

THE FURPHY

ARMADALE SUB-BRANCH OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER

March 2026 Edition



**1 Commerce Ave, Armadale, WA 6112
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General Meetings:

Second Sunday of the month at 1100hrs

Annual General Meeting:

Second Sunday of September

Committee Positions

Armadale Sub-Branch Committee	
President	Mr Mike Fairweather
Vice President	Mr Bob Giles
Secretary	Ms Carol King
Treasurer	Mrs Cheryl Cowie
Warden	Mr Graeme Cowie
Warden	Mr Keith Northcott
Membership Officer	Secretary
Committee	Mr Geoff Scott
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 March

<i>Day</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Time</i>
Sunday	1 st	Social Committee Meeting	1100
Tuesday	3 rd	Management Committee Meeting	1100
Sunday	8 th	General Meeting	1100
Sunday	22 nd	Midnight Angel Band	1230

CAN I CALL YOU BACK? I'M
SHAVING MY PRIVATES RIGHT NOW.



Secretary's Notes

Hi Everyone,

We've had another busy month including a couple of private functions being held here, including a wake for Peter Stevens who was a much liked and well-respected Service member. Our sincere condolences are extended to Dot and family.

Roast Lunches in January and February were well patronised but will no longer continue.

Midnight Angel will be back performing on 22nd March.

BYO snacks and nibbles on the day.

A roster for the ANZAC Appeal Stalls will be posted on the board in the next week.

We will be holding our normal Gunfire Breakfast on 25th April however there won't be any lunches provided on that day.

Had a terrifying experience last night. was alone in the house having a bath when all of a sudden.....I felt a tap on my shoulder.

We will need to have a tidy up around the building prior to ANZAC Day but it's possible that we may have another volunteer organisation come in to assist in that regard. If not, we may have to arrange our normal Busy Bee using our own volunteers but will keep you informed.

Best regards as always,

Carol King

Sub-Branch Secretary

e-mail: secretary@armadalersl.com.au

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Hi Members,

Finally, our new carpet has been laid, and it certainly makes a big difference to the look and feel of the hall.

Thanks to all our volunteer members who pitched in to pack everything up and put it all back during the week.

It will take a little longer to fill the cabinets back up with the memorabilia but that will be an ongoing process.

No news yet on the Veterans Facilities Grant but we are remaining positive that our application will be received favourably.

As required by Liquor and Gaming, we will be having a series of membership checks during the month of March. Please remember that if you're bringing in guests who aren't members they MUST be signed in.

That's about all from me 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

Nothing is more Aussie than telling
flies to fuck off and expectin' them
to listen



Membership Update

As at 28th February, 2026:

Service Members:	144
Affiliate Members:	43
Social Members:	<u>72</u>
Total:	<u>259</u>

We have gained 3 new Service Members during the month.

24 Social Members did not renew by 31st January and have been removed from our records.

All Members not renewed by 31st January have had their Loyalty Cards disabled.

We continue to liaise with RSLWA regarding Service persons who have renewed directly through their Portal as we are not being automatically notified when this occurs.

If you have any queries, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Carol King

Tel: 9497 1972

e-mail: secretary@armadalersl.com.au

Happy Birthday to youuuu!

March Service Members:

Akacznek	Mr	Thomas	08/03	Boyce	Mr	Daniel	12/03
Dell	Mr	Geoffrey	21/03	Hymus	Ms	Patrice	08/03
Jones	Mr	Allan	29/03	Mederic	Mr	Michael	08/03
Millard	Mr	Robert	01/03	Mitton	Mr	Glenn	08/03
Popelier	Mr	Martinus	20/03	Quinn	Mr	Michael	22/03
Scott	Mr	Geoff	22/03	Stevens	Mr	Peter	21/03
Wilson	Mr	Patrick	24/03	Wood	Mr	Jason	23/03

March Affiliate Members:

Boyce	Ms	Lisa	17/03	Esslemont	Mr	Robert	12/03
Grogan	Mr	Sean	14/03	Leask	Mr	Gordon	20/03
Lucas	Mrs	Catherina	11/03	Tozer	Mr	Murray	17/03

