

THE FURPHY

ARMADALE SUB-BRANCH OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER

April 2025 Edition



**1 Commerce Ave, Armadale, WA 6112
PO Box 697, Armadale, WA 6992**

Ph: (08) 9497 1972

email: secretary@armadalersl.com.au

Website: www.armadalersl.com.au

Social media: [Facebook](#)

General Meetings:

Second Sunday of the month at 1030hrs

Annual General Meeting:

Second Sunday of September

Committee Positions

Armadale Sub-Branch Committee	
President	Mr Mike Fairweather
Vice President	Vacant
Secretary	Ms Carol King
Treasurer	Mrs Cheryl Cowie
Warden	Mr Graeme Cowie
Warden	Mr Mick Quinn
Membership Officer	Mr Tom Rynn
Committee	Mr Bob Giles
Committee	Mr Keith Northcott
Advocate / Welfare Officer	Mr Brent Errington
Bar Manager	Mr Mike Fairweather

ADVOCATE / WELFARE

Brent Errington “Erro” is available as follows:

At the Armadale RSL Sub-Branch:

Monday: by appointment only

Thursday: between 0900 - 1400hrs

Weekday Contact Details:

Mobile: 0407 449 150

e-mail: welfare2@armadalersl.com.au

Diary Dates for April

<i>Day</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Time</i>
Sunday	6 th	Social Committee Meeting	1100
Tuesday	8 th	Management Committee Meeting	1100
Sunday	13 th	General Meeting	1030
Friday	25 th	ANZAC Dawn Service	0600



ANZAC DAY



Armadale RSL Sub-Branch

DAWN SERVICE

Friday, 25th April 2025

Memorial Park, Jull Street, Armadale

The Returned Services League, Armadale Sub-Branch are proud to facilitate a Community Dawn Service again this year.

The service will commence at 6:00am precisely.

There will be a small March in the park. Veterans are to form up at the rear of the Park by 5:45am. Family Members who are wearing Service medals are welcome to join in.

Marshals will be in attendance to assist.

A Gunfire Breakfast is available for \$10 between 7:30 and 9:30am.

Refreshments will be available at the RSL following the service.

"The Price of Liberty is Eternal Vigilance"





ANZAC DAY LUNCH

\$12 Meals

from 12 noon

Parmi or Steak Burger

(with Chips)



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Hi Members,

To prepare for ANZAC Day we will be holding a BUSY BEE which is advertised elsewhere in this edition. At this point we only have 6 people who have put their names down which is disappointing. If you are available, please consider volunteering for a couple of hours.

We have been advised that the local commitment grants will now be handled by the relevant departments. We will be contacted shortly about our grant, but it may take a few weeks to get organised as they have many grants to acquit. This grant will cover funding for the external plumbing repairs and new carpet for the hall.

We've been busy finalising ANZAC School speeches and / or attendance as a guest. If anyone is available to help out in this regard, please let me know as we are desperate for volunteers.

Just a reminder that both Service persons and Affiliates/Descendents wearing service medals are welcome to join the Dawn Service march in Memorial Park this year. Assembly is at 5:45am at the rear of the park.

Cheers for now,

Mike Fairweather

President

Returned Services League Armadale Sub-Branch

Ph: (08) 9497 1972. M: 0403 980 290

1 Commerce Avenue Armadale WA 6112 | PO Box 697 Armadale WA 6992

e-mail: president@armadalersl.com.au

ANZAC DAY

Lest We Forget - 25th April



"The Australian and New Zealand troops have indeed proved themselves worthy sons of the empire."

GEORGE R.I.

Secretary's Notes

Hi Everyone,

We are still asking members to consider Volunteering for our Busy Bee on 12th April and also to help manning the ANZAC Fundraising stalls. Both Rosters are on the board or alternatively, just let me know.

Arrangements progressing for all things ANZAC, and everything seems to be going very well at this point in time.

The Quiz Night went off very well, thanks so very much to Lois and her team who did a fabulous job of organising everything.

It's been a difficult time over the past few weeks with Jules off on medical leave.

Our sincere thanks to Stormy and Fiona for stepping into the role during her absence, it's very much appreciated.

We will be having the Cloud 9 Band appearing on Sunday 11th May. We've not had them here before and hope you will support them by coming along to listen.

