ISSUE 29

GLENN ROBBINS

SHAUN MICALLEF

AUSTRALIANS AND HOLLYWOOD

PETER SCOTT'S RUNNING DEEP

VETERANS FILM FESTIVAL

BROOME AND THE DAMPIER PENINSULA

THE HISTORY OF MELBOURNE LEGACY

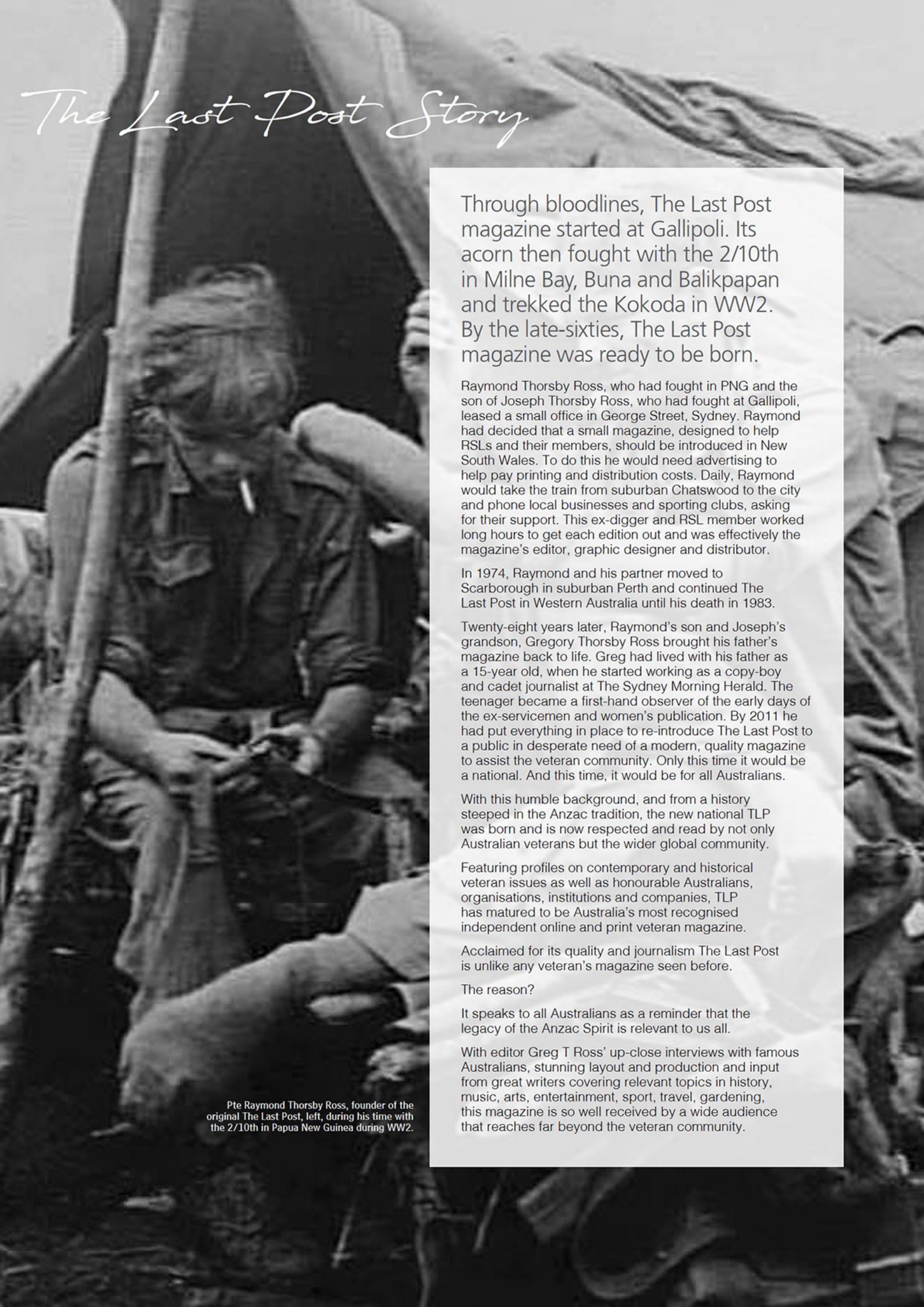
TIM PAGE

A personal recollection from The Last Post Editor Greg T Ross

THE LAST POST

KEEPING THE ANZAC SPIRIT ALIVE FOR AUSTRALIA'S VETERANS AND THEIR SUPPORTERS

The Last Post Story



Pte Raymond Thorsby Ross, founder of the original The Last Post, left, during his time with the 2/10th in Papua New Guinea during WW2.

Through bloodlines, The Last Post magazine started at Gallipoli. Its acorn then fought with the 2/10th in Milne Bay, Buna and Balikpapan and trekked the Kokoda in WW2. By the late-sixties, The Last Post magazine was ready to be born.

Raymond Thorsby Ross, who had fought in PNG and the son of Joseph Thorsby Ross, who had fought at Gallipoli, leased a small office in George Street, Sydney. Raymond had decided that a small magazine, designed to help RSLs and their members, should be introduced in New South Wales. To do this he would need advertising to help pay printing and distribution costs. Daily, Raymond would take the train from suburban Chatswood to the city and phone local businesses and sporting clubs, asking for their support. This ex-digger and RSL member worked long hours to get each edition out and was effectively the magazine's editor, graphic designer and distributor.

In 1974, Raymond and his partner moved to Scarborough in suburban Perth and continued The Last Post in Western Australia until his death in 1983.

Twenty-eight years later, Raymond's son and Joseph's grandson, Gregory Thorsby Ross brought his father's magazine back to life. Greg had lived with his father as a 15-year old, when he started working as a copy-boy and cadet journalist at The Sydney Morning Herald. The teenager became a first-hand observer of the early days of the ex-servicemen and women's publication. By 2011 he had put everything in place to re-introduce The Last Post to a public in desperate need of a modern, quality magazine to assist the veteran community. Only this time it would be a national. And this time, it would be for all Australians.

With this humble background, and from a history steeped in the Anzac tradition, the new national TLP was born and is now respected and read by not only Australian veterans but the wider global community.

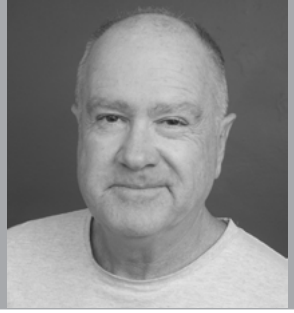
Featuring profiles on contemporary and historical veteran issues as well as honourable Australians, organisations, institutions and companies, TLP has matured to be Australia's most recognised independent online and print veteran magazine.

Acclaimed for its quality and journalism The Last Post is unlike any veteran's magazine seen before.

The reason?

It speaks to all Australians as a reminder that the legacy of the Anzac Spirit is relevant to us all.

With editor Greg T Ross' up-close interviews with famous Australians, stunning layout and production and input from great writers covering relevant topics in history, music, arts, entertainment, sport, travel, gardening, this magazine is so well received by a wide audience that reaches far beyond the veteran community.



from the publisher GREG T ROSS

By September, after the release of The Last Post birthday edition, it seemed, in a lot of Australia, that the winter would never end. Excess rain. Colder than normal, so there was really no Spring. But Spring was in its first month when we flew from Melbourne to Perth, and then to Broome, to escape the ennui.

When we landed in Broome, the first thing was the heat. The welcome heat. We bought supplies from the supermarket and drove north, for more than a couple of hours. To Cygnet Bay. We spent a week there and then back to Broome for three or four days, near Cable Beach. Still the heat. The surf. The sunsets and sunrises.

The chilli ginger beer.

It was a revitalisation. But, landing back in Melbourne to a 13 degree and wet night, a return to what a lot have had to go through in '22.

I'm hoping to bring the experience of Broome and the Dampier Peninsula to you with our eight-page feature in this Summer edition.

Finding the right head-space as an independent publisher can be a challenge. In the back of your mind, when you're enjoying yourself, you half-feel you should be back at the office, making money. But, goddamn it, after over 11 years of bringing TLP to the public, sometimes you succumb to the need to disconnect. The trip to north-west WA represented that.

The break was short-lived. Since October we've been working 'round the clock, to bring you this, the Summer edition.

As usual, we're looking at a lot of issues relevant to the veteran community amalgamating with the general community. We cover health and its closely aligned cousin, arts. We interview more great Australians and feature RSL Australia, ADA, HomeFront Australia, Vasey RSL Care, Melbourne Legacy, CSC and a Foreword from Inspirational Australian Woman, Suzanne Shipp. We feature a personal tribute dedicated to the loss of Tim Page.

My Diary of an Independent Publisher can be found on Facebook and of course we're available on other socials as well as our podcast series on Apple and Spotify.

Hope you enjoy the read over what we hope will be a long, hot summer.

Greg T Ross, Editor

#thelastpostmagazine
#diaryofanindependentpublisher

Greg T Ross

AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL P04959.067

In this edition, Tim Page: A personal recollection from The Last Post Editor Greg T Ross.

foreword

Suzanne Shipp
General Manager, Operations and Maintenance
APA Group

Suzanne Shipp, General Manager for APA Group's Operations and Maintenance, is passionate about people and making a difference. She has an established and proven track record in leading safety, strategy, operations and developing growth. Under her leadership, her teams forge successful partnerships with all stakeholders and ensure our assets continue to be world class, ensuring safe, reliable operations.

Suzanne has over 30 years of industry experience and prior to joining APA, she was the CEO of Laser Central, an Australian home grown manufacturing business and Chief Executive – Digital Solutions at the Nova Group, a professional engineering business. Before that, Suzanne held various roles within Origin Energy gaining valuable experience across the energy sector for almost 10 years. She started her professional career in the Australian Army as a sixteen year old apprentice and progressed to be a Black Hawk Maintenance Engineering Officer. Suzanne received her bachelor's degree in Engineering and earned a master's degree in Business Administration. Currently she is a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and was awarded an Executive Engineer status by Engineers Australia. Suzanne volunteers her time as the Treasurer of the Currumbin Palm Beach RSL sun-branch giving back to her fellow veterans and wider community.

Importance of diversity in the ADF, veteran community and corporate world.

Inclusion and diversity to me is about creating a sense of belonging and ultimately enhancing the way we all work and play together.

It is important in the ADF as it is with all corporations and veteran communities because the sense of inclusion attracts and retains the best people. It helps build resilience in our veteran communities and supports good mental health. It also makes commercial sense, as diversity of thought generates better financial outcomes through enhancing creativity and breakthrough innovations, leading to better decision making and problem solving.

The ADF, veteran communities and corporations are all striving to move beyond inclusion and diversity to creating a feeling of belonging and a sense of family. It's not just an important topic, it's essential, because everyone of us wants a place where we can bring our whole selves to work, where we feel valued and can make a difference, where we are listened to and respected. I want diversity of thought to be something we don't just talk about but is actually sort out, promoted and encouraged.

My vision for diversity and inclusion is to move beyond a gender conversation to be a natural equilibrium, where it's just normal to have different people from different backgrounds with different perspectives, experiences and ideas working together in a respected environment, making great decisions and solving the world's greatest challenges.

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78 10 Minutes of aerobic exercise - a short burst of aerobic exercise is believed to promote a molecule in the brain that is crucial for learning to feel safe.

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SPORT

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98 Legacy 100 Torch Relay - the Legacy Centenary Torch Relay begins on Anzac Day 25th April 2023 in Pozieres, France. It will then travel to London, England where it will continue its tour throughout Australia. It is a 6-month campaign to pay homage and acknowledge veterans' families, saluting their sacrifice. The torch will travel over 50,000 km, through 100 stops, carried by approx. 1,500 torch bearers. s

100 Sports and gambling - we have to get to the heart of our culture's obsession with sports gambling before we can see change, says UNSW media and advertising expert.

102 Rebels without applause – respected SMH journalist Malcolm Knox looks at the legacy of world series cricket and why it is time to recognise world series records.

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FRONT COVER:

Photographer Tim Page, whose images and exploits from the Vietnam War made him a legendary figure of journalism in the 1960s.

Photo by Michael Klinkhamer © klinkhamerphoto.com

RSL Australia

Update

Greg Melick
RSL Australia President

As we end another year, it is a time we can reflect on some of the RSL's activities over the past 12 months.

Throughout the year, we have been actively and deeply involved with the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide attending hearings around the country and making detailed submissions and comments on behalf of the veteran community. The RSL has devoted significant resources to supporting the Royal Commission process and prominently advocated for the implementation of the interim recommendations. Some of our significant initiatives, such as launching the Veterans' Catalogue web application (a search-friendly hub of reputable Australian service providers) and facilitating the first National ESO Forum, aim to address some of the issues that have arisen during the Royal Commission. We will continue to take a prominent position as the Royal Commission continues into 2023.

This year, the passing of our Patron, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, was a significant event felt by all veterans who particularly valued her association and patronage of the League for more than 70 years. Her passing was a moment of great sadness, but it was also a time to reflect on her unstinting service and contribution to Australia, Great Britain and all the nations of the Commonwealth.

At the time, we had recently marked Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee, with RSL Branches and Sub-Branches throughout Australia illuminated in purple to mark her extraordinary 70 years on the throne. Such was the esteem in which our organisation and its members held her.

I was honoured to represent the RSL and its members at Her Majesty's funeral in London's Westminster Abbey. We are now seeking the support of King Charles to succeed his mother as the RSL's Patron.

During my time in London, I also attended the Royal Commonwealth Ex-Services League's 34th Centenary Conference, meeting with delegates from more than 30 Commonwealth nations. We discussed a range of mutual interests concerning veterans, including mental health, support for war widows, raising awareness of veteran needs and fundraising.

Amongst many notable projects, the RSL initiated a major Australia-wide research project that will continue in 2023, capturing insights and feedback from the veteran community. This multi-phase project will culminate in a national survey to be conducted next year. Insights will assist in shaping the future direction of our organisation, its services, and programs to enable the RSL better to serve veterans and their families.

Along with our major observances of ANZAC and Remembrance Days, we have continued to support and facilitate national programs and services, including the Mental Health Initiative, RSL Veterans' Employment Program and RSL Active. Through these programs, we have supported a variety of veteran-friendly events, including Long Ride Australia and the Kirra Long Boarding competition.

This is just a snapshot of the considerable work the RSL is doing, both nationally and through its State Branches and Sub-Branches to support and serve our veteran community.

In closing, may I sincerely thank all the volunteers and members who supported the RSL in conducting commemorative services, supporting fundraising initiatives and assisting in the delivery of vital welfare services to our veteran community.

My very best wishes to all for an enjoyable festive season and a happy and prosperous new year.

Greg Melick (right) lays a wreath on behalf of the RSL, alongside Dr Brendan Nelson outgoing Chair of the Australian War Memorial Council (middle) and General Angus Campbell Chief of Defence (left), at the National Remembrance Day ceremony held at the Australian War Memorial on Friday, 11 November.

RSL VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

Free Career Support For Veterans and Defence Families

With you every step of the way!

1. Need a change?

You are:

- Looking for a job
- Wanting to change career
- Looking for your passion and purpose

2. You're a:

- Veteran
- Veteran or defence partner
- Child of a veteran
- Reservist

3. Register online

It's quick, easy and free.

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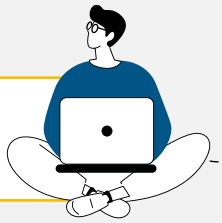
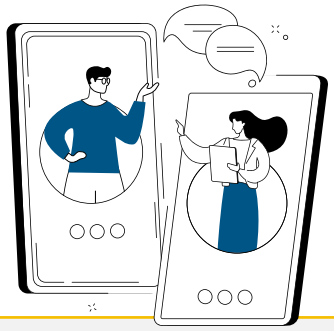
SCAN ME!



4. We'll be in touch

Your local Case Navigator will reach out to assess your needs.



5. We make a plan tailored to you

This might look like:

- Translating your military experience
- Workshopping your CV
- Writing job applications with stand-out cover letters
- Enrolling in training programs
- Connecting you with local employers with current vacancies

6. On-going support is provided

Your case navigator checks in regularly to see how you're doing and what you need next.

7. You've made it!

You have:

- Clarity on the types of roles and industries to pursue
- Confidence in promoting yourself
- A stand-out CV
- The ability to write a great cover letter
- More confidence going into job interviews
- A clear training/up-skill pathway
- Connections with local employers

OR

- A fantastic new job!

RSL Australia

Royal Commission: Driving collaboration and innovation

Following the significant challenges presented in 2020-21 through COVID, this year has presented its own challenges and changes.

International instability, a change of Government and the loss of our Head of State (and RSL Australia Patron), HM Queen Elizabeth, have changed the landscape in which the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide forges forward.

RSL Australia has been heavily invested in the Royal Commission throughout 2022, submitting papers and recommendation reports developed by its dedicated working group. The RSL has had representatives attending all the Hearing Blocks, including the most recent in Wagga Wagga, to understand firsthand the themes, sentiments and issues arising from the evidence presented.

The recent Wagga Wagga Hearing, along with the release of the November 2022 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) report which monitors Defence member and Veteran suicide, further demonstrate the scale of the challenge confronting all those working for the wellbeing of veterans and their families.

ESO FORUM: DRIVING COLLABORATION

While the interim recommendations of the Royal Commission released in August focus on some immediate remedial actions, notably changes in policy and addressing the intolerable backlog of DVA claims, it is clear that ex-service organisations (ESO's) also have a role to play. Currently, Australia has a significant number of reputable ESOs delivering a range of quality support services to the veteran community. What has been missing is a coordinated veteran-centric response by ESOs to ensure optimal outcomes for the community it serves.

In light of this, RSL Australia, with support from RSL State Branches, facilitated a National ESO Forum on 15 November 2022 in Canberra. The Forum brought together 50+ representatives from ESOs from across Australia to discuss:

- A collective ESO response to the Interim Report of the Royal Commission;
- Options for ESO partnerships and collaboration to avoid replication and duplication of services;
- How veterans and their families access services, navigate the ESO service landscape and meet their service needs; and
- Options to provide a unified veteran voice to Government.

The Forum was a great success, demonstrating the appetite for ESOs to work together. From here, RSL Australia is compiling a participant endorsed report, including next steps to implement the actions arising from the Forum. This includes plans for further collaboration in 2023.

ABOVE, FROM TOP:

National ESO Forum:

Commissioners of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide and leaders from across the RSL organisation

Attended by representatives of prominent Australian Ex-Service Organisations.

Commissioner and Chair of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide, Nick Kaldas, addresses the forum.

VETERANS' CATALOGUE:
A BETTER WAY TO FIND SUPPORT

The challenges in navigating the complex support network available in Australia including the services provided by ESOs have been a reoccurring theme in the Royal Commission. In early 2022, RSL Australia partnered with veteran technology provider, Servulink to develop an online tool that would enable the veteran community to better navigate the support network available to them. This collaboration led to the successful launch of the Veterans' Catalogue web application in early November.

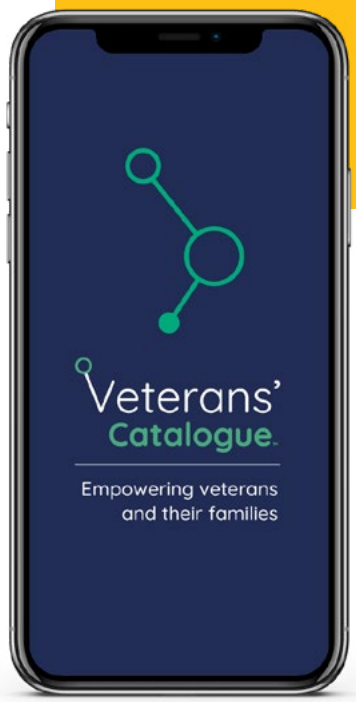
The Veterans' Catalogue enables users to find and connect with more than 1500 registered veteran service providers across a range of holistic wellbeing, personal, professional, community network and family needs. A range of smart search features, including an interactive map, ensures users can easily target specific services and refine searches by geographic location. The online tool is free to use and available on any device or browser.

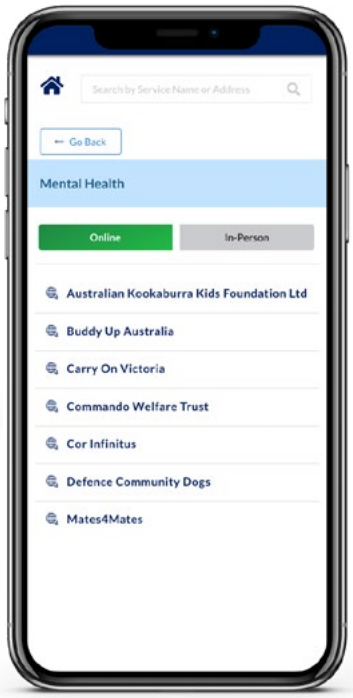
All reputable Australian-based service providers who support Defence members, veterans and their families are invited to register on the web app, at no cost to ensure a comprehensive range of resources are available to users.

