



April 2023

ANZAC DAY BULLETIN

ALISON BYRNES MP FEDERAL MEMBER FOR CUNNINGHAM

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Commemorating ANZAC Day TUESDAY 25 APRIL

The 2023 Wollongong City ANZAC Day March will commence at 10.00 am.



The March will form up in Crown Street Mall Wollongong, facing Kembla Street, then turn right into Kembla Street, then right into Burelli Street, then turn left into Church Street. After passing the Wollongong Cenotaph marchers will turn right into MacCabe Park behind Pioneer Hall where they will disperse.

The March will include some vintage cars carrying disabled veterans, Australian

Defence Force personnel, members of Illawarra RSL Sub-Branches, representatives of other ex-Service organisations and veterans' groups, and contingents representing community organisations. Local bands will provide musical support.

Spectators are welcome to attend the March, and line the route to show their support for our local veterans.

THEIR STORY

Peter Poulton OAM



In my Anzac Day Bulletin I will tell their story – stories about veterans and their service for our country.

For my first story, I could not go past my late good friend, **Peter Poulton**. Peter served as President of Wollongong RSL for over two decades. I can't pinpoint my first meeting with Peter but I certainly had a lot of involvement with him over many years and I loved his drop-ins to my office for a chat and a cuppa.

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ILLAWARRA ANZAC DAY EVENTS

Vietnam Veterans Association-Illawarra Sub-Branch	ANZAC Eve Commemoration Service Sunday 23 April at 4:00 pm at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Flagstaff Hill. Wollongong Harbour.
Dapto-Port Kembla RSL Sub-Branch	Dawn Service 6:00 am in front of the memorial in Allan Street, Port Kembla.
Austinmer-Thirroul RSL Sub-Branch	Dawn Service 6:00 am War Memorial in the park next to the Austinmer Surf Club. Dawn Service 6:00 am William Woodward Memorial Park next to the Thirroul railway station.
City of Wollongong RSL Sub-Branch	Dawn Service 5:00 am Wollongong Cenotaph, north-east corner of MacCabe Park, Church Street, Wollongong. Please be in place by 4:50 am.
Coledale RSL Sub-Branch	Dawn Service 731 Lawrence Hargrave Drive. 5:45 am for march to Coledale RSL for 6am Service.
Corrimal RSL Sub-Branch	Dawn Service 6:00 am in ANZAC Grove Memorial Park, Railway Street, Corrimal.
Helensburgh RSL Sub-Branch	Dawn Service 5:45 am Charles Harper Park, Helensburgh.
Woonona-Bulli RSL Sub-Branch	Dawn service 5:30 am on the bowling green. 455 Princes Highway, Woonona.

Follow Alison on Social Media: www.alisonbyrnesmp.com.au [alisonbyrnesmp](https://www.instagram.com/alisonbyrnesmp) [AlisonByrnesMP](https://www.facebook.com/AlisonByrnesMP)

THEIR STORY

Peter Poulton OAM



Peter Poulton OAM in the ANZAC Day Parade 2021.

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Peter passed away in June 2021 at the age of 73, but he did an interview with the *Coal Coast* magazine two years ago and I have used some extracts from this interview in Peter's story.

Peter was called up to serve in the Vietnam war in 1968 – one year after becoming a police officer.

He went to Kapooka and then the infantry centre. He went to Vietnam for the whole of 1969 in a specialised unit called Civil Affairs, established to aid the local indigenous population.

They rebuilt schools and put in windmills – Peter commented that if you drive across Southern Vietnam these days you would probably still see Southern Cross Windmills.

Peter was a soldier and served in the Battle of Binh Ba which resulted in what has been described as, 'the death of a village' and they had to completely rebuild. During his interview with *Coal Coast* he commented that the memory

that sticks out most during that time was the devastation in Binh Ba – "... the horrific loss of human life and the destruction of these villages. It was horrendous."

When Peter returned from Vietnam, he went back into the police force and believed that because the police force was paramilitary, he probably assimilated better than others.

He said that one of the most poignant memories of his life was when he'd been home from Vietnam for six or seven months, and back in the police force in Goulburn – he and another officer were called to a house. They went down to the woodshed and, in his words, "here's a bloke in full uniform wearing his medals... and he was dead. It got too much for him. There's been a lot of it over the years and it's happening again now with the modern-day soldier."

Peter believed that the climate is now that the RSL and other ex-servicemen organisations need to be reaching out to

more veterans and trying to help them. Peter dedicated over two decades to doing just that.

In 1987 Peter was chairman of the Vietnam Veterans Welcome Home Reunion. When he saw the elation on his fellow veterans' faces, he asked himself why it hadn't been done earlier.

Peter then went on to lobby to build the Vietnam Forces National Memorial to remember all Australians who had served, suffered or died in Vietnam.

He didn't want their sacrifice to go unrecognised by future generations. After a long and arduous process, it came to fruition on 3 October 1992.

Peter loved seeing young people involved in commemorating Anzac Day in the Illawarra.

Peter's family miss him dearly as will so many in our Illawarra community.

Sports & recreation on the road to recovery

We know military service is unique and carries considerable risks for a person's physical and mental wellbeing. While not all veterans are negatively impacted by their service, we know only too well that many are.