March Social Members:

Bumhira	Mr	Levie	31/03	Kent	Mrs	Mal	01/03
Marsh	Mr	Chad	31/03	Passmore	Mrs	Merette	12/03
Russell	Mr	Luke	27/03	Strandly	Mrs	Jodie	28/03
Van de Velde	Mrs	Linda	10/03				

If there are any errors or anyone has been missed off the list, please advise

The Secretary (Interim Membership Officer)

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

We hope you have a very special Birthday

Bar Manager's Report

G'day All,

All the Loyalty Cards for members who did not renew by 31st January have been de-activated. If you have paid in the meantime, please let me know and I will reinstate it for you. No accumulated points will be lost as a result.

Attendance has been low, but there were a couple of functions during February including a band so that helped a lot.

We are still trying to hold the prices down but can't guarantee how long that will be for.

Cheers for now,

Stormy

Yesterday, my neighbor left dog poop
in my yard.
Today, I filled a condom with mayonnaise
and tossed it into their yard.
They're still fighting.

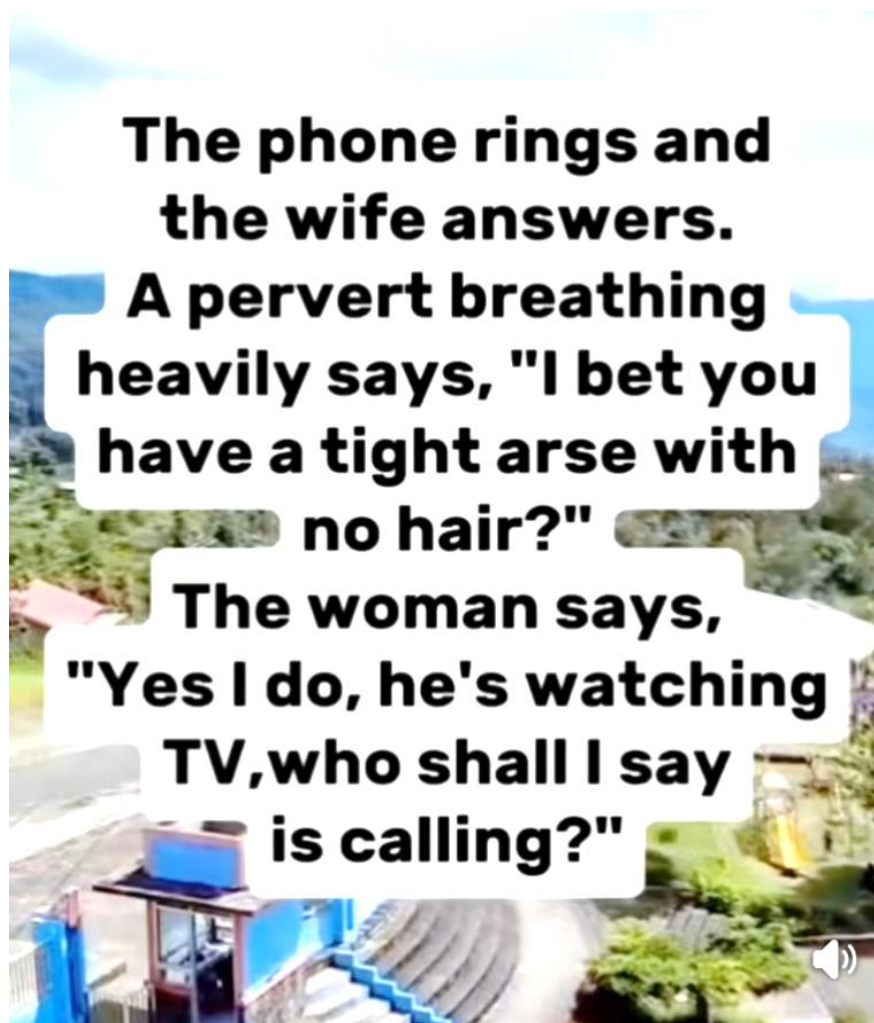


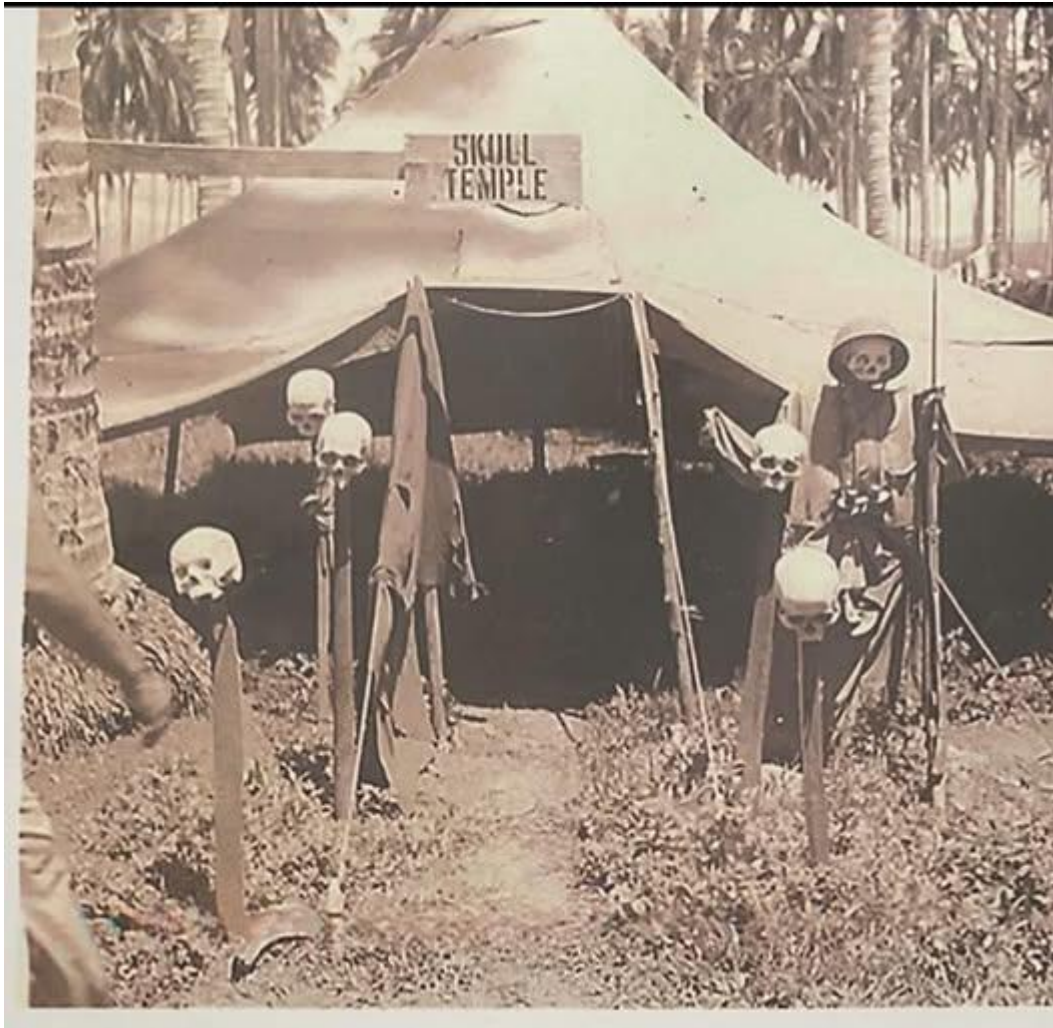


One of the top snipers of World War II, Lyudmila Pavlichenko had 309 confirmed kills, including 36 enemy snipers.



An Australian light horseman with a captured train engine, late 1918. Godfrey Burgess collection. Burgess served with the 12th Light Horse.





The "skull temple" that became infamous on Guadalcanal after the land campaign. Many 'souvenir photos' were taken of it.