The initiation of the ESO Forum and the launch of the Veterans' Catalogue are two significant projects established in 2022 which will run in parallel with the many other employment, advocacy, recreation and welfare programs offered by the RSL.

RSL Australia is looking forward to continuing this good work, along with any new opportunities that 2023 presents.

www.rslaustralia.org/veterans-catalogue





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Camelot (Jackie)

They showed an affinity to poets
and painters and speed
and to the great divide.
She whispered seductively
to the mortise mirror
and spoke in Spanish. And pondered
on what the bullets had
sounded like
and recalled how beautiful he looked
in the moments before he died.
She wore his blood
on her blood-stained skirt and blouse
and stockings. And in her hair. “Look
what they have done to him”, she cried.
And she scrubbed her nails
and took a shower, that night.
She had not smoked a lot
before he died
but she smoked a lot after she lost her husband.
And mostly, she hoped somebody
would take a pot shot at her.

GREG T ROSS

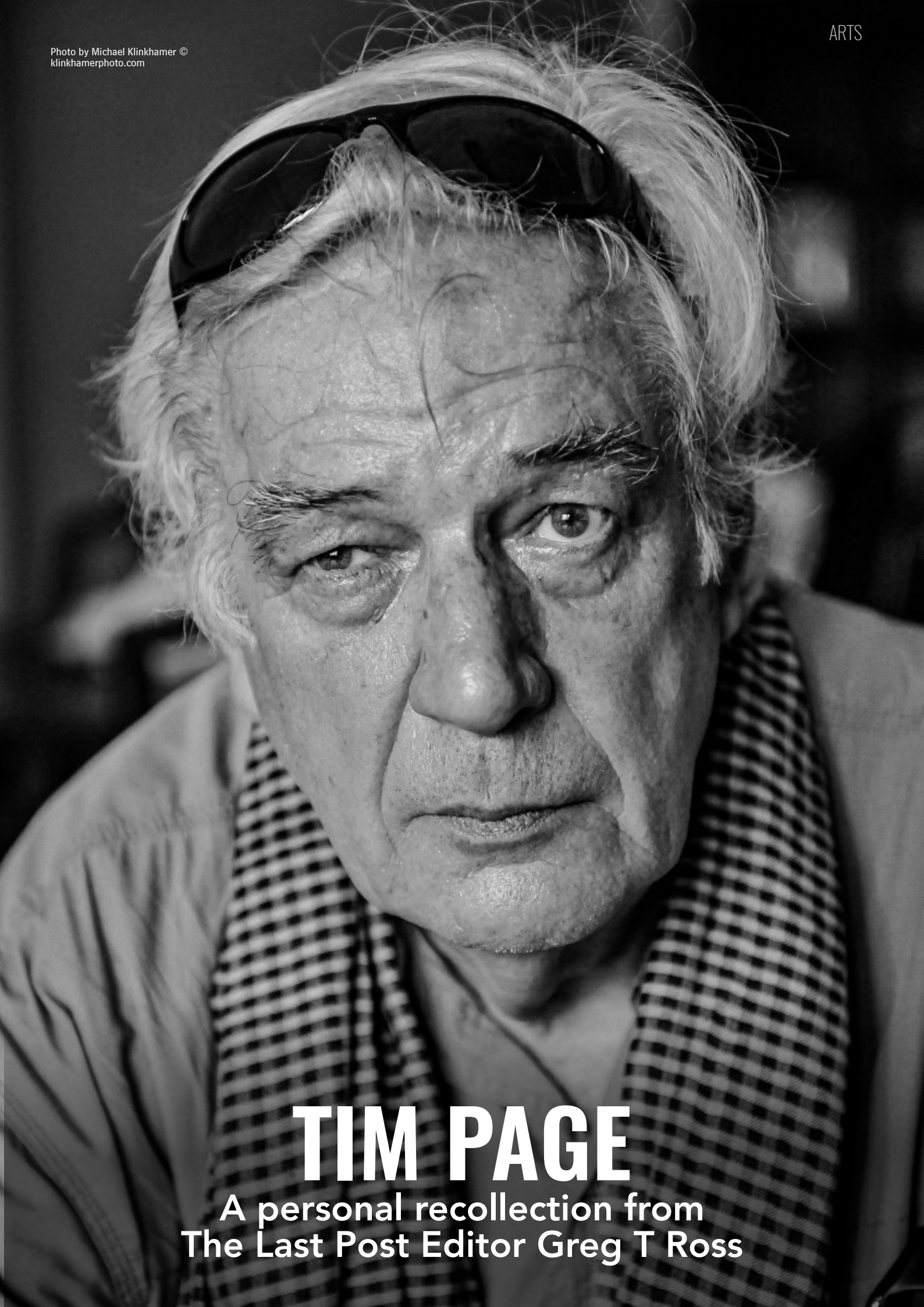

Photo by Michael Klinkhamer ©
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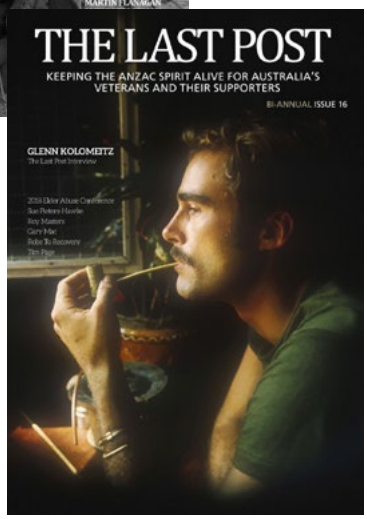
TIM PAGE

A personal recollection from The Last Post Editor Greg T Ross

It was the tail-end of 2011, or early 2012. The Last Post had only just emerged from the womb. We already had two editions under the belt and ready to go for our third. People I was chasing for an interview. Back then it was a potpourri of talent from a wide range of classifications.



This was back when we had an office in CBD, Adelaide. I still remember the conversation. My first with Marianne (Mau) and Tim.

Tim and I spoke for some time and I felt privileged for the allocation. He agreed to an interview with the then fledgling TLP. Like with a lot of those that came to know Tim, he gave himself, aware of his place in history but never a prat about it. We spoke, that first time, like friends. Soon he would become one. A loving friend.

Over the following years, we featured Tim many times. On the cover, an interview and in feature stories. His experience and knowledge of the Asian wars and American counter-culture was a goldmine for a publisher who wanted quality in his publication.

We always promised to catch up. That would not happen for some time. But it came to be. 2019. Or 2020.

In the meantime, I had moved back to NSW and on one occasion, had some time to spare.

I drove up the coast to Fernmount, on the outskirts of Bellingen. On the dirt road that led to the property I passed Mau. We pulled up and chatted. She told me 'His Pagesty' was at home and looking forward to seeing me.

I got lost that first visit. That's just me and not surprising to anyone that knows me. But, in the end, I found the property. A narrow dirt track that led to a beautiful, sprawling paddock with a gatehouse and two houses and a dam and gardens. The properties borders were defined by forest. There was Tim. "Hello Mr. Ross", was his greeting.

Over the following years, Tim, Mau, her sister Annette and I became good friends. After the first visit, Mau reassured Tim with the words, "he's one of us".

And so I was. And still am. Despite Tim's death. And Annette's too.

The spirit lives on.

The bohemia of the property and those on it created a relaxed, loving atmosphere. Impromptu parties and friends. Sometimes going until the small hours.

On one night, Tim and I were alone. We stayed up until 2.30am, talking about Van Morrison, Bobby Kennedy, Ohio, Jim Morrison. And, of course, Vietnam. It was the best interview never recorded.

Tim was gonzo. But he was more than that. He was a loving, inclusive friend. One night, at a party, he laughed at the pink tee shirt I was wearing. I laughed too.

We would often cook together when I visited. A vegetarian meal for Mau and Annette and other stuff for Tim and I. We chopped wood together and shopped together and had our first Covid vaccine shot together. On times I would fly back to Sydney, Tim would take me to the airport and we kissed goodbye. There was no shit with Tim. "Young Gregory", he called me.

On my visits, during beautiful afternoons, Tim, Mau, Annette and I would open the bar with martinis. A culture I brought to Fernmount.

How do I miss him? I still don't know yet. I miss our no-bullshit chats, that's for sure. I even miss helping to dress him when he was injured and he would chastise me for not doing it right. I think I understood him.

Great photographer. Great recorder of human history. Great friend. He was all of these things and more. He was more than gonzo. He was a great, like-minded human.

I'll be back at Fernmount in December to remember Tim. I'll make a martini for him and damn it.

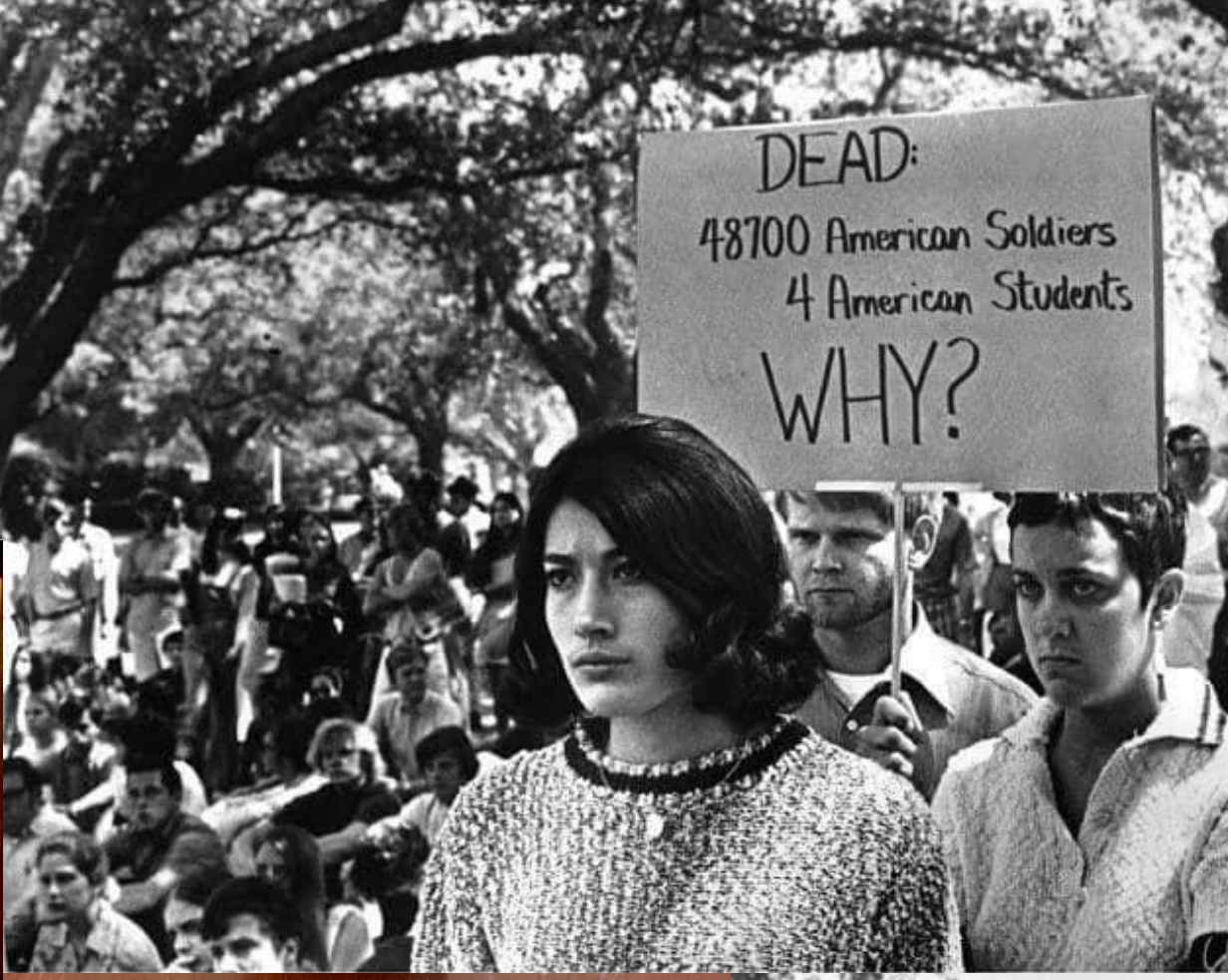
The last time we spent together was at the hospital at Coffs. I kissed him goodbye and told him I loved him.

Still do.

Greg T Ross


ANY GOOD WAR PICTURE IS AN ANTI-WAR FRAME - TIM PAGE
SAIGON
60
75
VIET NAM

"GREAT PHOTOGRAPHER. GREAT RECORDER OF HUMAN HISTORY. GREAT FRIEND. HE WAS ALL OF THESE THINGS AND MORE. HE WAS MORE THAN GONZO. HE WAS A GREAT, LIKE-MINDED HUMAN."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48700 American Soldiers
4 American Students
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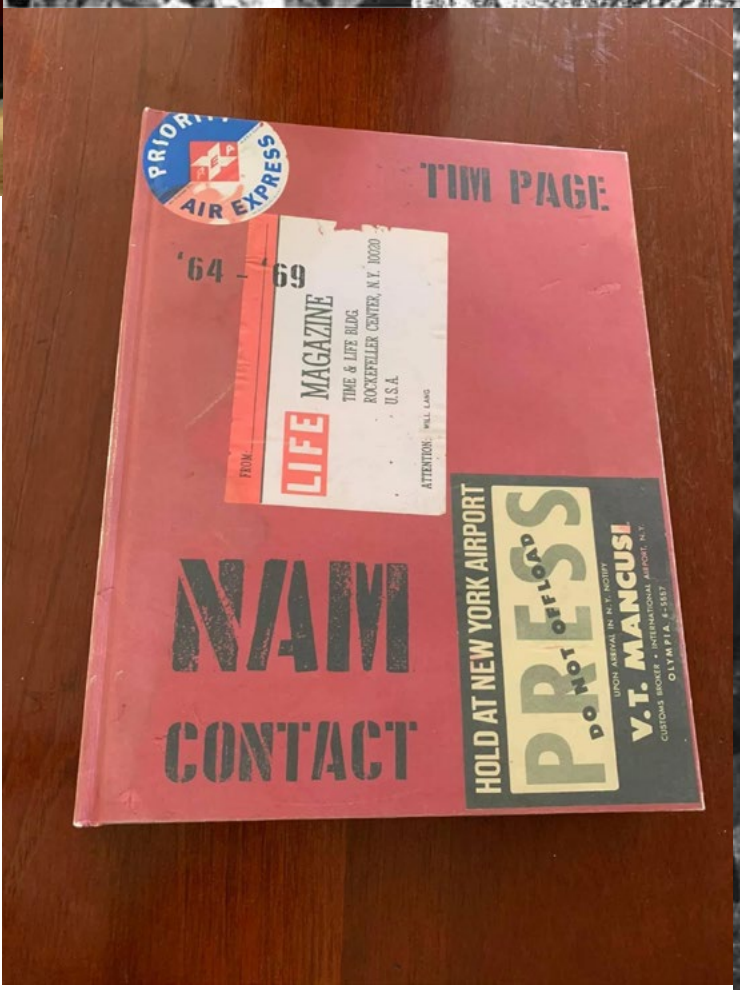
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Australians & Hollywood is a Canberra-exclusive exhibition celebrating iconic moments in contemporary Australian film and the people and stories that brought them to life.

ELVIS IS IN THE BUILDING

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Highlights include spectacular costumes from ELVIS, Moulin Rouge! and The Sapphires; props from The Power of the Dog and ELVIS; customised steering wheels from Mad Max: Fury Road; Baz Luhrmann and Catherine Martin's art concept books for Romeo + Juliet; the clapperboard from Dune and much, much more.

Bring your smartphone to access Spotlight, our free digital exhibition companion experience, and collect bonus exhibition content.

NFSA

National Film and Sound Archive of Australia
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Australians & Hollywood Exhibition
Open daily from 10.00am to 4.00pm

Book Tickets: **nfsa.gov.au/hollywood**

PODCASTS: **www.thelastpostmagazine.com/tlp-interviews**

Greg chats with National Film and Sound Archive's Tara Marynowsky, lead curator for the Australians & Hollywood Exhibition.

Greg T Ross: So, where is the Australians in Hollywood exhibition on Tara?

Tara Marynowsky - Curator NFSA: It's on at the National Film and Sound Archive at our Acton headquarters, McCoy Circuit, Canberra. It's running until early 2024.

GTR: What does the exhibition contain, Tara? What? What's in this exhibition?

TM: So it's very much, from the 1970s onwards. Not a comprehensive survey, but a survey of thoughts about the Australian film industry and our success here in Australia and overseas 'cause we like to think about our global success a lot. But the materials in the exhibition are primarily from our collection, the National Film and Sound Archives collection that we've been building since 1984. Also, some special loans from our, we call them the Hollywood Friends in the show. So people like George Miller and the likes who have loaned special things for the exhibition.

GTR: Okay, wonderful. You mentioned of course, primarily from the seventies onwards, this signified a rebirth for Australian filmmaking and it's presentation to Australians and overseas audience. Coincidental or not, was a decision made to feature from the seventies onwards?

TM: Oh definitely. Yeah. I think it was really important to start in the seventies around the Mad Max and the Ozploitation era because that was a really great period for people just getting stuck into filmmaking and not less about the rules and regulations and just getting in there and having a go. So really symbolizes what the show's all about, is just getting into the storytelling and the craft and not feeling pressured. I guess the funding bodies weren't such a big deal then. So it's bit more of a time for exploration.

GTR: Indeed. It was seen by many to be new wave almost. So when you look at this and you look at Australian significance in Hollywood and overseas, what's the importance of these films and these people that you are featuring? Did they make an impact and how did that affect our culture?

TM: Yeah, definitely. One of the important factors in the show that a lot of content that you may not realize has an Australian behind the scenes working to create some of the most famous, most Hollywood films that you've seen. So films like Dancers with Wolves was filmed by an Australian cinematographer who won an award for that, an Oscar. So yeah, I guess it's about reestablishing that a lot of the Hollywood films we do go and see since early on are very much Australian stories in some ways too. So yeah, there's a lot of that within the exhibition. But then you've also got your really famous spaces like you take Cate Blanchett and Nicole Kidman who have really defined and created pathways for younger, inspired new actors and crafts women and men to join in and follow their dreams.

GTR: Yes, they were effectively front of shop and the back of shop is the people like the Dancers with Wolves cinematographer. And many others, of course.

TM: Yeah, definitely. So I love all that, knowing that all the films I didn't realize, they're almost quite Australian.

GTR: So how important is it for Australians to see this exhibition from a cultural point of view?

TM: Oh, well. Very important because I was a curator. I think for me it was really about highlighting all of these incredible creatives as not just our celebrities, but also our artists. So there's a lot of people in exhibition who have come from arts backgrounds and use that skill to really surge ahead, like people doing special effects and editing. All the little behind the scenes roles that we often forget about are really highlights. So editors, cinematographers, production, designers, that kind of thing. So yeah, I think, my aim is to really show how much great talent there is and often we might gloss over it 'cause it's commercial. So yeah, putting it back into the front of our minds that there's some amazing artists in that industry.

GTR: And finally, Tara, I guess the NFSA is well known for presenting Australians with an important mirror for us to look at ourselves. How important is this section of the arts for our own identity? How accurate and important is that?

TM: Yeah, I think it's really important. I think it's very eclectic though, and when you do see the exhibition, you'll see how many we're big fans of kitch, the comedies like the Crocodile Dandies and the Muriel's Wedding. But we also have all those folklore stories like the Kelly Gang films, and one of the really important aspects of the exhibition is our first nation storytelling section. So it's a real focus on people at Warwick Thornton and Rachel Perkins who have just really changed the stage for our indigenous voices to shine through. So I think that's a really important aspect as well, to clarify that it's Australians and Hollywood, that it's almost like dynamic relationship we might have, but also that our stories are really strong and we make them often on home soil, even the Baz Luhrmann films that he makes in Australia. So it's about celebrating the way we collaborate and in the camaraderie behind that as well.

GTR: Yes. Very much a reflection of Australian society in so many ways. Even the parts we may not want to look at, but that's great.

TM: Yes. There's darkness and lightness, as well. ■

Baz Luhrmann and Catherine Martin at The Met Gala, New York, May 2022. Photo: Alamy.