The City of Wollongong RSL Sub-Branch has developed a Sport and Recreation Program for Veterans which is eligible to all eight RSL NSW Sub-Branches in the Illawarra region: Coledale, Austinmer-Thirroul, Woonona-Bulli, Corrimal, City of Wollongong, Warilla, Dapto-Port Kembla and Albion Park.

To be eligible to participate in the program, a veteran needs to produce an ID document and an RSL NSW Membership card from one of the eight sub-branches listed above.

My good friend Bevan Fermor was the first RSL member to sign up. Bevan suffered some health issues last year which saw him in and out of hospital. He trains with EXO Health and Movement and says:

“My balance has significantly improved, and I can feel the strength returning to my legs. I used to experience periods of dizziness out on my walks but since starting my exercise program I don't experience these anymore. I can definitely recommend Ghetto's exercise programs to my fellow members, especially those over the age of 80.”



Bevan Fermor training with EXO Health and Movement.

VIETNAM WAR 50TH ANNIVERSARY

In 2023 we recognise the 50th anniversary of the end of Australia's involvement in the Vietnam war.

At this year's ANZAC Eve commemorative event the **Vietnam Veterans Association – Illawarra Sub Branch** will be unveiling 4 plaques to dedicate to deceased Members. The community is invited to come along and support these families.

Sunday 23 April at 4pm at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Flagstaff Hill, Wollongong Harbour.

ILLAWARRA REGION - RSL SUB-BRANCH

SPORT & RECREATION PROGRAM

AVAILABLE TO MEMBERS AND FAMILIES OF THE FOLLOWING RSL SUB-BRANCHES

AUSTINMER-THIRROUL	COLEDALE	Proudly supported by
CITY OF WOLLONGONG	WARILLA	
WOONONA-BULLI	CORRIMAL	
DAPTO-PORT KEMBLA	ALBION PARK	

If you are a veteran and are not a member of RSL NSW but want to participate in the program, you are encouraged to join your local RSL NSW sub-Branch in the Illawarra region. RSL NSW membership is free to eligible veterans and can be done online in 5 minutes. Click or scan the QR code to join RSL NSW

WHAT DOES THE PROGRAM PROVIDE	
GOLF	WOLLONGONG GOLF CLUB FREE & SUBSIDISED GOLF
LAWN BOWLS	FIGTREE SPORTS CLUB FREE & SUBSIDISED LAWN BOWLS
SURFING	VETERANS SURF PROGRAM FREE & SUBSIDISED SURFING
WALKING	ILLAWARRA REGION ORGANISED WALKS & BBQ
FISHING	FIGTREE SPORTS CLUB FREE FISHING COMPS & CHARTERS
EXERCISE	ILLAWARRA REGION FREE & SUBSIDISED GYM ACTIVITIES
SPORT TEAMS	ILLAWARRA REGION RSL SPORT TEAMS IN LOCAL COMPS

TO GET INVOLVED AND FOR MORE DETAILS & INFORMATION CONTACT US
https://wollongongrsl.org.au/2023_sport_recreation/
 email - wollongongsb@rslnsw.org.au | mobile - 0449 199 016




ANZAC DAY SCHOOLS' AWARDS 2023

COMMEMORATING AUSTRALIA'S VIETNAM WAR SERVICE

In 2023, schools across Australia will commemorate the 50th anniversary of the end of Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War.

Share with us how your school will learn about and honour those who served Australia and its allies during the Vietnam War.

For details about how to enter go to anzacportal.dva.gov.au/adsa

PRIZES

NATIONAL, STATE AND TERRITORY AWARDS

- 1 x National Winner \$5,000
- 8 x State and Territory Winners \$3,000

SPECIAL CATEGORIES

- Award for Veteran Involvement \$2,000
- Award for Innovative Commemoration \$2,000
- Award for Creative Use of Technology \$2,000
- Remote Schools Award \$2,000
- Specialist Educational Settings Award \$2,000

ENTRIES CLOSE
Wednesday
31 May 2023

Australian Government
Department of Veterans' Affairs

Anzac Portal
anzacportal.dva.gov.au

PO4488 Image: ART46871 (ANVA)



Alison Byrnes MP with the newly elected Executive and Committee Members of the City of Wollongong RSL Sub-Branch.

Celebrating HMAS Wollongong

In February I was joined by representatives of the Royal Australian Navy in presenting the Ceremonial Ring from the HMAS Wollongong patrol boat to the City of Wollongong RSL Sub-Branch, following HMAS Wollongong's decommissioning on 8 December 2022.

The Navy also organised an additional two surprise donations, the last Captain's hat and the Decommissioning Pennant from HMAS Wollongong, all items are now on display at the City Diggers Club.



Alison Byrnes MP and the Royal Australian Navy presenting the ceremonial ring to the City of Wollongong RSL Sub-Branch.

**ALWAYS
HERE
TO HELP**



Alison Byrnes MP
FEDERAL MEMBER FOR CUNNINGHAM

If you need help with any federal issue
please contact Alison's office on

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or email

alison.byrnes.mp@aph.gov.au