex-serving community, as well as their families, live their best life.

Call 1800 011 046 to speak with an Open Arms staff member for assistance in finding the right program for you.

Our range of group activities includes both face to face group treatment programs and online groups.

The Department of Veterans' Affairs also funds a range of flexible training programs to support the veteran community to assist others in mental health and suicide prevention. Learn more about these programs and enrol at Protect - Mental Health First Aid Australia.

Sign up here:

www.openarms.gov.au/get-support/programs-workshops

GympieHearing

At Gympie Hearing, our mission is to change people's lives by opening up their ears to a world of sound, communication and connection.

As the only independent audiologist in Gympie, we take pride in offering personalised care and comprehensive services to meet all your hearing needs. When it comes to your hearing health, trust an expert who puts you first. With over 15 years of experience, we are proud to provide professional, comfortable and personalised care in an environment that is welcoming and supportive.

Our goal is to make your experience as pleasant, effective and stress-free as possible, ensuring that every step of your hearing journey is handled with the utmost care and expertise - from comprehensive hearing assessments to advanced hearing aids and ongoing support.



Lynda Reid

2/31 Wickham Street,
Gympie QLD 4570
07 5211 1877

www.gympiehearing.com.au
admin@gympiehearing.com.au



Scan this QR Code with the camera on your phone to our website for more information or to book an appointment

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CHECKS

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CANCER
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NON
SURGICAL
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OF SKIN
CANCERS

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sunshinedermatology1@gmail.com

SUNSHINE DERMATOLOGY
MEDICAL & DIAGNOSTIC CENTRE
LEVEL ONE, 7 NICKLIN WAY,
MINTYAMA QLD 4573

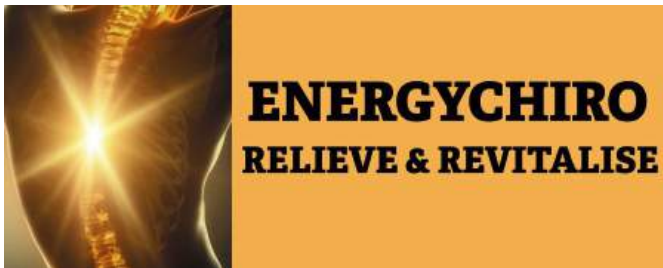


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nutritional habits to
naturally boost your energy
levels and achieve more
with your life!



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(24 8326)

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Clinic addresses:

82 River Road, GYMPIE

and

Kon-Kiki Tower 1

Level 5 Suite 507

55 Plaza Pde, Maroochydore

Phone number: +61 0490 051 055

Email: admin@energychiro.com.au

**Donna
Griffin**
**Occupational
Therapist**

Private OT – Gympie

Ph: 0419 777 891

Usual work days:

Monday, Tuesday,
Thursday



JEFF WINTERBURN

VETERAN CENTRE *Chaplain*

Jeff is a Veteran and Non-Denominational Chaplain available to the Veterans of the Gympie RSL.

Please contact Jeff if you would like to engage his service.

JEFF | 0437 678 981



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ALLIED HEALTH

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OUR PRACTITIONERS ARE READY TO HELP YOU ON YOUR JOURNEY TO BETTER HEALTH

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-  WORK RELATED INJURY REHABILITATION
-  SURGICAL REHABILITATION
-  CHRONIC PAIN MANAGEMENT



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 admin@adaptivebodiesalliedhealth.com

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Personalised Care
Exercise & Movement
Holistic Approach

IMPORTANT CONTACTS

Gympie Veteran Centre

39 Monkland Rd (Cnr River Rd)
07 5483 7707

Veteran Services Manager

Lauralie KNIGHT
vsm@gympiersla.com.au

Compensation Advocates

Ian BOWD
Ryan CAIRNS
Alecia COLBOURN
advocate@gympiersla.com.au

Veteran Services Officers

Lauren MANN
vso1@gympiersla.com.au

Chelle DOBSON
vso3@gympiersla.com.au

Chief Financial Officer

Brad WINES
07 5482 1018
bm@gympiersl.com.au

Venue Manager

Daniel FERGUSON
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manager@gympiersl.com.au

CEO

Martin MULLER
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