BAZ LUHRMANN'S ELVIS: COSTUMES AT THE NFSA

BY JENNY GALL

NFSA curator Jenny Gall does a deep dive into costume designer Catherine Martin's epic undertaking for Baz Luhrmann's ELVIS (2022).

DESIGNING ELVIS

Catherine Martin's favourite phrase when working on a new movie is 'try harder'. It's used encouragingly for her team in the workroom and also to motivate herself when she believes that things can be done better. Good enough is not good enough for the 4-time Oscar-winning Australian creative. Nowhere is this dedication to meticulous detail more evident than in Baz Luhrmann's 2022 film ELVIS.

ELVIS is the biggest creative venture for Bazmark to date. Martin and her colleagues had to assemble over 9,000 individual extras outfits encompassing shoes, underwear, socks, pants and jackets for the large concert scenes – all laid out in advance on a giant Warner Bros sound stage on the Gold Coast. There were 90 costumes for Elvis alone.

The production had two different workshops – one devoted to the background cast and one for the main cast. The team worked around the clock – especially on days featuring crowds of extras – to finish, prepare and dress the cast with the appropriate costumes. To comply with COVID health procedures, there needed to be one-third more clothes in stock to allow for disinfecting worn garments at mass fittings of extras.

In making a biopic about the legendary King of Rock'n'Roll, it was imperative to capture Elvis' persona at different ages and during the eras in which he lived. This meant adapting authentic clothing designs to suit the storyline, rather than creating mere reproductions of period costumes which could risk looking like the outfits of a low-budget Elvis impersonator. As Catherine Martin told The Curb, ELVIS provides lots of visual touchstones that connect the audience with familiar images of the star to tell his story, rather than attempting a strict chronological biography.

'If you have good costumes, you should be able to read more into it than just that person is wearing a red shirt,' Martin says. 'You should be able to feel who the person is and where you are'. Her focus is on integrating what the director and actor are creating into costume choices: 'I think actors are like flowers and the clothes are the vase'.

"GOOD ENOUGH IS NOT GOOD ENOUGH FOR THE 4-TIME OSCAR-WINNING AUSTRALIAN CREATIVE. NOWHERE IS THIS DEDICATION TO METICULOUS DETAIL MORE EVIDENT THAN IN BAZ LUHRMANN'S 2022 FILM ELVIS."

MEXICAN SUNDIAL JUMPSUIT

Of the ELVIS costumes in the NFSA collection, the Mexican Sundial, or Aztec, jumpsuit best embodies the mythical aura of Elvis the King. Designed by Gene Doucette, this was the suit that Elvis wore during the filming of the 1977 TV special Elvis in Concert as well as in his last concert (in Indianapolis, 1977), which concludes the film. The suit features the Aztec sundial, symbolising the eternal power of the Sun God. The decoration on the legs is a tribute to the New York Chrysler Building – a more contemporary icon representing progress and striving upward for the stars, as Elvis did.

Elvis' costumes define the trajectory of the narrative. To make every costume resonate with a chapter in the storyline, Catherine Martin subtly modified the iconic looks to better suit lead actor Austin Butler's physique and tweaked the timeline for when they appeared in the film. Martin and Luhrmann were striving to portray the soul of Elvis' life story and to celebrate the humanity of the man – both his good and bad traits. The arc of Elvis' life is one of gradual mental and physical decline. As Martin explained to ScreenHub, 'We go from purity to more colour and crazier embroidery, underlying that spiral'.

ABOVE: Austin Butler as Elvis Presley in the film ELVIS (Baz Luhrmann, 2022). Credit: Warner Bros.

RIGHT: The 'Sundial' suit, worn by Austin Butler in the film ELVIS (Baz Luhrmann, 2022). NFSA title: 1687803.

OPPOSITE PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP:

Austin Butler as Elvis Presley in ELVIS (Baz Luhrmann, 2022).

Detail from jacket and shirt worn by David Wenham in ELVIS (Baz Lurhmann, 2022). NFSA title: 1687710.

Pink and black jacket worn by Austin Butler in ELVIS (Baz Luhrmann, 2022). NFSA title: 1687717.

PINK LOUISIANA HAYRIDE SUIT

For the crucial scene in the movie when Elvis makes his debut on the Hayride stage in Louisiana, he wears a pink, light woollen suit jacket with black accents on the shoulders, black piping on the jacket edge, cuffs and collar, and black buttons on the front of the jacket and cuff of each sleeve.

He also wears pink, light woollen trousers with a pink-and-black narrow snakeskin belt with brass buckle, and a black lace, short-sleeved button-up shirt. The outfit is anchored by a pair of 2-tone brogues and pink-and-black argyle-pattern socks. Fluidity, matched with the striking pink fabric, is the key characteristic of this outfit.

In conservative society during the 1950s, the colour pink when worn by a man could be interpreted as effeminate. But with the addition of driving rock'n'roll music and writhing dance moves on stage, the visual message was provocatively masculine. Here is a man who is bending gender roles, singing songs strongly influenced by Black music and manipulating expectations with his erotic dance moves to create an emotionally charged, unforgettable performance. The legend of Elvis is born.

GREEN FROG 'NUDIE SUIT'

Hank Snow, played by David Wenham, required a costume that would define him as the king of the Hayride music scene and feature the eye-catching glitter and appliqué that Elvis would adopt and take to new heights in decorating his outfits throughout his rise to fame. The frog on the 'Nudie Suit' embodies these ideas spectacularly.

The Nudie Suit is named after its creator, Nuta Kotlyarenko, also known as Nudie Cohn. Nudie was born in Kiev, Ukraine in 1902 and moved to the USA to escape tsarist Russia

Mixing folk themes, vibrant contrasting colour schemes and a form-fitting cut, the Nudie Suit plays with masculine and feminine decorative ideals – a style trait Elvis loved to exploit in his clothing.

The yellow shirt was made by Rockmount Range Wear and has embroidered details featuring a wagon and cactus motifs customised with diamantes by the ELVIS costume workroom. A pink scarf is tied at the collar.

The suit is a 2-piece green woollen Western-style ensemble with shawl collar, frog and waterlily motif in appliqué with hand-painted details and bejewelled with multi-coloured diamantes.The black belt has a silver-and-yellow Western buckle and a fine pair of cowboy boots complete the outfit.

BLUE WHEAT JUMPSUIT

The Blue Wheat jumpsuit is an example of the costume Elvis made famous as his signature look throughout his reign at the Las Vegas International Hotel. In real life, he performed in this jumpsuit and cape at Madison Square Garden in June 1972. In the movie, it is worn in the International Hotel showroom 'You're fired' scene, when Elvis lampoons Colonel Tom Parker (played by Tom Hanks) on stage.

It is a regal garment featuring the famous Napoleon Collar (a consistent stylistic feature of the jumpsuits) and a gold-lined cape which was used to great effect to accentuate the visual impact of his dance moves and underline his status as the King.

The costume has several parts: a pale-blue jumpsuit with high collar, deep v-neck and wide flared trousers featuring sapphires and gold filigree wheat embellishments across the torso, back, arms and sides of the legs; a white wheat leather belt with pale blue leather squares and gold square studs and hanging chain; a pale blue cape embellished with small sapphires; and a gold satin scarf.

To ensure that the costume accentuated Austin Butler's height, Martin and her team adjusted details from the original garment – the height of the collar, the position of the pocket and the length of the embroidered details.

All the jumpsuits for the movie were manufactured by the company that made Elvis' real costumes from this era: B&K Enterprises in Charlestown, Indiana who hold the rights to all of Bill Belew's original jumpsuit designs. A graduate of the Parsons School of Design in New York, Belew designed Elvis Presley's costumes and personal wardrobe from 1968 until his death in 1977. Martin commissioned 34 jumpsuits made by Kim and Butch Polston's team and 10 of these made the final cut in the film.

The jumpsuit as a style has passed into the canon of majestic stage wear and is continually reinterpreted by contemporary pop stars such as Miley Cyrus.

YOUNG ELVIS

'It was incredibly important for my team and I to become familiar with Elvis's Southern experience … to tap into the spirit of the location', Martin told Vogue. The first of these locations to appear in the film is Shake Rag, the Black neighbourhood in Tupelo, where the Presleys lived when Elvis was a boy.

The costume worn by Australian actor Chaydon Jay as the young Elvis references the statue in Tupelo of Elvis as a 13-year-old boy. The costume comprises faded dungarees, an old shirt and a homemade lightning bolt insignia worn around his neck – the

THIS PAGE, FROM TOP:

Blue jumpsuit, cape and belt worn by Austin Butler in ELVIS (Baz Luhrmann, 2022). NFSA title: 1687693.

Belt (left), including detail of dragon (right), worn by Austin Butler with the Chinese Dragon jumpsuit in ELVIS (Baz Luhrmann, 2022). NFSA title: 1691979.

Chaydon Jay as young Elvis Presley in ELVIS (Baz Luhrmann, 2022) Credit: Warner Bros.

OPPOSITE PAGE, FROM TOP:

Coat and blouse worn by Olivia DeJonge in the film ELVIS (Baz Luhrmann, 2022). NFSA title: 1688028.

Wedding dress and veil worn by Olivia DeJonge in the film ELVIS (Baz Luhrmann, 2022). NFSA title: 1688025.

sign of Captain Marvel Jr, Elvis's favourite cartoon character and one of the powerful symbols that recurs throughout the film as the star strives to reach his private Rock of Eternity.

And it is the star's quest for fame and immortality that is the key to Luhrmann's interpretation of Elvis, as he told ABC Arts: 'We could call him the original superhero. He is born of dust.'

The clothing is typical of poor working-class boys of the 1940s and its simplicity contrasts strikingly with Elvis' later love of colour and embellishment in his clothing as the King.

PRISCILLA WEDDING DRESS

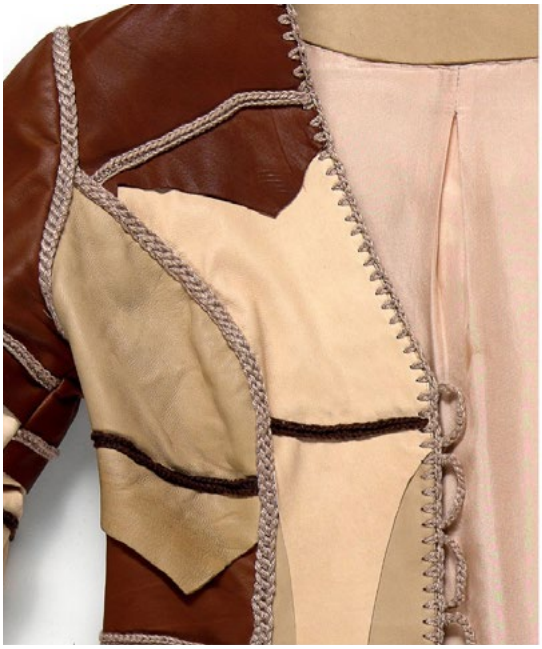
A style icon in her own right, the outfits of Priscilla Presley (played by Olivia DeJonge) tell the story of a woman who moves from an adoring teenager and loyal wife to establish a life of her own after her divorce from Elvis. Martin renewed her collaboration with Miuccia Prada (which dates from the suit designed for Leonardo DiCaprio in Romeo + Juliet, 1996) and commissioned outfits from the Prada archive for Priscilla's early life with Elvis.

Priscilla's wedding dress, however, was reproduced by the costume team in Australia as a labour of love, with meticulous stitching involving hundreds of tiny pearl beads on the sheer sleeves and bodice of the 1960s gown. Priscilla Presley told British Vogue about her original dress, which was purchased from the department store Westwood and faithfully recreated for the film. 'It was white, with long lace sleeves and pearl embellishments. It wasn't extravagant, it wasn't extreme — it was simple and to me, beautiful.'

The floor-length silk chiffon wedding dress has a mid-length train with an elaborate beaded neckline and sleeves covered with seed pearls. A white rhinestone tiara and 3-inch layered veil crowns the outfit. While the bridal scene features fleetingly in the film, the outfits of Elvis and Priscilla are so ingrained in collective memory that the small scene stands out, and the wedding outfit becomes a symbol of innocence that will transform into disillusionment over the film's narrative.

DIVORCE COSTUME

The outfit that perhaps best epitomises the skill and dedication of the Australian team in the ELVIS costume department is the jacket and leather trousers worn by Priscilla in the Las Vegas tarmac scene, when she and Elvis are exchanging custody of their daughter, Lisa Marie, and Priscilla pleads with Elvis to address his addictions and enter rehab.



The costume comprises a mid-calf leather coat, camel-coloured leather boot-cut trousers, cream sheer lace high-neck sleeveless top and a tan leather satchel with stitching detail and real fox-fur feature. The coat needed to be created within a 2-day turnaround in the workroom. The team worked together to learn the skills necessary to piece together multiple hides and stitch decorative crocheted defining bands along the edges of the garment.

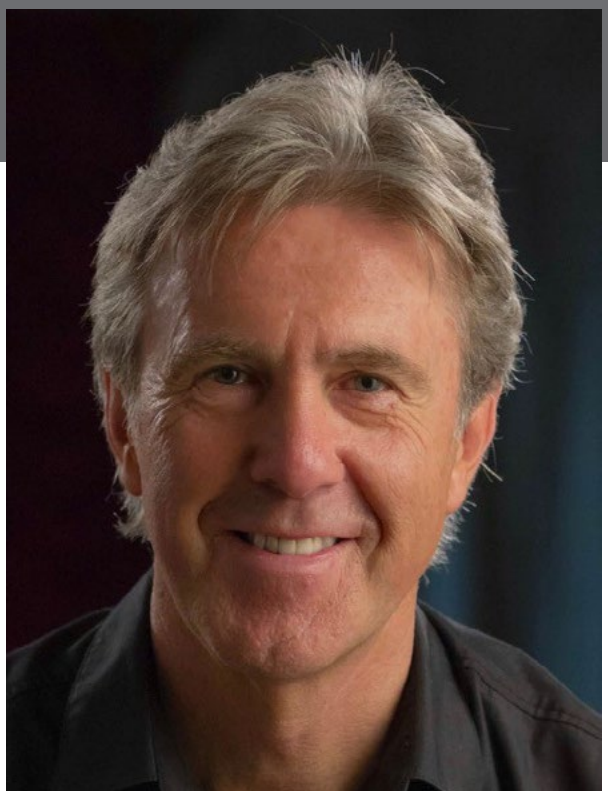
The re-creation of the outfit was based on the ensemble Priscilla wore to the divorce court in 1973, with the trousers contrasting with the previously characteristic skirts and mini dresses to represent a woman taking control and moving ahead with her life.

LEGACY

When asked about providing for the legacy of her costume designs, Catherine Martin is adamant that 'it is important that work made in Australia stays in Australia'.

The NFSA is proud to be custodians of the Bazmark archive so that future generations might revel in the exceptional talent and skill of Catherine Martin and Baz Luhrmann's shared artistic vision. ■

A selection of costumes and props from ELVIS are on display at the NFSA as part of the Australians & Hollywood exhibition.
nfsa.gov.au/australians-hollywood-exhibition-nfsa



Glenn Robbins

Glenn Robbins is a Melbourne-based comedian, actor and writer. He is famous for his work on The Comedy Company, Full Frontal, The Panel and for his characters Russell Coight, Kel Knight and Wayne Wheeler.

Greg T Ross: Good morning to you, Glenn Robbins and welcome to The Last Post Magazine. How are things there in Melbourne?

Glenn Robbins: Well, like everywhere in Australia, we've had our fair share of rain. Certainly not as much as the east coast, but today is beautiful and it's the springtime weather that they probably wanted for the Melbourne Cup. They didn't get it, but we're getting it today and it's absolutely beautiful.

GTR: Isn't that magnificent? Just the type of a weather, I guess, for Russell Coight to get out and show his wares?

GR: Well, absolutely. Russell's a man of the world. He does many things. He is well prepared for any sort of climate issues. So I think he's pretty proud of the way he handles himself. So bring it on, he says, but just make sure you've got your water rations ready because it's a cruel beast, the outback, and he's found out the hard way.

GTR: Yeah, that's right. We'll actually, I do recall a video of yours where you were advising people to pull over for a power nap and do just what these people in this car were doing and I think they were making love.

GR: Well, it's a win both ways. Yeah, it's a win win, really so yeah, it's good advice, I reckon.

GTR: And that's not a power nap, that's something else, powers something else.

GR: Yeah. Well maybe you have a power nap afterwards. I know I do.

GTR: Cheers. Glenn, look, we'll go into you starting off in your career in a minute, but while we're talking about Russell, where did that character come from, Glenn? Was that your version of Steve Irwin or what happened there?

GR: It actually was created by Tom Gleisner back in The Late Show days. He did a sketch about a character who was an amalgamation of a number of different outback adventurers that we have in Australia. And he then wanted to turn it into a television show and he very kindly approached me and we renamed him and developed him a little bit further. And so, it's Tom Gleisner's creation and I brought my hand to it with much pride, and the outcome is on the screen.

GTR: Yeah. Well it's fantastic. And then you ended up working with Tom again in The Panel. But with Russell, look, this is actually a favorite character of many people. I know that my lady and I, Claire, were up in Cygnet Bay oyster farm up in the Dampier Peninsula recently, and the Pindan, the red dirt, I had a pair of shorts on and a hat on and Claire said that I reminded her of Russell Coight. I don't know if that was a compliment or not.

GR: Probably not. You were probably doing something inappropriate or probably breaking something or thinking that you were the best handyman in the world and it just backfired on you. We all think we're pretty good at things, but when we're not, and that's why people like the character so much, I think.

GTR: Yes, they can see a bit of themselves in it.

GR: Yeah, that's right.

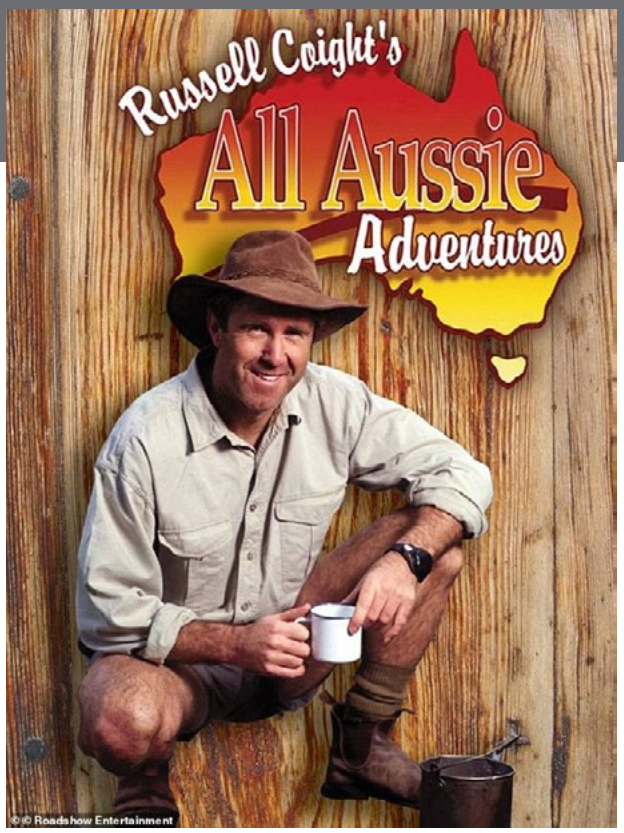
GTR: I am known for being clumsy. Glenn, at what age did you realize the power of being able to make people laugh or at least inherit characters that would do that?