That's about all from me for this edition.

Carol King

Sub-Branch Secretary

e-mail: secretary@armadalersl.com.au



BUSY BEE



SATURDAY 12TH APRIL

10:00 – 12 noon

To be followed by a light lunch with drinks

***For catering purposes, please advise the
Secretary if you are able to volunteer for a
couple of hours***

Membership Update

As at 31st March, 2025:

Service Members:	158
Affiliate Members:	52
Social Members:	<u>55</u>
Total:	<u>265</u>

RSLWA advise that there is still a problem with the issuance of Membership Cards. They will let us know when the problem is resolved.

Any questions relating to membership can be asked via me.

Tom Rynn

Tel: 0439 934 285

e-mail: tomrynn@bigpond.com

RARE PIC OF A CAT-EGORY 3
PURRICANE!!!





April Service Members:

Anderson	Mr	Jason	06/04	Avey	Mr	Colin	03/04
Davis	Mrs	Lois	25/04	Giles	Mr	Robert	25/04
Hassall	Mr	Ashley	19/04	Holloway	Mr	Stephen	15/04
Jackson	Mr	Keith	25/04	Leigh	Mr	Norman	13/04
Manning	Mr	Stephen	20/04	McDonnell	Mr	Patrick	17/04
Schlunz	Mr	Christian	27/04	Strohman	Mr	Steven	04/04
Taylor	Mr	William	20/04	Wind	Mr	Egon	09/04

April Affiliate Members:

Bond	Mr	Martin	07/04	Cowie	Mrs	Cheryl	08/04
Jacka	Mrs	Kathleen	08/04	Matthews	Mrs	Shirley	28/04

April Social Members:

Fowler	Mr	Doug	24/04	Hepburn	Mrs	Jan	09/04
--------	----	------	-------	---------	-----	-----	-------

*If anyone has been missed off the list, please advise
Tom Rynn (Membership Officer)*

*These members may collect a free drink of their
choice during the month*

We hope you have a very special Birthday



19 February 1942, Japanese forces launched a devastating air raid with more than 240 aircraft. The bombing of Darwin was a pivotal event in Australia's history during the Second World War, marking the first and largest attack on Australian soil.



Marines and Coast Guardsmen proudly display a Japanese flag, picked up by one of them during the capture of Engebi Island, Eniwetok Atoll, 19 February 1944. Note bullet holes in the flag, and helmet camouflage on one marine



**FOR SALE:
4 SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS (OLD MODEL)**

**we are having Himalayan rabbit
casserole for dinner**



we found himalayan on the road!

EASTER TRADING



Good Friday 18th April – Closed

Easter Sunday 20th April

Open from 12 noon

\$20 ROAST LUNCH

**Roast Beef with Yorkshire Pudding,
Roast Potato, Pumpkin and Sweet Potato
Cauliflower Cheese, Mixed Vegetables and
Gravy**

Dessert \$5 extra

Easter Sunday Only

Bar Manager's Report

G'day All,

It's been a bit difficult covering shifts while Jules is off sick, but thanks heaps to Fiona for coming in to help out.

The price rise wasn't as bad as I thought it would be, so it has been possible to keep the prices as they stand for the moment.

Bye for now,

Stormy





The irrepressible Australians at Anzac. An Australian bringing in a wounded comrade to hospital. Dardanelles Campaign, circa 1915



Soldiers of the Australian 5th battalion as they move up to the front lines in 1918 at Ypres, Belgium

CLOUD 9 DUO

***Appearing at the
Armadale RSL***



Laurie Gransden and Gemma Cleary

Sunday, 11th May 12:30pm

***Get a group of friends together and join
us for a great afternoon of musical
entertainment***

Free Entry



Quiz Night

Quiz Night Donations

AFWA Trainer (Nick)	Dome (Armadale)
Armadale RSL Sub-Branch (\$300)	Fat Bellies (Armadale)
Atwell, Lisa	Forget Me Not Op Shop (Kelmscott)
Australia Post (Armadale)	Getaway Outdoors (Kelmscott)
Burgess, Brad (Client)	Hair by Us
Butchers Hook	Jadran Winery
Carriage Jewellers (Armadale)	Metcalf, S
Coles (Haynes)	Northcott, Keith
Coles (North Armadale)	Passmore, M
Cowie, Graeme	Red Rooster (Armadale)
Craster, Irene	Society of Artists (Armadale)
Curullis Seafood (Armadale)	Thingz (Armadale)
Davenport, Keven	Tooth, Geoff
Davis, Lois	