A fantastic display of Australian soldiers marching through the streets of London in 1919



VWS Members of B Company, 6th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (6RAR), share a nip of rum to lift morale. They have just completed a tough night-long ambush assignment in South Vietnam. Soldiers benefiting are (left to right) Lance Corporal Les Nuffer of Rosebury, Brisbane, QLD, Private Tony Trevenen of Tambellup, WA, Private Neville Benfer of Mount Cotton, Qld and Corporal Jock Smith of Perth, WA

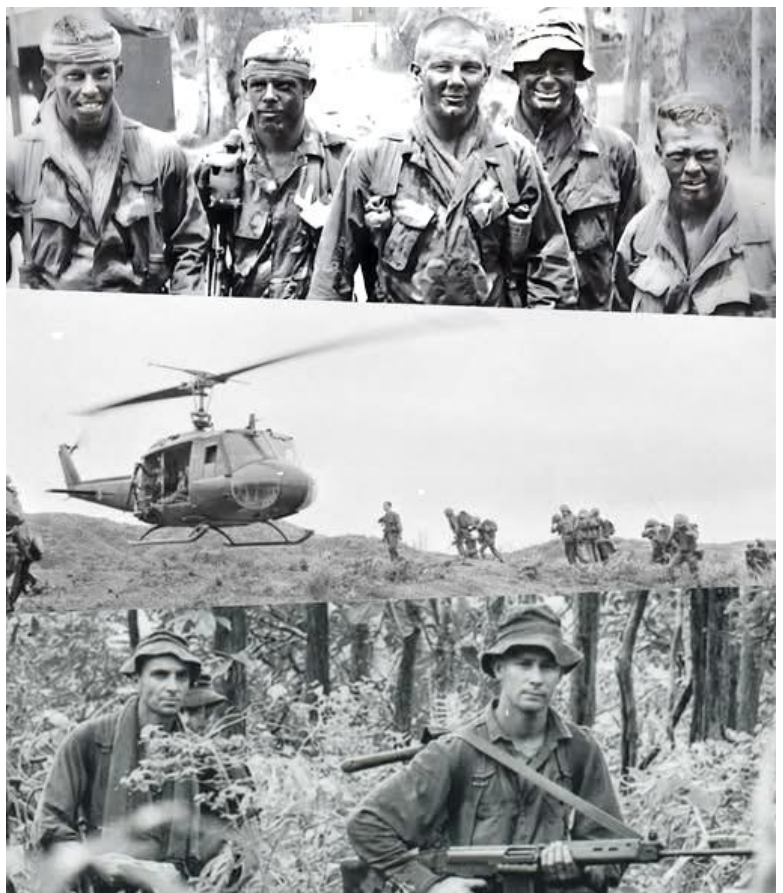
"The Moment US Soldiers Feared The SAS" — A Vietnam Encounter:

17 American Green Berets walked into that patrol base. 12 walked out. The rest vanished into the jungle canopy, dragged away by an enemy they never saw, never heard, and could not fight. And you know what the battalion commander did? He wrote two words in the operational log and sealed it immediately.

Those two words, Australian sector. Wait, Australians? the guys from the country with more sheep than people. The nation that sent barely 500 special forces soldiers to a war consuming half a million American troops. Those Australians were operating in terrain where entire marine companies had been decimated, where the Vietkong ruled absolutely.

Where American doctrine had failed so completely that senior officers openly admitted defeat. Oh, this story gets so much stranger than you think because what those Australian SAS operators were doing in those mountains, the methods they employed, the things they learned from trackers whose people had been hunting for 40,000 years was so effective and so psychologically devastating that American liaison officers were submitting transfer requests just to escape their presence.

One special forces captain came back from a joint operation and wrote a classified report that never saw daylight for 30 years. In it, he described watching the Australians work and concluded with words that shook the Pentagon. We have been playing at war. They have been hunting. You're about to discover why the most powerful military on Earth stood in awe and fear of 150 men from a country most Americans associated with kangaroos and crocodiles.



The Vietkong stopped calling them soldiers. They called them something else. Maang, the jungle ghosts. 28 kilometers northeast of the Australian base at Newat, the Mtow Mountains rose from the coastal plains like vertebrae pushing through skin. From reconnaissance aircraft circling at 3,000 m, the range appeared deceptively modest.

Nearly 18 kilometers of jungle covered limestone extending into Bin Toui province. American aerial photography had mapped every square meter. B-52 bombers had dropped over 60,000 tons of ordinance on its slopes between 1966 and 1969. The third marine division had conducted five major operations into its approaches.