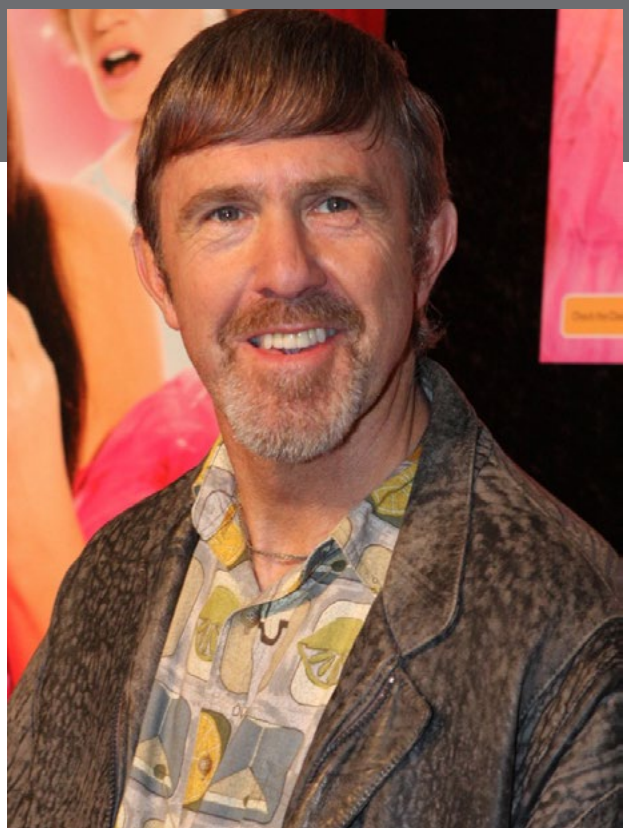
GR: That's a good question. Probably at school, at primary school, I think I worked out that I could make people laugh. It must have been about grade three or something where we had to roll up a piece of paper and look through it and tell the class what you could see. And I was so good at it, they had to take the roll of paper off me and give someone else a turn because I wouldn't stop. So I think I have a pretty vivid imagination. And I was educated pretty early on in stage comedy by my mother. We used to go along and see the likes of Barry Humphreys and that sort of thing. And I had two brothers that were very funny. So I think it's come through my family, totally.

GTR: Yeah. And thank your mother for taking you along to see such great performances.

GR: Oh yes, yeah.

GTR: Jeez. That's gold. Characters, well I suppose it would be remiss not to mention Uncle Arthur. I guess you'd come through The 11th Hour, I think that was when I first saw you in Melbourne and then Uncle Arthur, I think a couple of years after that. Where did you get Uncle Arthur from?





Glenn Robbins' much-loved iconic Australian characters Russell Coight and Kel Knight.

PODCASTS: **www.thelastpostmagazine.com/tlp-interviews**

GR: Well, again, that was directly from my mother taking me to see Humphreys, and Humphreys would say, "Write what you know." And I just thought, well, the one thing I do know is my father, so I'll do an impression of my father and hopefully people relate to it. So I went to Dad's cupboard and pulled out an old suit and an old pair of glasses and made up a hearing aid because my dad was deaf. Not that I wanted to portray deaf people in a negative way. He just happened to be deaf.

GTR: It was part of the character.

GR: The character, that's right. And it went from there. So I think Uncle Arthur was pretty early on in my character. So yeah, write what you know. And people really related to it, so I thought, okay, well that's a good lesson for life really. The little things that you only think you have been through or you experience or you see in people, don't be surprised if other people see the same thing. So yeah, that's basically the genesis of it.

GTR: Yeah, yeah, that's interesting too. And I guess then that philosophy, Glenn, correct me if I'm wrong, would have carried over to Kel Knight and Wayne Wheeler, perhaps.

GR: Yeah, that was an interesting one because I grew up not far from Calder. I wasn't into cars at all, but my brother was, so I was kind of around it as a kid. And Wayne and Robin, I saw them out one night and they said, "Oh, we've written this series with you in mind." And they said, "It's all about drag racing." And immediately I went, "Oh, there's a world that I find intriguing." So I thought, well, I'd like to do that, but with the character, I just let the dialogue do the work in that, because I just wanted to make him a good family man who loved what he did and loved his family, and had some compromises along the way. I didn't think about it too much comedically. I didn't try to stereotype him.

GTR: And Kel, I mean Kel Knight, for heaven's sake, what a brilliant portrayal.

GR: Yeah, well that sort of gently evolved through Fast Forward. I used to do The Comedy Company, then I did Fast Forward.

GTR: That's right.

GR: And I was doing some characters with Michael Veitch, and then the girls were doing a sketch after Fast Forward. I think it was called Something Stupid. And they said, "Can we get you to play that character as Kath's boyfriend?" And then of course it started out as a sketch character, but it evolved to a full blown character when the girls obviously wrote the scripts for the series. So I can take a little bit of credit, but not total credit for Kel. Whereas the other ones I can take probably a bit more credit. Yeah.

GTR: But in the end it's the portrayal. And I guess perhaps, again, correct me if I'm wrong, but in your early days you were performing at clubs, venues around Sydney and Melbourne. Had you any characters there or you were just on as yourself?

GR: I started out doing character. Standup was much more cabaret when I started. So, going along to a comedy night, you would often see a lot of characters, you would see magic. You would see-

GTR: Los Trios Ringbarkus.

GR: Yes, exactly. Exactly. But now it's a little more uncommon. So I didn't start out doing standup, I started out doing Uncle Arthur and many of the characters that I ended up doing on The Comedy Company, I did on stage, which was a great breeding ground, learning area for me. But then eventually they said, "We'd like you to start to MC." And then I had to learn to be myself on stage, which I never really wanted to be a solo standup and do my own show on stage or anything. I just was happy doing spots and doing bits and pieces here and there. But I never aspired to have a solo show at a comedy festival or anything like that.

"...THAT'S THE JOB OF COMEDY REALLY, WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT IT, IS TO POINT THINGS OUT AND MAKE PEOPLE SEE THINGS IN A DIFFERENT LIGHT AND MAYBE LAUGH AT THEM, CERTAINLY LIGHTEN THINGS UP. YOU'VE GOT TO BREAK THAT TENSION. THAT'S WHAT THE JOB OF COMEDY IS, TO BREAK THAT TENSION."

GTR: No, it was quite incredible, that period too, Glenn, the early eighties up until say '87, '88 when it was all on TV anyhow. But those clubs around Melbourne particularly, and Sydney I guess too, there was a renaissance of comedy in the country, I thought.

GR: Well, yeah, I mean, I'm not an expert. But yeah, I think there was a period and it's such a long period for me that I've been involved in it. But when I first started, television comedy didn't really exist. The only thing you could do when I first started was you could maybe get a spot on Hey Hey It's Saturday or The Ray Martin Show, and that was it. Done, dusted, nowhere else to go. My timelines are all over the place, but I think The Big Gig came along. That was a bit of a bridge. And then there was some other shows that followed. And then I guess the bigger one was The Comedy Company. That went into prime time, it was mainstream, it was commercial, it was Sunday night. It really helped. I like to think that it helped a lot of people get shows up in the world of sketch comedy. Not that sketch comedy didn't exist before Comedy Company, but it certainly did push it right into networks trusting to take on board.

GTR: Yeah, very well said. Yeah, very well said, because I mean, The 11th Hour, when was that? '85 or something. But I was about to say, because so overwhelming, was the number of quality comedians or appearing around Melbourne particularly, that the television networks really did latch onto that too, I think, Glenn.

GR: Yeah, it's a trust game. I mean, television is a business, so therefore they don't want to put money into things that don't pay the bills. But yeah, I think that they started to trust certain groups of people along the lines of Ian McFadyen and Steve Vizard, then the Working Dog guys. So there was a number of different areas that started to really deliver. So it was exciting and nothing better than working with like-minded people, and it was such a lucky bit. I think it's lacking slightly now. I'd love to see a bit more make believe, I'd love to see more characters. And I think we do see a lot of standups who are wonderful. We have a rich stable of standup comedians, best in the world I reckon. But it would be lovely to see some more character stuff. You see little bits and pieces of people doing it. But I think we've got room for both.

GTR: Yeah, yeah. Well said. Well said, actually, because this is my feelings, Glenn, and I'd like to hear your view. But in relation to wanting to see a few more characters, do you think comedy has become too serious at the moment?

GR: Well-

GTR: It may sound a strange thing to say.

GR: Yeah, I did. I think maybe there's some apprehension because there's been some issues that people step out of line and they will be publicly shamed online. I don't know. I'm not out there at the moment. I'm not really doing as much as I used to. I know there's some trepidation, and I know that when you do live television now, you have to be very careful. You always had to be a little bit careful, but it seems now that people might be a little bit more self aware. I think people are still doing great work. And I still think that Australian comedy is in a very healthy situation, and new people are coming through. We live in a serious time. I always maintain that even when jokes take a fine line in appropriateness, if it's a good joke, it's a good joke. And I forgive something maybe that crosses the line if it's a good joke. I don't forgive something that crosses the line and is a bad joke. It crosses the line for the sake of being controversial. So it's a really fine line.

And that's the job of comedy really, when you think about it, is to point things out and make people see things in a different light and maybe laugh at them, certainly lighten things up. You've got to break that tension. That's what the job of comedy is, to break that tension.

GTR: Yeah, well said. Well said. And look, in relation to characters, comedy and life, it's a reflection of. Is it healthy to have characters in your own life too? I mean, with your intimate partners or friends, you might have a character that allows you to say things perhaps that you wouldn't say if you were speaking as yourself, perhaps.

GR: Well, there's no doubt that if you look into it, there's all different schools of psychology, but people say to me, "How do you act?" And I say, we all act, we all take on roles. If you walk into your job, you're a certain role. You walk into your front door, you play a certain role. They're all versions of you, but they are certain sides of you, so exactly right. You develop ways to deal with the world and the problems around you through certain character traits or habits. And so yeah, we're all like that and we do it unconsciously. And sometimes you have to do it consciously. Sometimes you have to go, okay, I need to be the diplomat right now, because I can see trouble a-brewing, and you take on that sort of psyche, and you go, okay, I need to be the adult in the room now. So it is all role playing, and we all do it.

GTR: It's interesting. Does Russell Coight ever work his way into your real life?

GR: Oh yeah, absolutely. I mean, I'm not the world's best handyman, and to play that character, it wasn't that hard, because he made all the mistakes that I would make. And I know I'm in trouble when I turn into Russell when I try to show off doing something. And the moment I do that, I take my eye off the ball and I end up messing it up. And I do things all the time. I go, oh God, I'm the real Russell. So yeah, absolutely. I don't do it intentionally. But that's the talent of the art, to be able to do it intentionally when the red light goes on.

GTR: Classic. And any chance of Russell coming back?

GR: Well, Tom and I sit down, we sat down a couple of years ago. I think we've done every joke we can do about a bushfire, or a car getting bogged, or blowing things up, or Russell getting bitten on the penis by some sort of animal in the outback. So probably not, but you never know. He might pop up somewhere. Hopefully he pops up.

GTR: Well, I'll tell you what, he's very popular. And we'd love to see you up at the Cygnet Bay oyster farm next April as Russell. You'd be warmly welcomed, I'm sure. Magnificent. That's just north of Broome. It's an incredible place.

GR: Oh yeah. It would be an incredible place.

GTR: So Glenn, thank you so much for your time and your insight.

GR: My pleasure, Greg. ■

Song for angels

Everybody sing
Unculo uthokozisa abadabukileyo
A message for peace, a message to follow
Held a party out here

At home in Montauk
Ran into Artie
We were due for a long talk

No chantin' politics
We're two folk hero kids
Bridgin' troubled waters is all we ever did
So we played on pocket combs
Bass from a washtub
Tom n Jerry foolery
Jammin' like a spark plug
Til light began to enter an' rain began to fall
Then I sang like an angel at the wonder of it all.

When the party ended I strummed my guitar
Back in the office with memorabilia
I remembered Zulu music
A club in Kenya, too
Wearin' 'Gumboots' on my brain
The way people wear shoes
Following instinct and creative flow
Singin' Mbaganga, street music of Soweto

Scorin' out a cry for the accordion to shadow
Unculo uthokozisa abadabukileyo

Graceland's now an ocean and three decades away
From Queens and peddlin' songs in the Brill Building hallway
Music heals me, my inspiration's pure
What troubles me, man?
The constant threat of war
The world's a shrinking place
Culture torn from race
So when light enters and rain begins to fall
Let me hear you sing at the wonder of it all.

Everybody sing
Unculo uthokozisa abadabukileyo
A message for peace
A message to follow.

ALISON JANE RICE

"Unculo uthokozisa abadabukileyo means: Singing makes all the sad people happy because it is the voice of happiness."

Original poem written by artist Alison Jane Rice in 1991. Ali was working in the music industry at that time as a freelance journalist/photographer for Miller Media in Bondi NSW. She gave it to US songwriter Paul Simon one night after his Aussie tour had ended as an inspired gift and to thank him and Art Garfunkel for the positive impact their music has had on our world. The Copyright still remains with Alison.

Re-written for The Last Post Summer edition 2022.

alisonjanerice.com

Revenge at Santa Monica Pier

I move through a Sunday swarm of eyes, past the metal arms of a giant octopus. A loud, posh voice cuts through the noise: 'Tourists are pleasure-seekers with one eye on the exchange rate. If you're a traveller you have a deeper, purer experience – a stronger connection to the place you've arrived in. It's not just about taking a holiday.'

Oh, somebody's been reading The Sheltering Sky – I chuckle to myself, almost turning to comment. Instead, I finish converting US to Kiwi and fork over five bucks for an ice cream.

I walk past a teenage African-American girl singing her heart out in a pink dress – with a soul for sale and a voice to make it happen … past a dreadlocked man frantically stroking an electric violin of swooping sounds below a live-action painting of seagulls – impressively stationary in a stiff breeze … past a pale, pudgy family who look like daylight vampires waiting to fly in the red and yellow baskets of the Ferris wheel … past a busy actor dressed as Heath Ledger's Joker, hustling selfies for cash … all the way down to the ocean-end of the pier, where you can buy bait & tackle and cast a line into the swell and suck of the waves.

I lick my cone, watching a busking silhouette carefully pick out the notes to 'Hotel California' – an audio jigsaw puzzle falling into place. Peering at the radiant silver ball hanging in the haze, I reckon I'm in pretty deep for five minutes. Yeah … suck on that, you travelling know-all.

JEREMY ROBERTS


PACIFIC
PARK

Dog Trumpet

Dog Trumpet is spearheaded by brothers Peter O'Doherty and Reg Mombassa, original members of iconic Aria award winning and Hall of Fame band Mental As Anything. The Mentals had a worldwide hit with Live it Up. Their songwriting contributions to the Mentals include Berserk Warriors, Egypt, Brain Brain, Apocalypso, Surf and Mull and Sex and Fun, Close Again and Psychedelic Peace Lamp.

Over the last thirty years as Dog Trumpet they have released seven critically acclaimed albums: Two Heads One Brain, Suitcase, Dog Trumpet, Antisocial Tendencies, River of Flowers, Medicated Spirits and their latest, released in 2020, 'Great South Road'.

Parallel to their music careers Reg is well known too for his idiosyncratic work for Mambo Graphics and as a fine artist. Peter is also a successful and much sought after painter. For over three decades the brothers have exhibited in Australia, New Zealand, Europe, USA and Asia.

Shadowland is Dog Trumpet's brand new album. A distinctive blending of psychedelia, folk and blues, the album probes the perils and absurdities of human existence, kicking off with the title track Shadowland, a nervous musing on digital over-surveillance; followed by Nina Simone, a song reflecting on romance and memory. F***ing Idiots points out the shameful idiocy of our addiction to war and militarism; The Ballad of Clayton Looby is an anti-establishment ode to a larrikin surfer. "Shadowland" is their eighth album and is released on the 4th November 2022 on Vinyl, CD and digital worldwide via Demon Music Group. New single "Nina Simone" out now.

10 SONGS

Gold

I don't have any of my vinyl records. And my twin brother and I had quite a collection. Singles, EP's, LP's, Double-albums. With the advent of CD's, I became less dedicated to the habit of vinyl. With the advent of streaming and downloading, I became less interested in CD's.

I was reminded of the importance of vinyl records this morning, whilst going through a clearing out process of unwanted stuff. I found I had a lot of that.

During the process, I came across a vinyl record that had been sent to me by an artist-musician friend. I had never played it because I don't have a record player. I went online to do that. I picked the album up, looked at it and placed it in the Vinnies pile. I took the pile downstairs to the garage.

The books, the CD's, I placed in the pile. Until I had only my friends vinyl album left in my hand. I decided to take myself back a few years and to go through the process of examining this record.

I removed the protective plastic wrapping. I removed the record from the sleeve and found a booklet of my friends beautiful paintings. And then, I took out the vinyl record. And looked at it and felt it and examined the grooves and the tracks. How wonderful. How bloody wonderful.

I repackaged the album and took it back upstairs. How could I give this away?

Too often, I believe, most of us are too caught up in the speed of life to ponder the small things, the beautiful things. The things that sometimes can really matter. The tactile, the art in everything that we discard because we feel we don't have room or time. This vinyl record was an example of that. The albums title is "Gold". How appropriate.

JACK P KELLERMAN

PEOPLE POWER IN ACTION

How important is the right to protest in a democracy? This is a burning question in many countries around the world at present. Protest Melbourne, a new free exhibition opening at the Old Treasury Building on 10 May, explores protests past and present to debate that question.

Melbourne has a long history of protest, dating back to the 1840s. Since then Melburnians have taken to the streets confidently and often. The first protests were about political rights, first for men, then for women, and shamefully much later, for First Nations people. Workers were also amongst the first protestors, and in 1856 Melbourne stonemasons first won the right to an 8 hour working day.

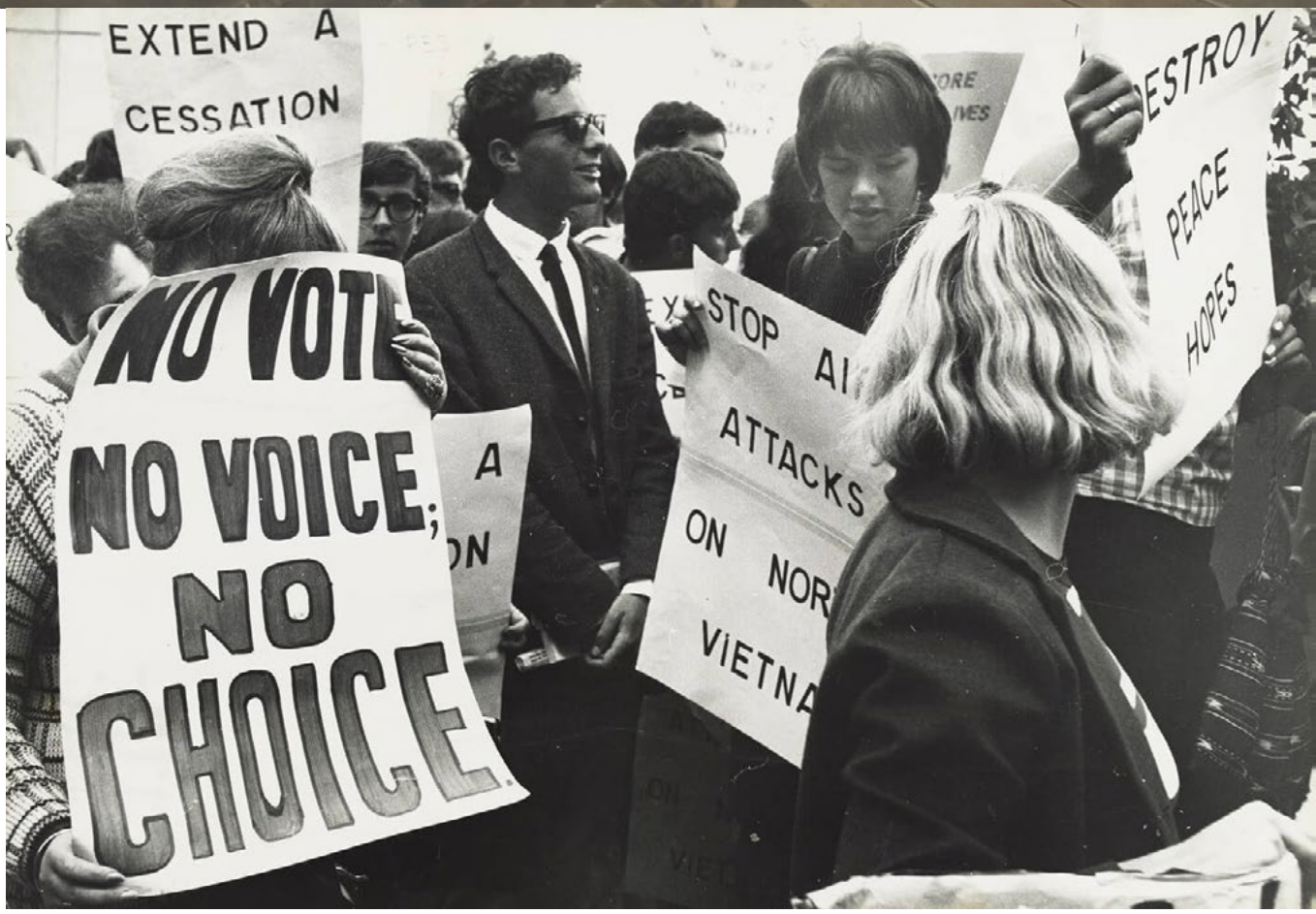
Over the years many groups have protested to demand an end to discrimination. Women's rights, First Nations groups, and the LGBTIQA+ community have all taken to the streets to demand equality. Other huge protests opposed Australia's involvement in conflict overseas, or the use of nuclear weapons. The Vietnam moratorium marches in the early 1970s were defining moments for the baby-boomer generation. In our time, climate change is the issue uniting the generations in protest, bringing young people onto the streets in huge numbers in the Schools Strike 4 Climate protests of 2018 and 2019. Stunning large-format images bring these moments to life in the museum.