The Sub-Branch extends their sincere appreciation to all the above people and organisations who donated to our recent Quiz night

MISSING DOG

If anyone ceasar, lettuce know





Luftwaffe soldiers loading an 8.8 cm FlaK gun, Germany



The crew of the B-17 Flying Fortress "Memphis Belle" is shown at an air base in England after completing 25 missions over enemy territory on June 7, 1943

Snapshot 3: Australians in War and Conflict

We continue our shared learning by publishing another 6 articles following people's contributions to Australia's war and peacekeeping efforts. We continue to reflect on today's Australian Defence Force values of service, courage, respect, integrity and excellence.

We also continue to remember those who served and those who continue to serve and those who died as a result of their service.
Lest we forget.

13: Australian sailors at D-Day

Hundreds of Australians served on British and Allied ships during the Second World War. Many of them took part in D-Day, the biggest seaborne invasion in history.

Australians participated in a variety of different ways during the D-Day invasion. These included as commanders of Royal Navy ships, submarines, and other watercraft. Among them was Lieutenant Kenneth Hudspeth. A teacher when war broke out, Kenneth joined the Volunteer Reserve of the Royal Australian Navy. He received training in anti-submarine warfare before sailing from Australia for the United Kingdom. During his service, Kenneth held numerous roles and spent 15 months as part of the perilous North Atlantic convoys.

In 1943, Kenneth received command of an X-Craft midget submarine. He participated in an attack on German shipping the following year and was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross (DSC) for his role in this action. Kenneth, as commander of one of 2 midget submarines for Operation Gambit, sailed from England on 2 June to mark the route for the Allied armada from England to the beaches of Normandy. They positioned the craft near the beaches where troops from Britain and Canada were to land. One submarine on the left flank and another on the right marked the limits of the Anglo-Canadian invasion area. Bad weather forced a one-day

postponement of the invasion, scheduled for 5 June. Kenneth and his team stayed submerged in place for an extra 24 hours so that they could

successfully complete their mission. The 26-year-old was awarded a Bar to his DSC for 'gallantry, skill, determination and undaunted devotion to duty'. Once the landing operations began on 6 June, Kenneth and his crew transported scouting parties to and from the Normandy beaches to gather intelligence about German defences. It was risky work that involved his X-Craft manoeuvring in shallow water without detection, and he was awarded a second Bar to his DSC as a result. This made Hudspeth the first Australian naval officer to be awarded a DSC with 2 Bars.

Australian Sub-Lieutenant Richard Pirrie was also part of the Normandy invasion. He wrote to his parents and brothers the night before the landings:

Well, my dears, the pressure is on now and as soon as the weather improves we sail for the greatest event in the history of the world... By the time you receive this you will surely have heard some of the bare details. This is the greatest Armada that ever was formed. A colossal feat of organisation; the product of years of planning and hard work.

The next day, Richard steered a landing craft close to the coastline, in full view of the enemy, to direct gunfire onto the German positions. Gunners targeted Richard's vessel, and he was killed in the ensuing battle, receiving a posthumous decoration for his bravery.



Lieutenant Ken Hudspeth DSC, commander of X-20 submarine crews during Operation Gambit in support of the D-Day landings at Normandy, France, June 1944.

Allied casualties from the D-Day landings numbered some 10,300, including more than 4,400 dead. By 30 June, more than 850,000 men had landed on the Normandy shores.

The war in Europe continued until 7 May 1945, when Germany signed an unconditional surrender. Australians continued fighting in the war in the Pacific until 14 August 1945, when Japan also agreed to surrender.

14: Codebreakers

Tucked away in a quiet, leafy street in Brisbane is a home with a notable history. Built in 1885 by a wealthy bank manager, 'Nyrambla' has since had many owners and residents. Perhaps the most notable, however, is the Australian Government, which requisitioned this grand, spacious, and attractive house for use as a top-secret military facility during the Second World War.