Australian burial parties burying Australian and Turkish dead during the armistice at Gallipoli. More than 3000 Turks and approximately 160 Australians were killed during the Turkish counter attack on 19 May 1915. Approximately one million rounds of ammunition were fired during the one day attack. The stench from the dead was so unbearable that the Turks initiated a nine hour armistice so that both sides could recover and bury the dead



April 9, 1940 – Seven Danish soldiers man their Madsen LMG against the inevitable. Within hours, **two would be gone**, and Denmark's resistance would end after just six hours. One of WWII's shortest campaigns



A Lancaster coming in about as low as you can safely go without landing. Note the three feathered props with one inboard engine still running. WWII

WARNING: Naked Image Overleaf.....



But the Hall should be dressed up again next time you come in !!!



This image captures a dramatic moment on April 16, 1945, in the waters around Okinawa, when the United States Navy destroyer USS Laffey (DD-724) faced one of the most brutal battles in the history of modern naval warfare. Taken from the escort carrier USS PCE-851, the photograph shows Laffey, heavily damaged, yet holding on to Radar Picket Station No. 1—the most vulnerable outpost that served as an early warning line against Japanese air attacks.

In a remarkably short time, the ship was subjected to a coordinated barrage of kamikaze attacks. At least five suicide planes struck the ship directly, followed by two aerial bombs, and dozens of shells and explosions fell all around her. The barrage of attacks reduced the ship's decks and superstructure to charred rubble—the bridge was ripped off, armour plates were ripped off, and blast scars were visible throughout the ship.

Despite the destruction, casualties, and widespread fires, USS Laffey did not surrender. The ship's crew maintained remarkable discipline and courage, battling the fires while controlling structural damage that threatened the ship's survival. Meanwhile, anti-aircraft guns continued to fire, providing a last-ditch effort to protect the ship and the surrounding Allied fleet. The USS Laffey's resilience in this battle made her a symbol of the tenacity and courage of sailors during one of the most brutal phases of the Pacific War

Battle of Brisbane riot in World War II

In November 1942, Australians and United States (US) forces clashed in the Battle of Brisbane riot. Thousands of soldiers from both sides fought with batons and guns over 2 days of rioting. One Australian soldier was killed. Hundreds were injured.

To protect the Australian-US alliance, authorities tried to limit information about the riot. This led to rumours and exaggerated accounts.

This was one of the first major conflicts between Australians and US forces on Australian soil. It highlighted tensions caused by the Americanisation of Australia's culture and economy.



Brisbane city welcomed US sailors and marines with confetti as they marched along the main street in July 1941. No hints of the tensions that would cause the Battle of Brisbane riot in November 1942.

Australia's wartime alliances

The Australian Government, therefore, regards the Pacific struggle as primarily one in which the United States and Australia must have the fullest say in the direction of the democracies' fighting plan. Without any inhibitions of any kind, I make it quite clear that Australia looks to America, free of any pangs as to our traditional links or kinship with the United Kingdom.

Two days after Christmas 1941, then Prime Minister John Curtin published an editorial in Melbourne's Herald newspaper. Curtin, a former journalist and union leader, had been prime minister for less than 3 months. In that short time, Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, bringing the United States (US) into World War II.

Nearer to Australia, Japan also invaded:

- Burma
- Hong Kong
- Indochina
- Malaya
- Netherlands East Indies
- Thailand
- Singapore
- The Philippines.

Curtin argued Australia needed to prepare for a feared Japanese invasion. The United Kingdom (UK) was preoccupied with the European war. Curtin called for a strategic alliance between Australia and the US.



A giant portrait of General Douglas MacArthur, Commander in Chief, South-West Pacific Area, is hung outside the Melbourne city store Myer Emporium. It marked a celebration of US Independence Day in 1943

United Kingdom

The relationship between Australia and the UK was tested as the war worsened. Curtin and his predecessor, Robert Menzies, worried that the UK wouldn't help if Japan attacked. Both wondered about Australia's ability to defend itself if the UK expected its forces elsewhere.