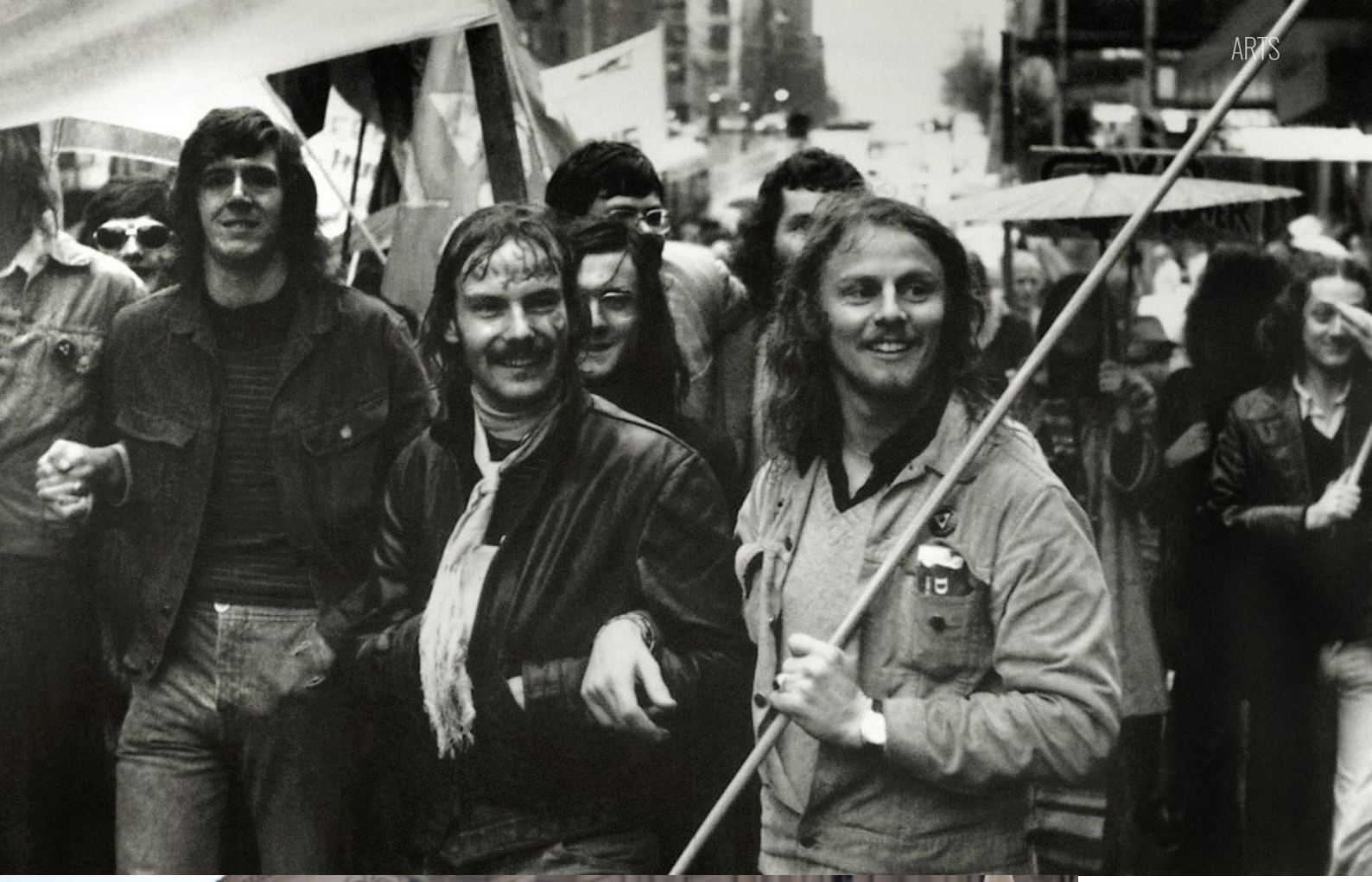
We tend to take our right to protest for granted. In Victoria the right to peaceful assembly, freedom of expression and freedom of association are protected under the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act, 2006. But that right is always qualified. During the recent lockdowns many felt that protest in defiance of public health regulations was irresponsible. So how secure is our right to protest? Is banning protest ever justified in a democracy? These and other questions are inspired by Protest Melbourne.

ONLINE EXHIBITION
Protest Melbourne
www.oldtreasurybuilding.org.au/protest


KATIES
SEXISM IS ALIVE & LIVING IN AUSTRALIA
BELIEVE
NOW!
MY WOMB IS NOT
DRESS FOR COMFORT NOT FOR STYLE
WOMEN'S LIBERATION
WOMEN ARE ON THE MO


MUSICAL
INSTRUMENTS
LYONS


EXTEND A
CESSATION
NO VOTE
NO VOICE;
NO
CHOICE
STOP
ATTACKS
PEACE
HOPES



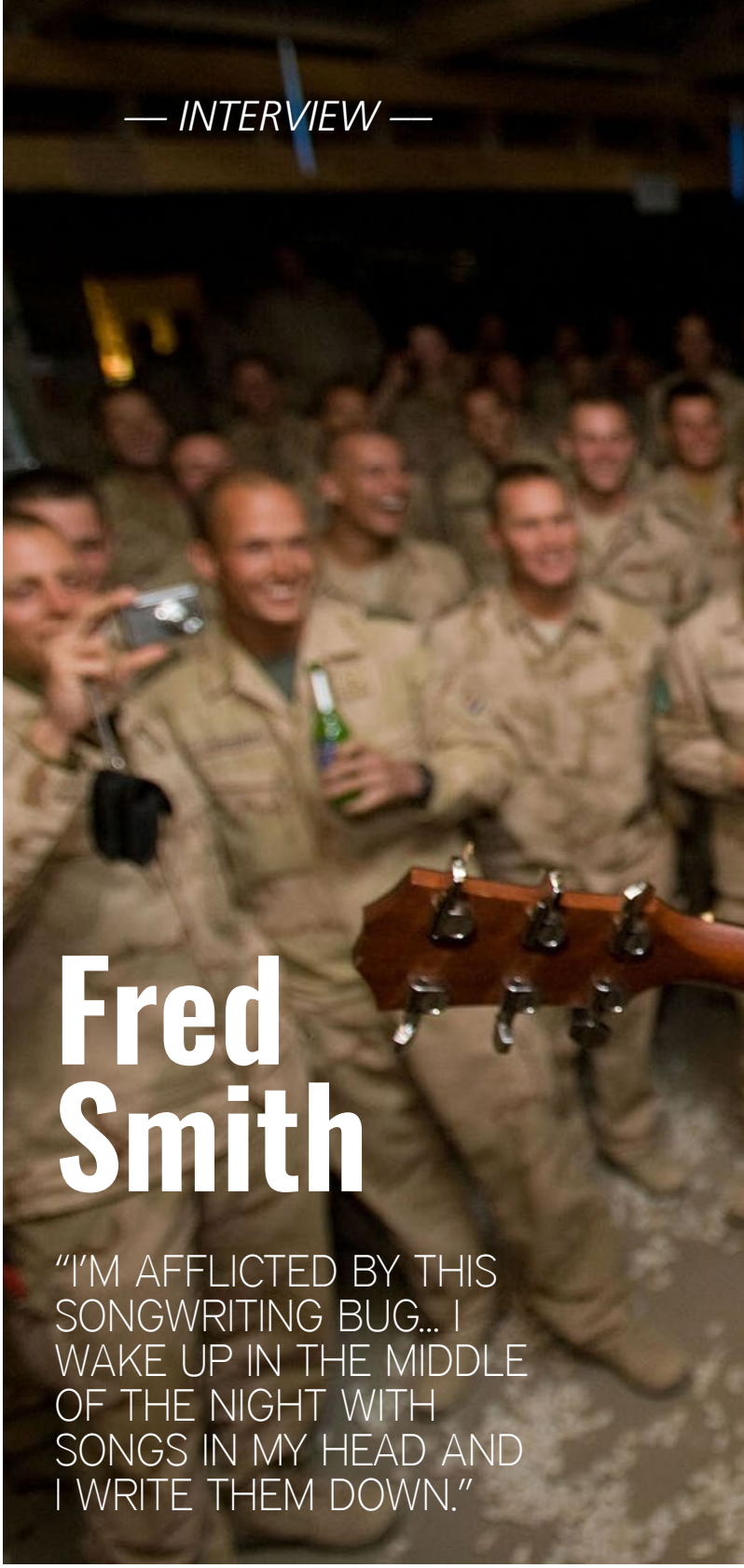
TOP: Australian Queer Archives: A street march, part of Gay Pride Week, Melbourne, 1973.
Reproduced courtesy Australian Queer Archives, photograph by Frank Prain.

BOTTOM: Schools Strike: Schools Strike 4 Climate march, Melbourne, 2019. Image courtesy Old Treasury Building.

OPPOSITE PAGE:

TOP: 8 hours: Eight Hours Procession, 17 April 1914. Reproduced courtesy State Library Victoria.

BOTTOM: No vote: Anti-conscription demonstration held in Melbourne in 1965 while the 'birthday ballot' was drawn. Photograph reproduced courtesy State Library Victoria.



Fred Smith

"I'M AFFLICTED BY THIS SONGWRITING BUG... I WAKE UP IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT WITH SONGS IN MY HEAD AND I WRITE THEM DOWN."

Said by some to be the best folk/country musician working in Australia, Greg speaks to this diplomat/singer-songwriter, who not only dances to a different drum but presents beautiful, unique and insightful songs.

Greg T Ross: Fred Smith, thank you very much for joining us here at The Last Post. It's an absolute pleasure speaking with you. And I first came across your name listening to the ABC some time ago, and was taken with your stories and your songs, which actually merge into the same thing. You're a diplomat in Afghanistan. We all know the image of diplomats that a lot of people have, Canberrian based, etc. But what was it really like being a diplomat in Afghanistan?

Fred Smith: It was challenging and fascinating, and on the whole, I enjoyed it. I mean, our role when I worked down in Southern Afghanistan, alongside Australian troops down there, was to build relationships with the tribal leaders in the province and provincial government officials in what was a very competitive tribal and political environment. And these were guys in turbans who generally spoke very little English, so all business was transacted through interpreters. They were mostly pretty charming guys, but some of them had some pretty bad history and were not always reliable in what they said, or at least very partisan in what they said. And so it was this complex business of trying to interpret what they were saying and understand it and develop some picture of what was happening in the social and political side of Uruzgan province.

GTR: Indeed. And you learned the language?

FS: Not enough of it to make a difference. It's a very difficult language, so generally working through interpreters.

GTR: Yeah. I mean, it's interesting. You talk of the role of your role in Afghanistan, Fred, and the music then becomes for you an extension of yourself with the desire to amalgamate and merge, well, not merge particularly, but amalgamate the locals in the area through storytelling. And then of course that becomes something that you do so well with music.

FS: Well look, I mean, it was an intense experience over there. I was working like everyone, 10 or 11-hour days, and you get to know people very well, including the soldiers I was working with. And every now and then, on a shiny summer's day, a reporter had come through that a soldier had been killed out in the Mirabad Valley or up in the Baluchi Valley. And the base would grieve and you would feel that grief and you would attend their funeral, that ramp service, and you would see the photo of the young man on the casket, and you'd just feel the enormous emotional impact of that on people on the base. And a number of the songs I wrote were about soldiers who perished in the various valleys of the province. But then of course, I wrote other songs, some from the point of view of Afghan women, some from my own point of view about the Afghan people I was working with and their struggle to survive.

And so between all that, I came up with a dozen or so songs that I put on a recording called Dust of Uruzgan. And there was a multitude of perspectives on that recording of different points of view on the Afghan situation. And the way to understand the situation, of course, is to look at it through multiple perspectives. That's how you get a three dimensional understanding of anything. So I think between that and my storytelling and the songs I feel like I'm offering my audiences a 3D understanding of the reality on the ground in Afghanistan, at least for our soldiers, and to some extent for the Afghans.

GTR: Well said, indeed. And your songs truly are three dimensional. We'll talk about that in just a moment. The reality of being on the ground in Afghanistan and your role as a... Some have called you the singing diplomat, but a diplomat nonetheless. Was that reality, was that realness something that you had sought, or did it just come about through circumstance?

FS: In the music? And realness in the music?

GTR: In being on the ground in Afghanistan, and obviously your music matured through your experiences there. But that realness, Fred, of having death so close, was that something that helped you grow, as reflected in your songs?

FS: Yeah, I think so. I didn't know what the experience would be when I went there. I was involved in the Australian peacekeeping operations in Bougainville and the Solomons,

PODCASTS: **www.thelastpostmagazine.com/tlp-interviews**

Solomon Islands a decade prior to my arrival in Uruzgan. And generally that had gone well and none of our soldiers had been killed in that environment. But on my first day in Afghanistan, a boy got killed, and that was pretty... About the soldier named Ben Ranado, who eventually I wrote the song Dust of Uruzgan about. And so it slapped me in the face that we weren't mucking around here and most days were fascinating and quite fun to work. But every now and then, something generally bad would happen and you'd be reminded that this is a war.

GTR: Well said. We'll talk about how you started off with music, but I mean, my recollection of your angle from this was that you'd started off and I'd heard some of your earlier stuff is a pub drinking type comical songs, and then through the natural maturation, these hauntingly beautiful songs that have led some to claim he was the best singer songwriter going around Australia at the moment. Do you continue to mature and change with your songwriting?

FS: Oh, inevitably. Inevitably. I tend to write about the world I'm living or playing in. In the late 90s, I was playing in pubs around Canberra and made a lot of sense to be singing things that bordered on drinking songs. I started working on Bougainville Island and following the war there, and Solomons and stories I was hearing from the conflict sounded like they needed to be told. And sure enough, the songs started to pop into my head when I was lying in bed at night. And so the songs do tend to reflect the main world that evolves. And as to what is next, I can't tell you.

GTR: No. Well, I'll tell you what. I can tell you this much, Fred. Honesty in life is an honesty in art. I mean, your songs have a great honesty in confrontational of some emotions, et cetera, et cetera, which is one of the most respectful things that you can find in a songwriter, I would dare to say. But it appears you can't write any other way since your transformation through your experiences. You did some really good stuff in Bougainville too, Fred. Was that where you did the Songs of Peace? Was it that you...

FS: Yeah, that's right. So when I was there, the first thing I tried to do is learn to speak Papua New Guinea Pidgin. Talking to the security guard there on the night shift and he taught me to speak Pidgin. And soon enough... At one point we were living in a small, burnt out supermarket in the southwest of Bougainville there, and I was out on the front porch one night playing my guitar, and we had the only light bulb in town. And so pretty soon we had 100 of the village kids gathered around at my feet listening. And so I realised I needed something to play to them and sing to them. So I started running these songs in Pidgin. Some of them were comical and some of them were more serious about the peace process. And eventually it became a very useful way of engaging the community.

We sort travel out in these patrols and set up in a village and I'd start playing, and the soldiers who were with me would do the backing vocals, which they hated, and we'd dance around a bit, and it became a way of building confidence in the peace process and making ourselves more human and accessible to the population. And so it became useful, all that. And in the end, the army for a recording desk into Booker Island, and we recorded five of my songs and five local songs for the Songs of Peace cassette. And this was like 1999 that was distributed around the island, and we became a big deal there. But subsequent to that, I came back to Australia and wrote more denser English language narrative songs about the experience. And that was a recording called Bagarap Empires, which began to earn me a bit of renown on the Australian festival circuit.

GTR: Yeah, you fit very comfortably into that. I remember, I think it was an Australian story where your father met you on the tarmac at Afghanistan. You were wearing a cobra or something. And some had said a wonderful diplomat, if a little wacky. Are you aware of being different from the norm?

FS: Well, it's come to my attention that I do do things a bit differently. It's been brought to my attention, but it seems natural enough to me to do what I do. I'm afflicted by this songwriting bug, and I wake up in the middle of the night with songs in my head and I write them down. And it's a false multiplier. You can really reach people with music in a society like that when it's the last thing they expect.

GTR: Well said. It's probably one of the most magical things. Music treats, even people with dementia, et cetera, can remember... Alzheimer's can remember words to songs if put to tune, incredible stuff. The power of music. We touched there just on some considerations of the wackiness of it all, but were you aware of your willingness to embrace change and different cultures through your growing up with a diplomat father?

FS: I suppose I did, but at the time I was resistant to it all. Like when you're eight, nine years old, you just don't want the world to stay still, nothing to be constant. So I suppose it built in me some reflexes for comprehending cultures different from our own, understanding people who are wide a bit differently, knowing what it's like to be an outsider in a community. All of those things, I suppose it built into me at some instinctive level, but at the time I just wanted everything to stay still.

GTR: Yeah, well, that's right. And time seems to go by more slowly as a child, I think. And I think I recall you saying something about, were you eight when you got your first guitar?

FS: I think I was nine, about that age. Yeah.

GTR: And what led you? Had you been a great fan of Muse? Did you want to emulate anybody or you just wanted to do your own thing?

FS: Oh no, it was more absurd than that. I was watching a cartoon and I saw Robin Wood fire an arrow out of the boot. I just thought that was an interesting trick. And so I think something like that got me into it. And then I got guitar lessons and then studied initially the guy who taught jazz guitar, and then I went to the Philippines and learned the more Spanish tradition. So all of those influences permeated my guitar playing, which in turn permeates my songs.

GTR: Yeah, I saw a film clip of you singing, performing a song. I think it was in Afghanistan, and they once said Alvin Lee was the fastest guitarist in the West, but you were pretty quick on that acoustic guitar. That was incredible performance. It was amazing.

FS: Yeah, I do all right. I do all right.

GTR: Yeah. And your father, what did he think of your musicianship originally?

FS: Oh, I think he probably was a little surprised by it, but I didn't come from an immensely musical family. We had three records in our collection, Beatle's Hey Jude, and Simon and Garfunkel's Bridge Over Troubled Water, and Aunty Jack Sings Woolongong.

GTR: Oh, well, what a collection. Yeah.

FS: That's all you need, believe it.

GTR: That's right. And how do you see your music progressing for the future, Fred? What are you doing now music-wise? What's the plans?

FS: Well, I've built this show called Sparrows of Kabul, which half is my own personal perspective on our 20-year

involvement in Afghanistan. And it's truly the culmination of 12 years of either living, working, or telling the Australian-Afghanistan story. And so I've been touring that for six months and I'll tour that for another six or seven months. And beyond that, I just written a handful of songs that I'm chipping away at the moment, and they don't have any identifiable theme or anything like that. So I tend to get led around by the nose by my own songwriting, which happens at this very instinctive level. So really I'm not in control here, mate.

GTR: Yeah, no, no, no. Understand completely. In Afghanistan, finally, the departure. That must have encompassed a whole lot of emotions for you. What was that like?

FS: Oh yeah. I mean, I was working on Afghanistan at the time from a hotel room in Doha. I'd been at the embassy last year between 2020 and 2021. And then we closed our embassy back in, I think May 2021. And then we're doing the Afghanistan file remotely from a hotel room in Doha. So as the republic began to collapse, and the provincial capitals fell one by one to the Taliban, there was incredible sense of grief and disappointment that it happened like this. But then shortly after, I mean Kabul fell on the 15th of August, but on the 17th of August, I found myself on a plane flying into Kabul Airport to assist with the evacuation of visa and passport holders. And that was... I'd never seen anything quite as chaotic or I'd never seen such deep levels of human desperation as what I saw outside the gates of the airport there with people sort trying to get into those horrendous human log jams. And in the end, we ended up getting about 4000 people out. But it was incredibly messy and not a little bit stressful.

GTR: Yeah, I went to a cricket match in Sydney last summer I think it was, between the Afghan interpreters.

FS: Oh, I heard about that match. Harry Moffitt's mob.

GTR: Harry Moffitt, met Harry there.

FS: Yeah, I'd be keen to get involved in that. I'm a reasonable opening batsman, wicked keeper.

GTR: Well, excellent. We'll have to play on the same team. I used to be an opening batsman too when I was playing in Melbourne. I won't tell you... Well, it was a D grade, but it doesn't matter.

FS: No, no, no. It's still a thrill.