From 1942 to 1945, Nyrambla was headquarters of the Central Bureau of Intelligence, a joint Australian and American signal intelligence operation. Its task was to intercept, decipher, and assess Japanese military and diplomatic communications.

When the Central Bureau moved into Nyrambla, the war was in its most desperate days. Japan reigned supreme in Asia and the Pacific. Her troops had taken Singapore and shattered the illusion of British security in the region. They had begun the war against the United States by raiding Pearl Harbor and had since forced the Americans out of the Philippines. In Australia, the fear of an invasion had become very real.

The Central Bureau was one way that the Allies could regain the upper hand. Over an exhausting 3 years, the men and women who went into Nyrambla listened to an enormous amount of radio transmissions and intercepted signals. They cracked Japanese codes and analysed communications traffic to astonishing and significant effect.

Personnel in the Central Bureau worked using primitive cipher and decrypting machines, including the IBM Tabulator. They worked around the clock intercepting messages, decrypting them, retyping them, and dispatching them around the world.

Among their successes was their interception of messages containing the itinerary of Japanese Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto. In 1943, the Japanese naval commander-in-chief was touring Japanese bases in the Solomon Islands and New Guinea. The Central Bureau identified his route, timing, and the plane he would travel on. This information enabled the US to intercept the plane. It was shot down, and Admiral Yamamoto, who planned the Pearl Harbor attack, was killed.

Also significant was the Central Bureau's insights into Japanese radio traffic. The Central Bureau intercepted and decrypted a considerable amount of Japanese weather reports. Some thought these were worthless, but those in the Central Bureau saw 2 reasons to value the reports. Firstly, the reports meant that the Allies no longer needed to deploy weather balloons or conduct reconnaissance missions to ascertain weather conditions for themselves. Secondly, and more importantly, they realised that the reports were also a forewarning of Allied bases, ships, and locations likely to be attacked by Japanese air raids.

At the start of the Second World War, Australia did not have personnel with signal intelligence skills and knowledge. Instead, it largely relied on Britain to provide the information. The war, and the creation of the Central Bureau, spurred Australia to redress this. It recruited and trained codebreakers, cryptoanalysts and traffic analysts. It built links with US and British signals intelligence operations in the Pacific and Southeast Asia, laying the framework for the modern 'Five Eyes' signals intelligence system.

As with all intelligence operations, personnel of the Central Bureau performed their work with strict secrecy. There was no publicity attached to their efforts and little to no recognition of their achievements and contribution to the war effort.

Today, a small plaque at the entrance to Nyrambla provides the only clue of the Central Bureau's work and a reminder of what made its work so effective: 'Their strength lay in silence'.



Members of the Central Bureau of Intelligence outside their headquarters, Brisbane, 1945

15: Ginger Meggs Salvage Corps to the rescue

In 1921, James 'Jimmy' Bancks brought the character 'Ginger Meggs' to life. Ginger Meggs was a popular Australian cartoon that quickly captured Australia's imagination. The mischievous, red-headed, skinny kid with an adventurous streak became a household name. Ginger Meggs transcended time and place.

During the Second World War, many Australians took the stories and antics of Ginger Meggs' character with them into overseas service. Back in Australia, Ginger Meggs encouraged and inspired Australian schoolchildren to chip in and help in the war effort.

The Second World War had an impact on almost every man, woman and child in Australia. It was a time of uncertainty. Many children had family members serving overseas. Children worried about their loved ones and whether they would see them again. For some children it was a time of adventure, but for all it was a time of change.

Ginger Meggs was a constant source of strength and amusement during turbulent times. The cartoon character's thirst for adventure provided an attitude and steadfastness for many Australian soldiers. Some airmen painted images of Ginger Meggs on their aircraft's nose and sides. These pictures were 'good luck' signs and said something about the pilot or crew. They represented the Aussie spirit – a spirit of battlers and knockabout larrikins, just like Ginger Meggs.

Back at home, the patriotic call to action was strong and children equally wanted to do their part. Girls helped their mothers by knitting socks, jumpers and scarves. Boys often took on jobs their fathers usually did around the home, such as mowing lawns, trimming hedges and fixing fences. Salvage collection was a popular way of contributing to the war effort.