British prime minister, Winston Churchill, wrote to Curtin after the article was published. His response was scathing:

“Such a statement will cause resentment throughout the Empire and had a very poor reception in high quarters in the United States.

I hope you will not mind me saying that you have really not begun to feel the weight of this war, or even begun to experience the danger and suffering under which the people of Great Britain have long been proud to live.”

Australia and the UK shared a common history, language and culture. Their ties went back to Australia's colonial past. Many Australians still saw England as the 'mother country'. They believed Australia's role to be that of an important junior partner in the British Empire. But Curtin's actions led to a change in foreign policy and national identity that continues today.

United States

Curtin now looked to the US for Australia's defence and protection. In return, Australia gave the US an important strategic base for its war effort in the south-west Pacific.

Supreme Commander of Allied Forces in the South-West Pacific Area, General Douglas MacArthur arrived in Melbourne in March 1942.

He received a hero's welcome from crowds lining the streets. He set up headquarters in the city and was given command of Australia's army, air and naval forces. Macarthur famously told Curtin:

“We two, you and I, will see this thing through together. We can do it, and we will do it. You take care of the rear and I will handle the front.”

One million US service personnel passed through Australia during World War II. At the time, Australia's population was only 7 million.

Some 4,600 US soldiers arrived in Brisbane 2 weeks after the Pearl Harbor attack of 7 December 1941. By 1943, there were 150,000 Americans in Australia. They were stationed Australia-wide, from Melbourne in the south to Darwin in the north and Fremantle in the west. Most were based in Queensland because of its closeness to fighting in the Pacific.



Visiting US GIs were treated to snacks from home, including coffee, doughnuts, hamburgers and hotdogs. American Red Cross Service Club, Melbourne, 1942.

Increasing tensions

Australians tended to idolise Americans as if every single one of them was a screen star, making for a welcome in the dark days of 1942 that was warm, generous and slightly unbalanced. People competed with one another to invite a 'Yank' home for a meal and women's magazines helpfully published recipes that would ensure the Americans felt right at home. So, people were apparently struggling to make fish chowder, breaded veal cutlets, shoestring potatoes, parsnip fluff, browned tomato sauce and butterscotch ice-cream cake. It all sounded exotic and romantic, and did provide a bit of life and fun just as the war seemed at its most dangerous.

Most Australians initially welcomed the US troops. Many saw them as vital for Australia's defence. This was especially the case in 1942 when Australians feared Japanese attack and invasion. Others opened their homes to US soldiers, leading to lifelong friendships. Australian women also enjoyed the charm, smooth manners and generosity of the visiting troops.

Tensions increased as US and Australian cultures clashed. Jealousy was a common trigger. US soldiers earned roughly twice as much as Australian soldiers and were free with their spending. They could afford to treat women to chocolates, cigarettes and other gifts. US uniforms were also smarter, backed up with a spare. The Australians looked dowdy in comparison.

The visitors were attractive to some but resented by others. Resentment grew as the urgency of the Japanese threat lessened. Some Australian businesses tried to swindle cashed-up and currency-naïve US military personnel. There were fights over women. Australia's White Australia policy was tested by the arrival of large numbers of black US servicemen, especially in Australia's racially conservative north.

There were tensions between local and US authorities, as local police and US military police (MP) grappled with issues of jurisdiction. Locals resented the power wielded by the MPs.

There was also conflict between battle-hardened Australian soldiers who were just home from overseas combat and US servicemen who had not served on a front line. In the eyes of many Australian soldiers, the US servicemen were 'bragging, untested competitors'.



US fleet marching down Queen Street, Brisbane, March 1941. This was the first visit to Brisbane during World War II of a US Naval Squadron. The US forces marched from the Valley to the City Hall. It was a goodwill visit to Australia as the US had not yet entered the war. State Library of Queensland digitised copy print from 28118 Sunday Truth and Sunday Sun newspaper photographic negative number 102768.

Wartime Brisbane

In July 1942, the Allied forces headquarters moved to Brisbane. The city's population doubled within months.