GTR: That's right. And you still think when you take a good catch, it's the best catch that's ever been taken.

FS: But you're also surprised.

GTR: That's right. Is there a replay of that to make?

FS: That's exactly it.

GTR: That's right. Well listen, we'll hopefully see you on the cricket field one day. That'd be absolutely magnificent. And finally, one thing that isn't disappointing, there's a couple of things that aren't disappointing. The admiration that we have for you, and I know you don't do it for admiration, but I guess the admiration for honest storytelling in life is an art. And I think perhaps the word wacky really wouldn't come into use if more of us led our own lives and did what we wanted to do with what we've got. So I think that's the essence of what you are in that regard to songwriting. So we greatly appreciate your work and you taking the time to record these stories for sharing with the rest of the world.

FS: Thanks, mate. Thank you. ■

Matt Nable's Transfusion, starring Sam Worthington, has won the coveted Red Poppy award for Best Film at the Veterans Film Festival.

Jury Chair Bruce Beresford announced Transfusion as the winner of the prestigious *Howard Frank Van Norton Award for Best Film among a cluster of Red Poppy Awards including Sam Worthington for Best Actor and Jennifer Lawrence for Best Actress for Causeway at the annual international Veterans Film Festival during a gala Closing Night on Sunday at the Entertainment Quarter in Sydney.

The coveted Red Poppy Awards, titled after the war poem 'In Flanders Field', written during the First World War by Canadian physician Lieutenant-Colonel John McCrae, saw films from 14 countries in competition across the 4 -day festival.

Writer, director and actor Matt Nable and producers Michael Schwarz and John Schwarz collected the $10,000 prize for the Best Film Award. The film's star, Sam Worthington was awarded Best Actor. Causeway, which opened the festival, also won the Sgt Joseph Cecil Thompson Award (named in memory of the cornet player of the 9th Battalion Band that landed at Gallipoli in 1915) for Best Music by Alex Somers as well as Lawrence's Best Actress gong.

Others Red Poppy Awards presented:

- The Spectrum Films Award for Best Short Film went to US film Soldier by Justin Zimmerman. The prize includes $4000 cash and $2500 in post production support from Spectrum Films.
- The Award for Best Student Film was won by The Search by veteran Thomas Brouns.
- The Best Music Video went to Better Off – song by Johnny Reveille, directed by Casey Andrew both veterans.
- The Harry Julius Award for Best Animation went to the Iranian film The Sprayer by Farnoosh Abedi.
- The Beyond Blue Award for the Best Film Reflecting Hope and Resilience went to The Healing by Nick Barkla.

Winners were selected by the Jury panel of Bruce Beresford, Lisa Hoppe, Jenni Baird, Alan Dukes, Julie Kalceff, Cameron Patrick, Petra Salsjo and Gus O'Brien-Cavanough.

The Awards have been presented annually, except for a COVID break, since 2015. The last time the Awards were held in 2020 the Best Feature was won by Ukrainian drama U311 Cherkasy and Best Short was awarded to Australian entry Trust Frank.

*Private Howard Frank Van Norton was a veteran of the US Army in WW2 and is the late father of the Veterans Film Festival leading patron Kay Van Norton Poche.

Private Howard Frank Van Norton was born in 1925 and passed in 2012. He landed in France on 8 June 1944, two days after the main D-Day landings. During the Allied advance through France he was shot in the back by the enemy while repairing communication lines. Wounded, he continued to repair the wiring until communication was restored to his Unit. For that action he was awarded a silver star and the Purple Heart. After the war Howard continued his service to others in the community all his life.

ABOUT VETERANS FILM FESTIVAL

The Veterans Film Festival aims to be Australia's premier international film festival devoted to screening films about, for and by veterans, with sidebar events such as masterclasses, Q&As, workshops, art exhibitions and performances.

Through the new Screen Warriors program, the Veterans Film Festival will provide skills training, placement opportunities, scholarships as well as project development within the screen industry. By these means, it will broaden the diversity and inclusiveness of the Australian screen industry, whilst simultaneously supporting and improving the lives of veterans and their families.

Their Excellencies General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd), Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia and Mrs Linda Hurley are VFF Patrons. ■

OPPOSITE PAGE:

VFF Chair Warwick Young, juror Jenni Baird, winners Michael Schwarz and Matt Nable.

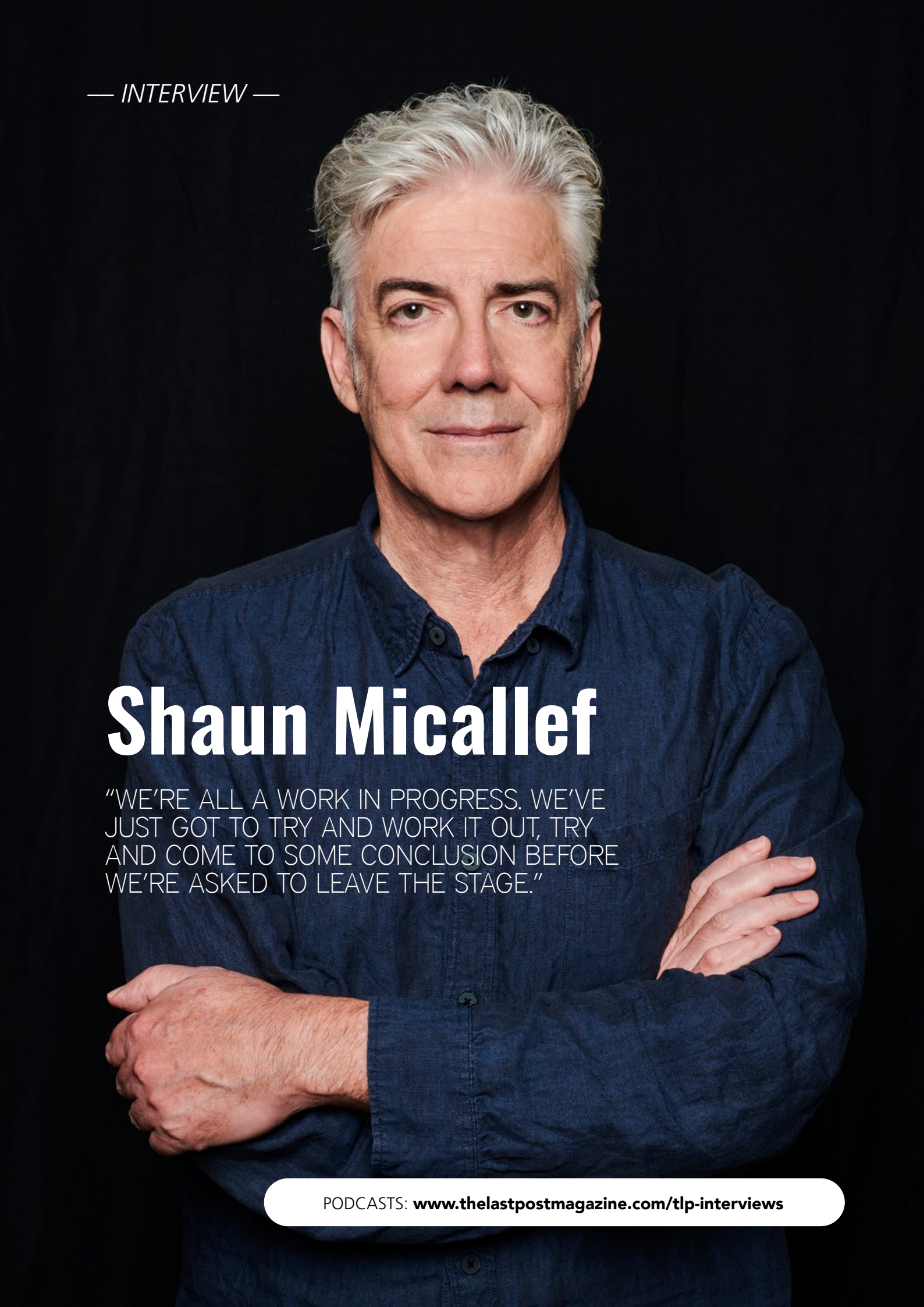
THIS PAGE, FROM TOP:

Winner Johnny Reveille performing.

Jury Chair Bruce Beresford, winners Michael Schwarz and Matt Nable -Transfusion

Johnny Reveille & Casey Andrew.

— INTERVIEW —



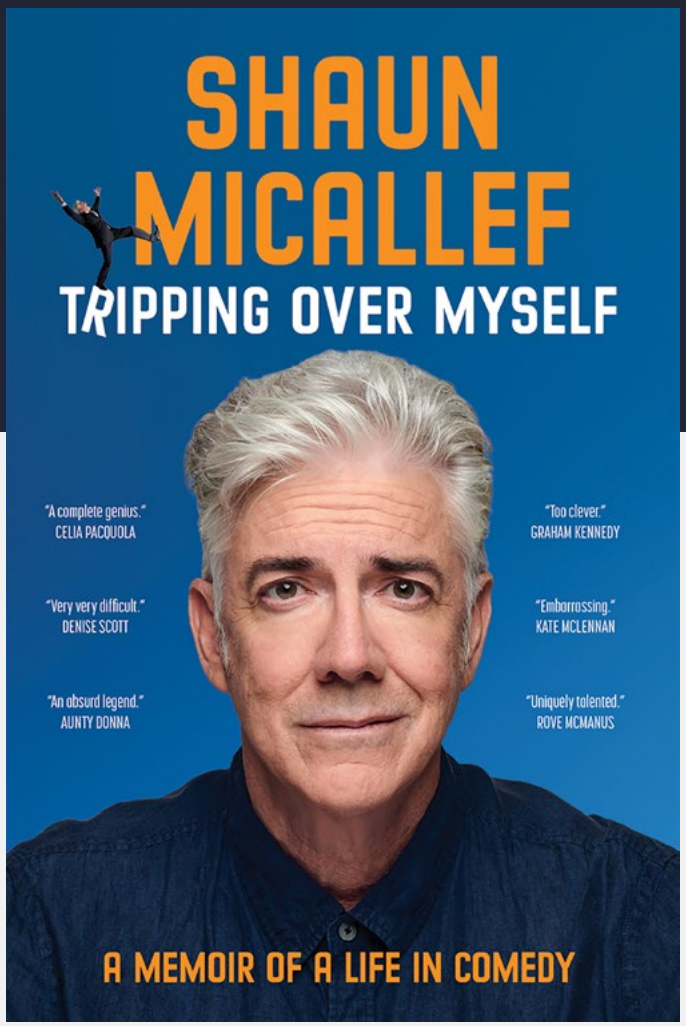
Shaun Micallef

"WE'RE ALL A WORK IN PROGRESS. WE'VE JUST GOT TO TRY AND WORK IT OUT, TRY AND COME TO SOME CONCLUSION BEFORE WE'RE ASKED TO LEAVE THE STAGE."

PODCASTS: **www.thelastpostmagazine.com/tlp-interviews**

TRIPPING OVER MYSELF

BY SHAUN MICALEFF
HARDIE GRANT



His favourite movie is Frank Capra's It's A Wonderful Life. He contemplated what's important in life, while sitting on a rock near the Kashmiri border. And he wrote a book.

Tripping Over Myself takes us closer to Shaun. From his early days in Adelaide to one of the most respected actors, comedians and writers. From The Magic Circle Club to Mad As Hell.

Greg T Ross: Good afternoon, Shaun Micallef. It's pleasure to have you on The Last Post interview and we are here to talk about your new book, Tripping Over Yourself. If you'll just excuse me for a moment. It says, "Comedy has been Shaun Micallef's, guiding light, his refuge, his passion, his passport, his lifebuoy, his drug, his mask, his means, his end, his self. But it's not everything." And you do let us into a bit of your life in this book, Shaun.

Shaun Micallef: Yes, I think it's important. I wanted to talk about comedy, obviously. That was the driving force for me. But I found when I started writing the book that it didn't have any context. There's no real reason for the audience who was reading the book to go, "Why is he interested in it? Why is it so important to him?" So I had to paint a bit of a picture of my real life outside of being on television, which I've never done before. So it was quite a challenge for me to do that because I'm not a standup comedian and I don't usually fold my personal life into my material. So it's been a whole new experience for me. I've enjoyed it.

GTR: You make note of that in the book. And indeed we start off, strangely enough, at the beginning, 1962 at the Ashford Hospital on Anzac Highway. And being in Adelaide, and I know that hospital very well. And as you note, I think everything is not too far away in Adelaide, maybe that explains the impatience of Adelaide drivers, Shaun.

SM: It might well be, yes. I notice every time I go back, which is every Christmas, because mom and dad are still around. They're still there. Whenever I go back, you travel a hundred metres along the road and there's a set of traffic lights and then another hundred metres and there's another set of traffic lights. But despite that, everything is only half an hour away.

GTR: That's incredible. I made note of that once myself, that very same point about the traffic lights. Your mother's upbringing was important in helping shape her family attitudes and your father's attitude too, and upbringing. How much was your father's memories of the war, of interest to you, Shaun, growing up?

SM: Well, had he shared them with me, that would've been enormously interesting. One of my complaints about growing up in Adelaide was that it was just in our house, just a bit dull. It was just a bit dull. And I think I retreated into my head to make things a bit more exciting. But the reality was, as I discovered much later, was that my father had, had a very interesting life in Malta when he was growing up. Because of course, this is during the Second World War and we have the Italians and then the Germans dropping bombs down my father's street. That would've been fascinating.

But he never shared any of that with me. I think it was a bit too traumatic for him, so he just wanted to provide a very safe environment for his children. He was handing us the reassuring dullness of life without bombs and without not having enough food thinking that was the great gift, which of course it was. And much later on as an adult, I found out about his very exciting life. But I suppose it sounds good, but I don't know whether I would've enjoyed it, having my roof blown off my house as he did.

GTR: It's an incredible thing the memories of fathers. My father was in the Second World War also, and he rarely spoke about it too, Shaun, unless he'd had a few drinks. But yes, wanting to hide it, perhaps push it away from their children, etc. I think you make note in the book too, pull me up if I'm wrong, but your father and mother were different personalities and your mother had been brought up in country South Australia.

SM: Yes, mom she had a tough life herself in a different way to my father. She grew up in a house - It's always a good story when she tells it - grew up in a house with no electricity, no inside plumbing. It was pretty basic. Kerosene lanterns would light the house. These sound positively Dickensian to my ears. But of course it was par for the course for country South Australia back in mom's day. And

I think one of the legacies with both my parents, not really wanting to visit that upon us as children. They weren't that forthcoming in telling us the stories. Mom, dad particularly, is that you get a... Particularly in dad's case, you get a remoteness, you might have experienced this yourself because it's forefront of our father's minds, because it was such a significant part of their lives, World War II.

And because they don't want to talk about that, they don't talk about anything else. So it was a bit hard to reach my father, which I was able to do as an adult when it would all make sense and be weighted properly. And I think that makes a big difference. And as a result, we weren't a terribly demonstrative family in terms of communicating our love for each other. And how we did it was in comedy with jokes and laughing, that's how we showed how close we were. And I think maybe that's why I am drawn to it. So if I'm going to write a book about it, I have to tell that story in order for the audience to understand why it is so important to me. Why it's a visceral thing that I'm just drawn to it. And I think that's why.

GTR: A good point too, Shaun and I was about to suggest that because of the imagination that you had and you used your imagination as a way of communicating, I suppose. And then we relate a bit to your stories from your early school days, which are quite funny. But at the same time, there you are finding the best way to communicate was through comedy and making fun of the teachers, etc, was always guaranteed to get a good laugh. I suppose that was important for you to be able to achieve that. A lot of kids perhaps wouldn't communicate through comedy, but you chose that avenue, so it was good. One of the funniest things you said was when Tofty, the bus driver, gave you your own valet service by dropping you off at your front door.

SM: Yes. You wouldn't get that these days, would you? People would judge a public transport just deciding, "Oh, well I don't need to follow the route, I'll just take this kid home. It's a bit of a walk for him." Yes. And the great thing was that that bus driver was my mother's bus driver when she was at school. Again, you don't get that. That's an Adelaide thing, maybe. Everybody knows each other. It was and is such a small world in Adelaide, which is quite comforting in a way. As you know, being from Adelaide, it doesn't take too much of a conversation with a stranger to work out that you have somebody in common in your lives. It takes maybe two steps removed or something like that, and there's bound to be somebody that you both know.

GTR: It's so true. It's so true. We had a conductor on our bus when we were kids coming home from school. We nicknamed him Dracula. But when my wife got home each day, I would say to her, "Did you see anyone you knew today, love?" And the answer would always be, "Yes", most times. Shaun, recollections of your early school days. You said you went from being a dimwit to a solid C grade student. Did that leave you with a sense of achievement?

SM: Well, it did. It was quite important in our household to... Particularly, my mother was very good at school and could have, if she had had the opportunity, I think gone on to further education, tertiary education, that sort of thing. In those days though, I think the public service examination at the end of year 10 was probably the most that you could hope for if you'd come out of country South Australia. So for me to not be a terribly stellar student, which is a bit of a letdown, and I think she was very keen for me to excel at school or at least realize whatever potential I had. But it did take a while for things to fall and to line up.

I don't know, I was never diagnosed as being dyslexic or anything, but it did take me a while to work out how to read words or letters rather that were in a row. And then words that were in a row, they to just appear to me as a big lump. And I could pick them out individually, but I couldn't push them together and read a sentence. But at some point I had a very good English teacher who helped me, not directly, he just got me to stand up and speak a bit more. And at some point, all the tumblers aligned. And yes, there was a penny drop moment for me where it all makes sense. And then I just instantly fell in love with language and I still am in love with it, that's how I make my living.

GTR: That's right. That's an important point too, Shaun. When you go back to gaining confidence with the language through speaking the words. And those words, then making sense. But that ability took you perhaps beyond what a lot of people can do with the language. Quite ironic that they would be having trouble putting words together when viewing them on a page and yet then converting them so brilliantly when standing up and speaking the language.

SM: Yes. I think I could cover for my inability to read by just ad-libbing or tap dancing between the thoughts that I was expressing. And I still do that now, I think I still. I lean into things. My interview itself, for example, is entirely on auto queue. Everything I do, when I look down the barrel to the home audience, I am simply reading. And equally with the interviews that I do, I over-shoulder. I'm looking over the shoulder of my fellow actors reading my lines. I haven't learned anything, but I can read now. I can read now and it doesn't look like I'm reading. I think maybe I'm just trying to impress my mother. That's what we all do.

GTR: Did you see me today, mom? That's right.

SM: I'm over here, mom. I'm over here. Look at me now.

GTR: That's right. You said that after law, your choices were journalism and wildlife and parks management. Do you think you still would've become a comedian if you hadn't been in the wildlife and parks or working for Murdoch or something?

SM: Well, that's a good point. Yes, I hadn't thought of that. If I'd taken plan B or plan C or just my marks weren't enough to get me into law, I could probably see a way of going from journalism into television presentation, comedy. I could do that. But looking after wildlife and monitoring the success or not of a national park, I can't quite see how I could segue from that into comedy. That would've been difficult.

GTR: That would've been. Exactly right. The thing that comes out about the book, Tripping Over Myself, Shaun, to me, one of the strongest things was your tenaciousness and without sometimes being aware of your own tenaciousness and being told... I think there was a guy, Patrick Cook, was it, or someone that told you about your writing?

SM: Yes. Patrick gave me some very good advice. Patrick was a wonderful and is a wonderful writer himself. And he told me a hard truth about my writing, that it was a bit derivative and that I shouldn't give up my day job. So I didn't, I went back to work for another couple of years and then decided, "Oh, that's enough. I'm better now. I'm going to chance my arm and see if I can make it."

GTR: That's quite brilliant.

SM: There's no point in being encouraged if the person doing the encouraging isn't been sincere, so I actually appreciate his bluntness.

GTR: It was brilliant. It was absolutely brilliant. And the tenaciousness was... You just charged on through, reminds me of when I was told I wasn't in the football squad, but I kept training until they told me to piss off. And I suppose, "Piss off. Ross, you're not in the squad." That was at Mitcham in Adelaide. And Andrew Denton once interpreted a recurring dream of yours, as you feeling that you didn't deserve the success you were getting, which may, I suppose be the same with a lot of us too, Shaun. But can you relate to that today, about that feeling?