Students and staff from State School 483 in Essendon formed the Ginger Meggs Salvage Corps. The students used handmade billy carts or hand trucks to collect paper, cardboard, rubber and aluminium from the neighbourhood to be recycled. Other students would go to school on a Saturday to help sort the recycled items. Each 'truck' had a captain and up to 5 helpers. The students wore armbands and pulled carts with the image of their mascot, the popular cartoon character Ginger Meggs. These students, like so many others around the country, epitomised the 'all in' approach of Australians.

Members of the Ginger Meggs Salvage Corps also answered the specific call of the soldiers. After the Japanese seized Malaya in February 1942, the Allied forces faced a critical shortage of rubber. The Ginger Meggs Salvage Corps was ready. The volunteers searched the streets, backyards and sheds on the hunt for rubber.

As members of the Ginger Meggs Salvage Corps scoured the local neighbourhoods, the sound of their voices filled the streets. The children sang songs and chanted poems inspired by Ginger Meggs and his adventures. One can only imagine that the sound of these spirited young voices would have brought a smile to those who heard them. Although not able to serve like their fathers, uncles and older brothers, these children exemplified the Aussie spirit during the war.



Students from Raleigh Street State Primary School, Victoria, set off on a salvage expedition, 16 April 1943.

Ginger Meggs, the mischievous, red-headed larrikin, was an identifiable and relatable character. He inspired both adults and children alike, connecting generations of Australians. During the Second World War, his antics brought humour to desperate and dangerous situations. Tristan Bancks, the great-great nephew of the creator, said Ginger Meggs, '*was used to make people feel good, even though the news was grim, he was an escape from the real world*'.

16: Sparrow Force

In February 1941, the Australian Government, along with Dutch and British officials, agreed to work together to defend Timor against the possibility of a Japanese invasion. Timor, a small island just over 700 km from Darwin, was an important place to defend. Many believed that should the Japanese gain control of the island, it would increase the chances of attacks or invasion of Australia.

At the time, Timor was a nation divided by political and national control. The Portuguese controlled the east and maintained neutrality, while the Dutch controlled the west. The Allied officials decided that the defending troops would fall under Australia's command. The Australian Army was called to defend Timor, divided into smaller units, known as the Bird Forces. One of the units was called 'Sparrow Force' and theirs is a story of resilience, adaptability and resourcefulness.

Three months after the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor in December 1941, Timor was invaded. The Japanese forces were swift, large and powerful, attacking by land, sea and sky. The soldiers of the 2/40th Battalion, part of Sparrow Force, were severely outnumbered and poorly equipped. Some Australians were killed while the remaining soldiers were taken as prisoners of war and housed at Usapa Besar, the camp built by Sparrow Force before the invasion. The Allied troops were forced to surrender on 23 February 1942.

Meanwhile, the 2/2nd Independent Company, part of Sparrow Force in East Timor (the Portuguese territory), conducted a fighting retreat. The soldiers dispersed into smaller groups and took cover in the rugged mountains to respond with guerrilla warfare. Guerrilla warfare is often referred to as 'hit-and-run' style of fighting, taking the enemy by surprise and disappearing as quickly and unexpectedly as they came. The Australians posted lookouts and sent out small patrols that would engage in short, sharp bursts of fighting before returning to the relative safety of the forest. The East Timorese and Portuguese local people assisted the Australians by supplying food and valuable information. Sparrow Force successfully interrupted Japanese communication lines and demoralised their troops. The men of Sparrow Force remained resolute.

As the guerrilla war continued, establishing reliable communications with Australia became critical. Members of Sparrow Force worked for nearly 2 months to build a radio transceiver that would allow them to send and receive messages with Australia. Signalman Max Loveless from the 2nd Independent Company was instrumental in manufacturing the transceiver. In a small dark shed, he disassembled and stripped parts from broken sets, gathered wires and built coils. The men salvaged what they could and even used a Portuguese radio manual to identify the correct colour-coded wiring.

By mid-April of 1942, all parts were ready to be connected and attempts to communicate commenced. Max sent a message in Morse code. It was unsuccessful. The team waited 3 days and tried again. Disappointed, the men heard nothing. Unbeknownst to them, their transmission had been successful and reached Darwin. Encouraged, the Darwin radio team instructed all transmitter stations across Australia to stay off the air to ensure they could receive more transmissions from Timor.