Brisbane in the 1940s was a large, conservative country town with strong ties to the UK. Many of its residents still carried the trauma of economic hardships during the Great Depression. Queensland also had some of the country's harshest laws and attitudes towards First Australians.

Brisbane residents felt anxious following Japanese victories to Australia's north in Asia and attacks off the Queensland coast. Some 200 air raid shelters were built in the centre of Brisbane.

Violent brawls became common in Brisbane in 1942. In South Brisbane alone, the MPs broke up an average of 20 fights a night. The number of arrests rose from 140 in June 1942 to more than 1,100 by October.

Most clashes in the early months of 1942 were between Black and White US soldiers from the segregated southern states. Fuelled by racism and alcohol, these attacks took place in Brisbane's sleazier areas. Knife attacks and shootings were common. As the year continued, violence spread into other parts of Brisbane. More US servicemen and Australians came into conflict.



Wartime Brisbane showing City Hall, 19 February 1940

Two days of rioting

Brisbane was already very much an unquiet city before the savage eruption of Thanksgiving Day, 1942.

The Battle of Brisbane took place over 26 and 27 November 1942. Over 2 days of violent fighting, one Australian soldier was killed. At least 9 Australians and 11 US servicemen suffered serious injuries. Countless others had minor injuries.

Thanksgiving is a national holiday in the US. It falls on the fourth Thursday in November; in 1942 this was 26 November. It is a holiday of goodwill, good food – and in Brisbane 1942 – lots of alcohol. A US MP had assaulted an Australian soldier earlier in the day. That, plus several hours of drinking, primed servicemen on both sides for a fight.

The riot was sparked by a confrontation between Australian servicemen and US MPs. Gunner Edward Sidney Webster had been out drinking with mates. When the pub closed earlier than usual, Edward headed off with 4 other Australians.

The early closure of pubs was a source of contention for Australian servicemen. They resented being told it was closing time, only to see the bar remain open for US military personnel.

Edward was not long home from fighting in the Syrian Campaign. He and his mates headed towards the Australian Canteen on Adelaide Street. They ran into Private James Stein of US Army 404th Signal Company. Versions of the story differ about whether the Australians were arguing or just talking with Stein. But, when 2 overly enthusiastic US MPs harassed Stein for his leave pass, Edward and the other Australians came to Stein's aid.

MPs had weapons, and many Australian servicemen resented what they saw as bullying behaviour. When an MP appeared to threaten an Australian with his baton, the Australian responded by punching the MP in the mouth.

More Australians and MPs joined the fighting. Punches and kicks were thrown. As a crowd of several thousand people gathered, rocks and sticks were used. Several windows were broken.

During the fight, shots were fired. Edward was hit in the chest, and he later died from the wound.

The violence continued into the next day. By 8 pm on 27 November, more than 2,000 people were involved in the disturbance. There were fights at various canteens around Brisbane, and the ground floor of the American PX (Postal Exchange) canteen was demolished.

The fire brigade was called to hose down the angry crowd. But the head fireman refused to do so.

Gunner Edward Webster is officially commemorated at Brisbane General (Toowong) Cemetery in the Returned Servicemen's Plot.



Repairing broken glass and damage at the American PX canteen (Postal Exchange), Brisbane, November 1942. State Library of Queensland digitised copy print from 28118 Sunday Truth and Sunday Sun newspaper photographic negative number 106429

Other clashes

Other riots broke out around the country at different times over the next few years. US and Australian servicemen came to blows elsewhere in Queensland, as well as at:

- Bondi, February 1943
- Fremantle, April 1944
- Melbourne, December 1942
- Perth, January 1944.

Significance of the riot

The Battle of Brisbane riot was significant for what it represented more than for the actual event. The riot, and the clashes that followed, highlighted tensions caused by the impact of hundreds of thousands of US forces on Australia's economy and culture.

The visitors' arrival affected the Australian home front in many ways, both during the war years and afterwards. US forces influenced Australian food, language and music.

On a deeper level, it disrupted traditional views of family life and partnerships. It also prepared Australia for ongoing debates about national identity, immigration and multiculturalism.





RETURNED SERVICES LEAGUE ARMADALE SUB-BRANCH

Your RSL