SM: Well, the world that I've chosen to earn my living in is, you can come to hurt it from any angle. I've learned that over time, is that it is full of people who have come through various doors and windows in order to get where they are. There's no hierarchy really. There's no pathway that everyone has to take. But at the time, I had this dream, and

Top *An extremely European family portrait. My father is third from the right, next to my grandmother Rose. Also (from left) my Uncle Tony and Auntie Carmen and (to the right of my father) my Uncle Joe and Uncle John. My grandfather Carmelo was away at sea.*

Bottom *My mother somehow enjoying herself in the bleak dystopian hellscape that is South Australia's mid-north.*

I'll recount the dream. It was that I was climbing up was up an enormous tower, but not using the stairs. I was in the walls and I was surreptitiously making my way up through this tower. But the walls, like it was an Edgar Allan Poe story. Andrew said, "That's an interesting dream."

And his interpretation as you've said, was that I felt that I didn't deserve to be climbing those stairs. And so I was doing it secretly or in an embarrassed way. And I think that's probably true. I wasn't at all confident, despite my tenacity and despite my desperation to succeed, I had that imposter syndrome that some of us have from time to time. When we think at our lowest point, we think, "You know what? I really just don't deserve to be here. There are others who are better." And indeed there were others who definitely were better. But since then I've learned that there are no rules. You can do whatever you want. And if you look confident enough, that'll be enough.

GTR: How brilliant. And I think, the dream may have been a way of doing things the hard way too, by climbing up, by not using the stairs. But is it true that Phillip Adams was largely responsible for you getting on the ABC by having a word to somebody?

SM: Well, yes. We had talked about this. I was promoting a book and he was the one that suggested to me after we finished talking on Late Light Live. He said to me that I should try some political comedy, some news satire on the ABC and suggested to me that he was going to have a word to the general manager. And I thought, "Well, that's very nice of him." I left it a couple of weeks. I didn't speak to Phillip again about it, but I did contact Mark Scott, who was then the general manager, and he put me onto somebody else. And within about, I reckon it might have been two or three months, we had a series commission.

And now I thanked Phillip in the meantime, but he denies any knowledge. He says that he didn't talk to anybody. I have to sit him down and have a conversation with him. Because somebody must have spoken to somebody. It couldn't have just been me ringing up Mark Scott. That doesn't make any sense. That doesn't make any sense, so I think Phillip Adams is a... He's like the godfather. He'll just make things happen, not make a big deal about it, but at some point he's going to ring me and ask for a favor to be returned. I know it.

GTR: That's very godfather like.

SM: Oh yeah.

GTR: Just a couple of final points too, Shaun. You were recording the SBS show, I think, Shaun Micallef's Stairway To Heaven, and you found yourself sitting on a rock near the Kashmir border, feeling homesick. Now you speak about needing to contemplate what's important in life. Was that a moment for you?

SM: Absolutely. I think I was probably about... I'm trying to remember my age. I think I might have been early fifties, 53, perhaps 53 or 54. And I'd gone through an interesting... I'd gone through a TV program that took a lot out of me. And look, it's only a TV program, so it's not like I'm complaining too loudly. But I did wonder whether there were... There's got to be something else. There's got to be some other point to my life other than getting up at five o'clock in the morning and we're putting a stupid wig on. So I of course turned my quest for meaning into a television show and thought I'd go to India where a lot of people go to find themselves. So yes, there I found myself on a rock on the Kashmir border and told not to use a mobile phone, "Don't use your mobile phone and they'll shoot you." They said. I was told, they'll think it's a satellite phone and that you're calling an airstrike. It was good. It was a good experience for me. And it put things into perspective. And I think inclusion that I reached for me, which works for me, was not so much that there's another life beyond this one, but that you've got to deal with the one we've got. And you've got to give it meaning, I suppose. There's no meaning to be found. You actually have to work to give your life meaning. So for me, it's my family, it's my children, that's the most important thing. And it seems like a very trite observation to make. But I needed reminding of that, at that point in my life. And that's stayed with me since, so I got perspective and harmony on what I'm doing. And as the road out ahead of me, Greg, grows shorter, I'm going to do as much with it as I can.

GTR: How brilliant. And I suppose finally, that would lead to a stripping of the ego and indeed a notation about your favorite movie being Frank Capra's, It's a Wonderful Life.

SM: Great film, and it is all about duty, that film, and it is all about sacrifice. And the thing I love about that film is that there's a nobility from George Bailey, the character played by James Stewart. He doesn't want to be doing the things that he has to do, but he's such a good man that he does them anyway. It's still such a great film, and the message in it, it's so wholesome, decent, and quite accurate. And the film came out about, from memory, probably 1943, 1940. No, it's '46. It was after the war. After the Second World War. If any of your readers haven't seen it, I would heartily recommend it as a film that stands up to this day, and it's just such a beautiful story.

GTR: It's one of the best, Shaun, it's one of the best. As is your contribution to Australian art and comedy and indeed a book that takes us a step closer to understanding you. I suppose we're all in the process of understanding each other, but it helps us understand you. And coming from Adelaide, I relate to the early parts of that book too. It's been an absolute pleasure.

SM: Thank you, Greg. Been very nice talking to you too. We're all a work in progress. We've just got to try and work it out, try and come to some conclusion before we're asked to leave the stage. ■

Adair Donaldson

Adair founded Donaldson Law in 2016, to focus on a non-adversarial approach to achieving holistic solutions for his clients' legal issues. Amongst other services, Donaldson Law specialise in ADF Super Benefits, ADF Survivors, Defence Reparation payments and Sexual Harassment.

Greg T Ross: Adair Donaldson from Donaldson Law, welcome to The Last Post magazine, and thanks for joining us here and being part of this coming edition. How are you?

Adair Donaldson: Oh, great. I'm well, Greg, and thank you for asking me to join you. Now from point of view that the way that you've been connecting with the defense community, it's just lovely to get the invite and be able to share some information with you.

GTR: Thank you, Adair. Look, you're founder and director of Donaldson Law. You do a lot of good things in the veteran community, but also outside of that too. But what made you want to start up Donaldson Law and to become what it represents today, which has been a magnificent achievement? And when did the journey start?

AD: Well, I suppose I've been a lawyer now for 25 years, and a large part of that time has always been looking after people that have survived trauma. In relation to the military background, dad was a military man, so he was a colonel in the Medical Corps. And what dad said to us was that if mom and dad were going to pay for us to go through uni, we could all join the reserve. So I'm the youngest in the family, so I followed, dutifully followed. And it was a great thing to have done.

GTR: That was the deal.

AD: So yeah, that was the deal. So I served a very short period of time in the infantry corps before then transferring over to the legal corps. And how the legal corps works is that if you are in a reserve capacity, you are there to be looking after or providing support to the members, whereas the ARA or the regular officers, legal officers, they're there to be looking after command.

And of course it's a crossover, I suppose a bit. But that gave me a wonderful insight into the really good things about the ADF and then the things that the ADF could be doing better. And it was in that capacity that I got to see firsthand a number of members that experienced some pretty ordinary things that happened to them during their time in the ADF. I remember I tried to go through the chain of command back then, and you'll probably appreciate this for being a junior officer, a reservist and a lawyer to boot, it really wasn't going to cut the mustard. And then in 2011, the ADFA Skype scandal happened. I'm not sure if you remember that, Greg, but it was a huge outcry at the time in relation to a cadet who'd had some pretty ordinary experiences when she was at ADFA. And I remember at the time that they came out and that they said, or tried to downplay it and say that she was a troubled cadet and that's why it happened. And to me, that just did not represent what was going on at all. And with great trepidation, I then went and I got contacted by the ABC and by the Australian, and I made a comment and the comment was that the ADF makes the NRL look like a bunch of bar boys. And I do a lot of work with elite athletes.

So I made that comment and back then made the front page of the Australian, and then it was on Fran Kelly. And all of a sudden we then started getting smashed with all these inquiries. And I suppose looking back on it, a lot of those people that were contacting us, they were 15, 16 year old boys at the time. Some of those were going back to the sixties and seventies and the early eighties. And obviously there's a lot of women that contacted us as well, but the young boys were horrific with the stories and what they survived. So the ADF has an incredibly proud history, but it also has a dark history there as well.

GTR: And these must be addressed there. These must be addressed obviously in any honest appraisal.

AD: Yeah, and listen to the ADFs credit, we approached them with these issues and they were incredibly proactive in addressing them. And my line of work is obviously looking after people that have survived abuse, adults that have survived child abuse. And one thing that I know from doing that work is that when we talk about people that have survived abuse, that they're after the four A's. And the four A's are the acknowledgement that it actually occurred, an apology. Thirdly, an assurance by them sharing their trauma, it's going to make a difference for others. And then obviously financial assistance as well. And the ADF has been incredibly proactive in doing those or providing those four A's. And certainly in my experience to date, the ADF has been second to none when we compare it to other institutions. Now, that may well be a low bar compared to when we're dealing with other institutions like the churches, et cetera. And they've got a long way and they can improve, but they've come a long way since 2011.

GTR: So this is, I guess part of what... I guess you approached this from a different angle. You saw aggressive litigations being perhaps not the way to go so much. You have come aboard with a breath of fresh air those years ago and you continue to assist the AD or the veterans, et cetera. How are things situated at the moment? I mean, there's lots obviously that you do with sexual harassment and financial advice, et cetera. Where are things at for the majority of veterans that you assist today? Are the stories the same or are they becoming a bit less?

AD: Well, first of all, Greg, we're never ever going to wipe out situations involving harasses or assaults. They're always going to happen. But what we can change is make sure that the systemic failings that have occurred in the past, they're eradicated. And we can also eradicate ignorance as well. So the ADF has been very proactive in addressing those issues, but there'll still be matters that occur from time to time. I suppose one of the concerns that I do have is the ability for the ADF to be fully resourcing or properly resourcing these complaints when they do happen. And to give you an idea, the defense was incredibly proactive with setting up, what's called the Defense Force Ombudsman. And there was a scheme there, which was called, which we referred to it as the Defense Reparation Scheme, where people could contact, they could put in a claim, and then as a result of that, they could get the acknowledgement, the apology, the assurance, and then they'd also receive an amount of up to $50,000, which was a reparation amount that didn't impact upon any other entitlements that their DVA or their superannuation.

Now, that was really, really proactive, positive thing to do. That came to an end on the 30th of June. And there

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was a number of issues with that. First of all, it didn't consider matters prior to 2004, sorry, it didn't consider matters after 2014. So to actually qualify for that scheme, the incident had to occurred before 2014. But there have been countless matters that have occurred since 2014 that should have been able to access that scheme and weren't able to do that. So that's a problem in itself. And I still think that it wasn't long-term thinking, trying to put a date on that abuse to get in there, that should have been there forever because it was such a really positive thing because people felt confidence coming forward and disclosing to an independent authority rather than going through a chain of command. So on one hand they did something incredibly, incredibly proactive, but I think that they made a mistake by saying that you could only access that if that happened prior to 2014.

And certainly there shouldn't have been a timeline on it. Because one thing that I know about survivors of abuse is that sometimes, for instance, with men, it takes 30 to 35 years on average for somebody to come forward to disclose. And there's going to be a lot of those men that went through the likes of Balcombe, that went through the likes of Lewin that are living in isolation in remote communities as a result of the trauma that they survived. And they never came forward and they wouldn't have ever been aware of it. So that's one of the challenges.

The other challenge there is, the ADF with those matters that have made complaints, and I spoke about resourcing there for a moment, but with the resourcing there on average, it's now taking somewhere between 18 months to two and a half years for a claim to be considered. Now, in a world where we've got a raw commission, they're investigating suicides within the ADF, it's just mind boggling to think that a survivor of abuse can have the courage to come forward and share their trauma, and it's then going to take another two years for someone to actually assess that and to get back to them. So that's incredibly disappointing. But as I say, on the one hand, the ADF has been very proactive in trying to address these, on the other it's let itself down.

GTR: Yes, indeed. And the time gap, the too long a time gap between the making of the complaint and having it seen to, 18 months to two years, is that just a lack of staff, do you think? Or a lack of..?

AD: Certainly. No, it's a lack of staffing. It is. I can't fault the Defense Ombudsman staff. And so when they're actually getting to a matter and they're reviewing it, et cetera, they're incredibly proactive. But there's too few of them to be dealing with too many matters. And it can't be fixed with a stroke of a pin from a point of view. If the government comes along and says, listen, let's resource this and let's make this so that they're able to deal with them in a more timely manner, well that would be wonderful. But at the moment, as I say, they haven't resourced it properly. Now, whether that's a sign that they are, I'd like to think that they take these matters very seriously. But when you think about it, that means that there's possibly crimes there where the perpetrators are still employed by the ADF.

GTR: We have heard about that. The possibility of.

AD: Yeah. So that to me is an issue. But when I come back and have a look where the ADF is at the moment, I'd like to think that they're being more proactive in trying to address the systemic failings that have occurred in the past and the cultural issues that have occurred. I think that from time to time, what should be happening is that they should be revisiting the report that Elizabeth Broderick did, who was the human rights and equal opportunities commissioner at the time.

GTR: I interviewed Elizabeth, some time ago.

AD: Yeah. She did incredible work. And sometimes I think that that report is sitting on a shelf somewhere gathering dust. I think that people should be taking that out every six or 12 months and looking at those and saying, are we living up to the recommendations that they accepted? Because they're invariably, Greg, you and I both see it in all different walks of life. They have an inquiry and then they say, yes, yes, yes, we're going to make change. And then 10 years later they have another inquiry to say, okay, this has happened and this as if it's new news for them.

GTR: Yep, yep. Yep. I think with obviously this access to complaints being, it had to happen before 2014, I think you said.

AD: That's correct.

GTR: It should be perpetual, obviously. And it should be ongoing. And we spoke about, I suppose the scars that are left on the individuals involved in this drawn out process, or at least too drawn out. Their lack of inclusion in society to their highest ability obviously affects society as a whole also. So there's many ongoing ripples in the pond, if you like, with these people.

AD: Greg, you're perfectly right. But on one hand, we're doing a Royal Commission invasion of suicides that are occurring in the ADF. Now, the trauma that someone experiences as a result of an assault, whether it be a sexual assault or whether it be harassment or whether it be verbal assault and what they go through through that period of time. And obviously you've got a degree of spectrum, you may have matters, which would probably be seen as almost like a common workplace occurrence where needs to address.

But then we've got some, on the other end of the spectrum, there's these incredibly serious matters that have occurred where people are living in a state of constant anxiety as a result of what occurred. And of course, it takes a certain amount of courage to come forward and to say, this happened to me. And if someone has the courage to come forward and to disclose about the trauma that they experienced, then the least that we can be doing is being there to support them and provide support. They shouldn't have to wait to two and a half years to get a response to say, it has been acknowledged, it has been... This is what the recommendation is. That's just appalling. But again, I just want to emphasize the fact that it's not the people that are assessing them, but should be carrying the blame on that. It should be the fact that we aren't resourcing.

GTR: Indeed. And that's a shout-out to all governments, and particularly the government's responsible and the department's responsible for increasing the resources ability of this to look after those in the ADF. But you speak obviously, and then the veterans that go and leave the ADF and then carry this around with them for years. I suppose it's the same in general society where you have sexual assault and the bravery initially to come forward and speak about this and then to have that dragged out in a number of ways. So I guess that's the main thing. And obviously Donaldson Law, and you've said about to write this, progress is being made as you say, are you confident that some further concrete improvements can be made in the repatriation of these things for veterans and those in the ADF are there?

AD: Yeah, well you mentioned about the approach that we adopt and where my approach, I suppose differs, is very much forged as a result of past experiences. And I remember going back many years to 2000 when we looked after a survivor, a number of

survivors of abuse and the matter ended up in the high court. And unfortunately we lost. And that was an incredibly traumatic experience for the people that had to live through that process. Back then in 2000, the law was against survivors of abuse. So no one was contesting that it didn't occur, they were contesting whether the organization was liable or not. But what that emphasized to me back then was that what we've done with those people, do to those survivors, is that they survived the trauma associated with abuse itself. They've then gone through the criminal process and they survived that.

And then what we did, and when I say we I'm talking about society, what society then did was we then put these them into this incredibly litigious process where it was very much adversarial. And that shaped me because I thought, jeez, we must be able to do this better. And that's where, I suppose the way that we differ and the reason why I set up the law firm was that in a national law firm that looks after survivors of abuse, was that I wanted to make sure that people had that choice of going to somewhere where they focused on the holistic outcomes as well as the monetary outcomes. Now, that's not always going to be possible.

And the longer we get away from the Royal Commission in relation to institutional child abuse, what we're finding is that some of the institutions now have short memories about what they said during the Royal Commission and the promises they made and the fact that they would be following through on recommendations, et cetera. So there's always, it may well be that instituting proceedings and litigation is the only way to go against certain institutions, but there'll be other institutions out there which want to be able to deal with the matters proactively and holistically. And isn't that a nice way to be addressing it, whether they're actually... Because they're actually showing genuine care towards the survivor in that situation.

GTR: Indeed, Adair. And you spoke about the child abuse, et cetera, et cetera. And of course one of the things that changing the unraveling of opinion and some establishments, some are dragging their heels more than others on this, both within, I guess what's happened to veterans previously during their experiences and also in the general community. So there are changes, some are changing quicker than others, but we speak obviously, you're appearing with The Last Post magazine. And one of our things obviously is to generate interest, which we've been able to do for 11 years outside of the veteran community and amalgamating the general community with the veteran community because we're all one of that. So you do a lot of other things, I guess based again on this philosophy of doing good things. I mean, you have putting youth in the picture, fallout resources, working with Australian Rugby League, and of course domestic violence against women and children and the trauma associated with that. These are important issues and we thank you for dealing with that. Any further comment on those parts of...

AD: Oh, Greg, I'm incredibly humbled, Greg, that you raised those issues because they are something that I feel very strongly about. And so this is for the wider community, I suppose, to give an insight as to how I came to be in that spot. As I remember back in 2007 and some of your listeners may remember that the then federal government, they decided to declare war on drugs and the way to declare war on drugs was to invest 52 million dollars in delivering a green pamphlet

into every person's letter box. I'm not sure if you remember that. All it was designed to do was start a conversation and I remember being in regional Queensland at that time and thinking, speaking to people, speaking to parents, and it was just no one read it. Like, okay, no one started a conversation and went into the bin. So I just thought we can be doing things better. So back in 2007, I came up with this concept and the concept was that why on earth are we running around preaching to youth about how to be better people and preaching these because... And care and I suppose treating them as a problem to be solved rather than treating them as the solution to the problem. If you can understand where I'm going with that.

GTR: Most definitely.

AD: Yeah. And so what I did was, an opportunity presented itself to address a group of teachers and social workers and police. And I pitched an idea about showing real case scenarios and then challenging them to come up with the solutions. And so I must stop my case selling job because next thing I know, I'm now a movie maker and I'm writing scripts and producing the resources. And I remember that the first one we did 2007, it was at Toowoomba and it was at the Empire Theater in Toowoomba, which is this grand old beautiful theater there. And there was 1500 school leavers. And I, at the time, Greg, I thought I was Geoffrey Robertson, I had the movies there being shown and I had the panel and putting up these hypothetical scenarios and I had my experts, I had my judge, I had my coroner, a clean skin prisoner, a police officer, a doctor. Anyway, at the end of it, I thought it was fantastic. I thought it went okay. I was incredibly nervous, but I thought, okay, I think I've got something here. I got the feedback from the teachers and the teachers said, "Hey, that was great." And then I got the feedback from the youth and the youth said, "Yeah, love the videos, but too many old people talking." embarrassed.

GTR: I had experience similar to that in my thirties. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

AD: Yeah. So same thing, you and I on the same page there, Greg, I thought you'd know. But as chance would have it, there was a school that couldn't make it the day before. And I rocked up there the next morning, I got a call from the principal said, can you come along? So I turned up there and so like something out of that TV show, Thank God You're Here, I arrived there. They said, "Listen, we've got 250 school leavers behind the door, we've given you 40 minutes. We doubt whether you last 20, in you go." And an hour 20 minutes later, we had to pull up stumps and all we done to start that conversation. So that was back in 2007. And from there it's just gone. So I suppose when I have a look at that side of things, what we do in that space is more, it's our attempt to play a part and a small part in trying to address those social issues.

So that's seen me work with an advisor for the NRL and something you may be thinking, or some of the listeners may be thinking, jeez, he's not doing such a good job there, but...

GTR: What are you actually doing? What are you doing with the NRL?

AD: So since 2007, I've been one of their advisors in relation to welfare and education, and I designed their resources, their fund resources as well. And so what I come back and I say about the NRL is that the NRL employs through their clubs and their subsidiaries, et cetera, there's around about 1800 young men that they employ in the at-risk category. And so that's men ranging from 18 through to 34 or so. And you know that no matter how much training we do, there is still going to be men that make poor decisions.