The next evening, Max tried again. The message was received in Darwin. However, in a period of heightened suspicion of potential spies and misdirection by the enemy, doubt was raised over its authenticity. Was the message a trick from the Japanese? The Darwin station responded, asking the soldiers to identify themselves. Max's prompt and accurate response confirmed that the call was legitimate and that Australian soldiers were still operating on Timor. In the week that followed, Sparrow Force was resupplied with equipment and food, and soon afterwards, reinforcements from the 2/4th Independent Company arrived.

The transceiver was given the nickname 'Winnie the War Winner'. The soldiers involved said that the radio was named in honour of Winston Churchill, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom at that time.

Nevertheless, even with communication and new supplies, by December 1942, the situation had become too dangerous for the troops to remain, and the Australians were evacuated over the following 2 months.

An uncommon experience for Australians in the Second World War, the men of Sparrow Force experienced guerrilla operations in enemy-held territory for an extended time. What drew these men together was their resolve, determination, ingenuity and fight for survival.



Members of Sparrow Force outside a hut in Timor, c 1942

17: Spies in the sky

By 1944, Allied leaders believed that control of the skies was necessary for victory in any ground battle. In planning the enormous ground invasion of northern France, now known as D-Day, Allied military leaders devoted considerable time to establishing that control.

The British and US air forces, in which some Australian personnel served, carried out attacks on German-held air bases, factories, repair depots, and airfields. More importantly, they attacked transport targets like railway junctions and bridges to prevent German reinforcements reaching the battlefield. The destruction of German air power mostly happened in aerial battles, often far from northern

France. They promptly counter-attacked German attempts to bomb ports, bases, and infrastructure in England.

John Herington, official historian of the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF), wrote, *'This mixture of staunch defence and virile pugnacity produced an effect far more valuable than the sum of every individual encounter.'* He added, *'it led to an almost complete failure of German reconnaissance in the months preceding the invasion'*

The inability of Germans to gain information about the Allied preparations for the invasion was mimicked across the English Channel. The Germans could not hamper the Allies as they surveilled northern France.

In the 6 weeks leading up to D-Day, English and US aircraft made constant sorties over the French coast. They photographed enemy supply dumps, headquarters, and communications. They photographed natural features, possible landing sites for aircraft, supply areas and bridges. Invasion beaches were also photographed at high tide and low tide.

These flights demanded a high degree of airmanship, patience, and accuracy. They also required a higher-than-usual amount of courage. This was because the air forces used Spitfires modified to fly faster and reach higher altitudes. The modifications, as Australian RAF pilot Stuart Davis recalled, had involved a very serious trade-off:

'People think flying Spitfires was wonderful', he said later, 'but I was on photographic reconnaissance, which didn't have any guns, didn't have any armour plating, and it wasn't all that fun!'

To lessen the danger to his aircraft, David adopted an erratic routine:

Instead of going straight along and doing them, and curling off and coming round and doing another one ... I'd start at the very end and do a little bit, then disappear, and then come up right down the back.

Manoeuvres like this were not available to other pilots in different planes. In May 1944, Flight Lieutenant Douglas Sampson, flying a Supermarine Spitfire Mk XI, had to fly at an incredibly low altitude over a beach that Allied military leaders planned to use for one of the landings during the invasion.

As his plane skated through the sky, a specially modified camera fitted in the fuselage behind Sampson's cockpit snapped away. The resulting images of the beach and underwater defences were so sharp, Sampson said later that *'the prickles on the barbed wire could be clearly seen'*.



An aerial photograph of landing craft making their way to shore during the D-Day landings at Normandy, France, 6 June 1944

These missions were invaluable to the Allied war effort. WA Farmer, a journalist for Melbourne's Herald newspaper, wrote afterwards that Sampson's colleagues had nicknamed that beach after him because his pictures had enabled the US troops to land there on D-Day and locate every enemy strongpoint on it. It helped them take Utah Beach by the time night fell.

The 'spies in the sky' paved the way for success on D-Day and, ultimately, the Allied victory in Europe. Moreover, their missions renewed the truth of that axiom about air control and ground battles.

18: Spring race meeting

Held by the Northern Picnic Race Club on Saturday 18 September 1943, the Army's spring race meeting was the first for the Northern Territory club.

This meeting was likely a welcome outlet for the soldiers based in the Northern Territory at the time. The war was in the islands of the Pacific, and northern Australia was subject to Japanese air raids. The event brought the community and the army together to celebrate the much-loved horse races, provide some respite from the war and raise funds for Australian prisoners of war (POWs).

The meeting was sponsored by Major General Arthur Allen, with all committee roles going to serving army officers. The racehorses were all station stock horses loaned by the Herbert brothers of Koolpinyah and Humpty Doo Stations and renamed for the occasion.

Reflecting the true spirit and humour of Aussie diggers at the time, the names given to the individual races, the horses, jockeys and stables were re-imagined and themed around the war and the army. Race names included 8th Army Gallop, Victory Purse and Leave Welter.

Dubbed 'POW Handicap', the first race was run at 1030 hours. Horses' names included 'Coming Home' (by Aussies out of the stables of Italy) and 'Welcome' (by Parcels out of Red Cross). Later races had horses named 'Surprise' (by Parachute out of a Plane) and 'Reveille' (by 6 O'Clock out of Bed), and even 'Spring' (by New Life out of Mother Earth). There were some very creative names indeed!

In July 1944, the same racing club held another race meeting in aid of the Prisoners of War Fund. The Kalgoorlie Miner newspaper reported a large attendance, with funds raised in the order of £2,000. By all accounts, the race meeting was a popular event.

While horse racing was not possible for those serving overseas, the respite from their current conditions was still very much needed.

The prisoners of the now infamous Sandakan camp in North Borneo marked Melbourne Cup day in their own way. An improvised winner's cup was made from bully beef tins, and a track was set up between officers' tents. The track was divided into 30 squares, and the men progressed according to a number drawn from a deck of cards. The first man to reach the end was the winner. In 1943, having been moved to a new camp, the prisoners again held their 'Melbourne Cup'. Using the same method for advancing along the track, bookies took bets for the winners.

Australian prisoners at the Sime Road camp in Singapore adopted their own version of the Melbourne Cup. They fashioned a winner's cup out of coconuts with a handmade aluminium plaque naming the winner. For this event, the prisoners raced frogs that were placed in the centre of a circle and the first one to cross the line won. The frog races were a popular source of amusement for the prisoners in the camps.

By 1944, there were approximately 28,500 Australian prisoners of war in Europe and the Far East and 22,000 prisoners of war in the Pacific region. At the time, reported funds from the races in the Northern Territory contributed to prisoners of war by the Australian Red Cross Society was in excess £1,000,000. These funds were used to supply food and comforts to prisoners. Australians were encouraged to spare what they could. A newspaper article noting 'everything is being done to provide Australian POWs with further help'.



The totalisator staff at the spring race meeting of the Northern Picnic Race Club, Adelaide River, Northern Territory, 18 September 1943



Did you know?

A propeller is just a big fan in front of the plane to keep the pilot cool. When it stops, you can actually see the pilot start sweating.



Flying low over the jungle, an A-1 Skyraider releases 500-pound ordnance on a Viet Cong position below, with smoke still rising from a previous strike, December 26, 1964.



The British transatlantic liner, RMS Queen Mary, as it arrived in New York Bay bringing more than 14,000 Americans home from Europe, 1945.



From the archives: a colourised photo of Tyne Cot cemetery at the end of the First World War



4th Infantry division soldiers during vietnam war 1967



At **Revive Physiotherapy & Exercise Physiology**, we specialise in helping **veterans** improve their mobility, strength, and overall well-being.

With extensive experience working with both **DVA Gold and White Card holders**, we provide **personalised physiotherapy and exercise physiology services** designed to support rehabilitation, injury prevention, and long-term health.

We provide both **Medicare and DVA-funded exercise programs** at leisure and aquatic centres, with **full access to the facility included in treatment for veterans**.

If you're a veteran looking to improve your physical health, or you know someone who could benefit from our services, **contact Revive today** to learn how we can support your journey. Offer suitable for Gold and White Card holders.

📍 **Locations:** Armadale Fitness & Aquatic Centre, Riverton Leisureplex, Booragoon LeisureFit, and MORE

☎ **Contact:** (08) 9300 0841

🌐 **Website:** revivephysiowa.com.au



RETURNED SERVICES LEAGUE ARMADALE SUB-BRANCH

Your RSL