But what I do know when it comes to the NRL, that they're second to none with what they do with respect to the level of education, the level of support they put in, not only to the top grades, but their education starts at 15, 16 years of age and goes all the way through. Even though they know that, for instance, we're a 15 year old, that the prospect of him actually making a living out of the sport is minute. But the way that they figure it is, they've got to be, it's a wider community approach. So isn't that positive?

And I suppose the other thing that, you mentioned domestic violence there. Greg, violence towards women or gender violence is something that I feel incredibly strongly about. I suppose in Australia at the moment, we don't talk about figures about how bad it is, but when we talk about sexual assaults, for instance, we're talking about one in three or one in four-

GTR: Yep.

AD: ...Women aged 15 years above will survive a sexual assault. And in relation to sexual harassment, we're looking at, it's one in two women. It was 52% actually women aged 15 years and above will be subjected to sexual harassment. In relation to domestic violence, again, the figures are off the charts, one in three type thing. So those figures are horrendous. And if we can be doing whatever we can to be bringing men on that journey and bringing men with us.

GTR: No, no, that's excellent because we've long, since the magazine started, we've long been looking at health issues, mental health issues, and then of course the feed off to domestic violence, et cetera, which we've looked at over a number of years. I do remember Emily Archer is a lovely woman who wrote a magnificent book called Let My Voice Be Yours.

And Emily had come out from England with her husband, and once out here he changed because she couldn't find a job as a nurse, but he got a job. So he started controlling everything. He ended up stabbing her in the car one night and Emily wrote a book about it and we've featured this now for a long time. So very pleased to share you...

AD: Hey, Greg, that whole issue there with respect to coercive control, that's only, as you appreciate, that's been around for donkey's years in relation to it's impact. Very recently, Queensland's just introduced the laws now with respect to coercive controls. But isn't that just wonderful to start seeing that that is now coming into law because it's insidious. And, well, Greg, it gets even more shocking because the work that we do is obviously going into schools and going into employers, but with respect to schools, what we're seeing is the domestic violence now is dropping an age group. So 16 through to 24, we are seeing episodes of gender violence that are occurring. Whether it be the telephone or the text messages that they receive in relation to things like weaponizing mental health, where they're texting someone and saying, if you break up with me, I'll kill myself. Well, that is a form of domestic violence and we need to be talking about these issues and parents need to be talking. Well Greg, I think that you and I could talk for a long period of time on these subjects. I look at the magazine and I look at the quality of the articles that you put in. And it is, as I say, quite humbling that I get to talk to you. So thanks very much for that.

GTR: Thank you very much for those words. Thank you very much too. I tell you what, Adair, it's been an absolute privilege and pleasure speaking with you. And we will continue this. We will speak again and we will share that with listeners and readers. So thank you so much Adair.

AD: No problem at all, Greg. Thank you. ■

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Beautiful Broome

16 or 17 days in the life of an independent publisher.

Beautiful Broome

It started with a drive to Melbourne. An arrival in Yarraville. I fetched the keys and was greeted by Sabrina.

A day or two later, a trip to Michael Smith's Sun Theatre in Yarraville to see Oliver Cassidy's beautiful personal doco movie on the 1983 stopping of the damming of the Franklin River. Popcorn. Choc Tops. The following night, a walk to The Yarraville Club to see Collingwood and football legend Peter Diacos, on-stage with his football-playing sons Josh and Nick.

Two sleeps later we were up at 4am for an Uber to Melbourne Airport. Destination Perth. And then to Broome, WA. Making fun on the flights. Photos.

Arrival: The dirt. The red, red dirt. The Pindan. The heat. After a long winter, the beautiful heat.

We picked up our hire car. A four-wheel drive Suzuki Jimmy. We visited the nearest supermarket and stocked up on stuff we figured we'd need for our stay. It was an express stock-up. The day was getting long.

Heading for Cygnet Bay. Djarindjin-Lombadina. A two-hour drive north. We pulled into a roadhouse that we would later learn serves the world's best Barramundi Burgers.

It was near dark by the time we reached Cygnet Bay. The Oyster Farm. We made our way, along dirt tracks, to Safari Tent 3. We came across a mature Green Tree frog.

The next morning, breakfast at the Oyster Farm. The pool. The ocean nearby. Still safe to swim but the crocodile season fast approaching. News of the Harvest Party, the following night. Russell Coight photos. A trip to Lombadina Beach. A lone dog on the beach. Nobody and nothing else. Back at The Oyster Farm. Beers. The pool. A 15-minute walk back along the track, to Tent 3. On the balcony, listening to Collingwood lose the Preliminary Final. By a point.

At The Harvest Party. Oyster-eating. Music. A drive back along the pindan track to Tent 3. The open sky. Discussions of stars.

The next day, a boat ride to the oceanic waterfall. A return to the Farm and a lesson tour of the farm. An evening boat ride to Shell Island. Photos of the setting sun.

The next morning, a waking to a rising sun and a walk. Discovery of shells and plants and birds. A trip to visit Jackie and Paul and Black Dog. A second drive to Bardi Jawi and Lombadina beach. And a stop at the Roadhouse. Barramundi Burgers. That night, an open-fire backyard meal. The next morning, a visit to the Camp Kitchen for a cuppa. Outside Tent 3, photos of birds. Iced coffee with breakfast, before leaving for Broome.

A coffee and bus-trams and Sun Cinema in Broome. Still the heat, the beautiful heat. Then to Bali Hai. A walk from Cable Beach. An afternoon visit to Matso's. For Chilli Ginger Beer. We would return for that. At the Mangrove Hotel we ordered cocktails and dinner. Back to Bali Hai. The recording of a birdsong. The next day, a cruise outside of Cable Beach. The watching of the sunset. Back at Bali Hai.

In the morning, an early rise to capture the sunrise. A lighthouse. A drive with Jimmy, along a beach we soon learned was a non-driving beach. A coffee and a dog later in the day. Poolside. Cable Beach. Breakfast at Cable Beach. Cocktails at 1pm. Back to Matso's in the late afternoon. More Chilli Ginger Beer. Still, the beautiful heat. We drove to a place whose name I can't remember, for an Asian dinner.

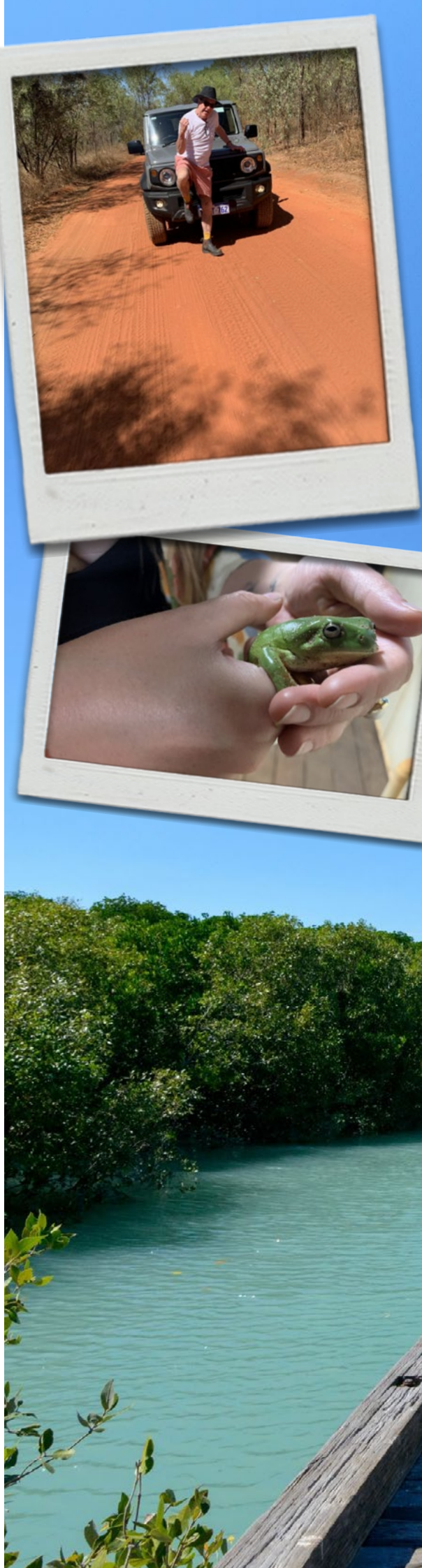
The next day we said goodbye. To Bali Hai and to Groundsman Tony and to Yvette and then back to Cable Beach for a last breakfast and swim. We returned Jimmy to the car rentals and kissed him goodbye.

At the airport we met a woman who had come to Broome for a long weekend, 20 years ago, and stayed. We boarded. The return trip home, quieter than the arriving trip. And seemingly longer.

Back in Melbourne. The cold. Jumpers and beanies retrieved from suitcases. Roadworks. Detours. Red lights. The big city.

A longing for a return to the simplicity of the pindan. ■

GREG T ROSS



RIGHT:
Streeters Jettty, Broome.

INSET PICTURES:
Greg T Ross Broome
travel images.

BELOW and OPPOSITE PAGE:
Photos by Greg T Ross

Broome time on the bay

Broome is known as the Gateway to the Kimberley,
but it's not without its own stunning scenery and attractions.

Broome Town Beach jetty.

Also known as Rubibi by the Yawuru people, this pearling and tourist town 1681km north of Perth is best known for Cable Beach, which offers 22km of pristine white sand, clear tropical waters, amber sunsets and the quintessential camel trains.

But as many first-time visitors soon discover when they arrive, there is a lot more to Broome, with much of it right in the centre of town.

Because it's located on a point that juts out of the bottom end of the Dampier Peninsula, Broome is blessed with 270 degrees of waterfront that includes several more beaches.

One of the most popular is Town Beach, or Guwarri, which offers a visual treat with pink pindan sand that melds into the opaque turquoise-blue water of Roebuck Bay.

The multi-award-winning Town Beach Foreshore Redevelopment has transformed the area into one of Broome's most popular recreational precincts. It is dominated by a 112m-long jetty that extends high above the seabed to accommodate the regular 10m-plus tides. It's a popular fishing spot and a great place to spot turtles around the high tide.

Town Beach is also a popular place to view the Staircase to the Moon - a natural phenomenon that occurs when a full moon rises over the exposed tidal flats to create a ladder-like reflection.

It's also where you'll find the Broome Historical Museum, housed in the former Customs House and adjoining Sailmaker's Shed, two of Broome's oldest buildings.

Run by volunteers seven days a week, it offers an insight into the town's diverse cultural history, its pearling heyday and the Japanese air raid during World War II that claimed at least 89 lives – a poignant memorial to those killed in the raid, called ***9 Zeros – 9 Stories*** can be found near the jetty.

Off to Chinatown

The Shire of Broome has completed a foreshore path that includes a 2.5-metre link between Town Beach with Chinatown that makes it easy to walk or ride between the two precincts past bulging boab trees and a few other attractions.

One of these is the stunning Women of Pearling statue, which shows an Aboriginal woman reaching for the surface with an oyster shell in hand. As well as paying tribute to the women who worked in the pearling industry, it acknowledges the practice of "Blackbirding", where Aboriginal women were kidnapped and forced to dive for shells without breathing apparatus, often with tragic results.

On a more cheerful note, Matso's Brewery a little further down the path has a shady beer garden where you can enjoy good food, and drink including its popular mango and ginger beers.

Another worthwhile stop along the walk is the Mangrove Hotel, which has a large outdoor bar/ restaurant atop a cliff with expansive views of Roebuck Bay.

A striking view can also be had from the Roebuck Bay Lookout on the corner of Dampier Terrace and Frederick Street. This elevated platform has all-abilities access and sweeping views over the bay and Dampier Creek.

Continuing north up Dampier Terrace brings you into Chinatown, which has been the multicultural heart and soul of Broome since the pearling crews set up their first camps and corrugated tin sheds in the 1880s.

Like Town Beach, the area has also been transformed and is now a charming town centre where you can explore pearl showrooms, browse Johnny Chi Lane, or visit the many art and photography galleries.

A range of street sculptures and statues representing the town's cultural heritage are dotted around the town. A lot of them focus on the town's pearling past, which you can learn about in greater detail at Pearl Luggers on Dampier Terrace, which features two of the last surviving and perfectly restored pearling luggers (boats) that are synonymous with Broome.

Back in the day, the luggers would come into town on the high tide at Streeters Jetty, which has been rebuilt and reaches into the mangroves.

A block away, on Carnarvon Street, you'll find a host of shops and the iconic Sun Pictures. Opened in 1916, the world's oldest operating open-air picture garden provides the uniquely Broome experience of watching the latest movies in a deck chair under the stars, wandering bats and even the occasional low-flying aeroplane. ■

Women in Pearling statue.

Johnny Chi Lane, Chinatown, Broome.

Statue of Chinatown icon Sam Male.

Plane flies over Sun Pictures, Broome.

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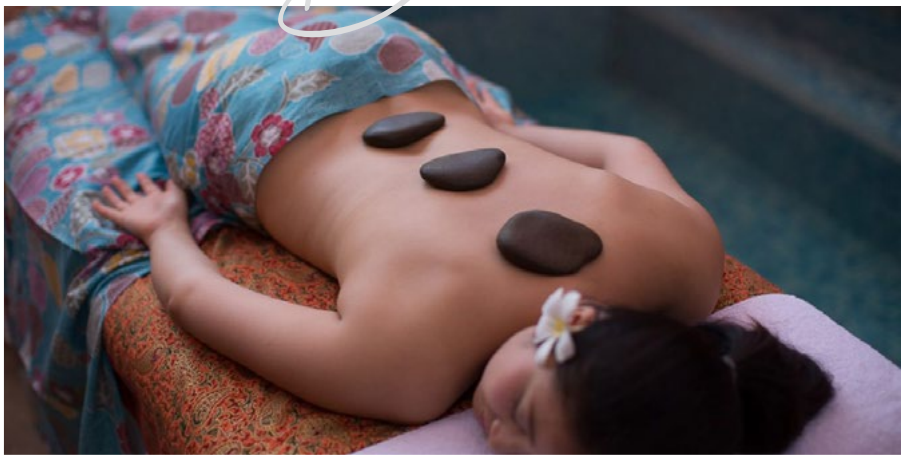


Immerse yourself in the story of the Australian Pearl

When we think of pearls, we imagine those beautiful white lustrous beads, sitting perfectly on a pendant, ring or perhaps an eye-catching strand. Reality is though, there is a lot more to a pearl than how it looks. Every pearl has a story, and that all starts with an oyster.

Luckily for us, there is a wonderful place you can visit to learn more about these ocean grown gems and the Australian pearling industry.

www.cygnetbaypearlfarm.com.au

That's the Brown family home. An operational pearl farm that began in 1946 and has been open to the public since 2009. A place that is surrounded by natural beauty. An ancient area full of wonder and remains the most untouched & pristine land and marine wilderness in the world.

The magical Kimberley Coastline is flowing with natural beauty that has had tourists dreaming of red earth, turquoise oceans and cascading waterfall holidays for years. You may have heard of Horizontal Falls, Mitchell Falls & Kings Cascade, but not everyone has heard of the thousands of islands just off Cygnet Bay Pearl Farm, named The Buccaneer Archipelago.

A place you can choose to go for its serene beauty and be immersed in the lively village of pearl farmers going about their daily operations along with visitors being guided around the farm.

The original family homestead has slowly evolved over the last 77 years and transformed into a pearl showroom and reception area, with the addition of the Homestead Restaurant and infinity pool. This heritage area is brought to life daily with farm-guided tours, boat adventures, restaurant dining and picnics, browsing world class pearls, or just relaxing in the safari tents or campsites.

With the Cape Leveque Road from Broome fully sealed to the Cygnet Bay turn-off, adventuring to the pearl farm is even more reachable for adventurers and day trippers alike. For something a little more spectacular, scenic flights are available through Air Kimberley, Broome Aviation and Fly Broome and land at the farm's pindan air strip. There is also the option to visit Horizontal falls direct from the pearl farm. The choice is yours to fly, or cruise along the spectacular Kimberley Coastline.

During your visit, immerse yourself into the epic story of the Australian pearl from its Indigenous beginnings through to the four generations of the Brown family who have been pearling and living at the farm since 1946. The pearl farm tour is the perfect starting point, where the guides will take you through the process and history of pearl farming. You will witness a live pearl harvest and then learn how these magnificent gems are graded.

Then inspire your adventurous spirit to a trip on the water with a sea safari tour through the Buccaneer Archipelago and discover stunning beaches on the Island Explorer, the largest tropical tides in the King Sound, or the amazing natural phenomenon of waterfall reef. These two-hour sea safari tours are a fantastic way to explore the Kimberley's unique natural environment. Spot turtles, dolphins, fish, and visit the pearl long lines on your way out of the bay.

Connect to the cultural significance of the pearl farm and visit Bruce Wiggan, the Bardi Jawi artist in residence as he creates his carved pearl shell 'riji' by the old homestead. Or join a cultural tour led by Bardi man and fourth generation pearl farmer Terry Hunter, who grew up on the farm and shares his family stories and their connection to the natural landscape. The Browns have always worked closely with the Indigenous Australians of the region and it's great to **hear stories** of Terry and his friend James Brown growing up together at the farm.

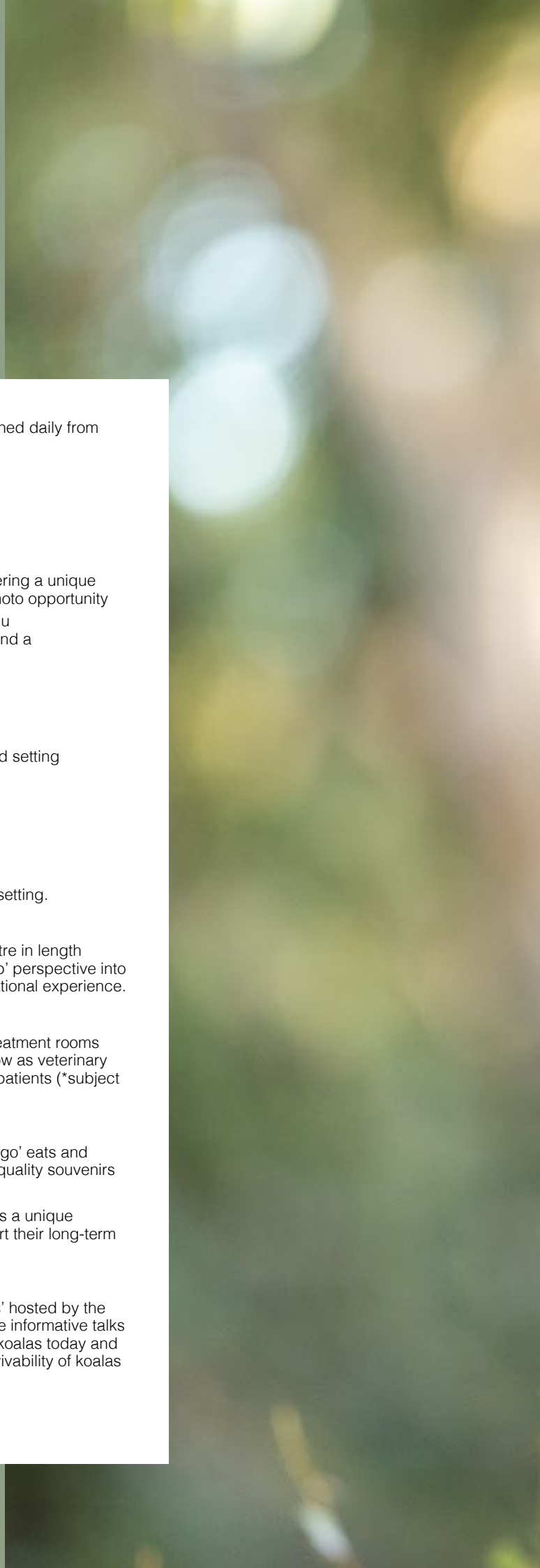
Discover the pearl showroom and choose a pearl to call your own as a special keepsake of your amazing experience at the farm. Or try the delicacy of pearl meat at the Homestead Restaurant, overlooking the bay and infinity pool.

There is a range of accommodation options to suit every traveller. Newly opened this year are the pearlers village safari tents. These deluxe glamping eco tents bring a new level of luxury with private ensuite, air-conditioning and king size beds. Built to be eco-friendly with minimal impact on the environment and furnished with items made in Broome by Aguyna (a not-for-profit community organisation). Surrounded by hundreds of locally grown plants, this serene space is accessible by 2WD and easy walking distance to the pool, restaurant, pearl showroom and tours. Wheelchair accessible tents are available.

To complement the existing 4WD accessible accommodation and camping available, 2022 will see the opening of a new 2WD accessible caravan and camping area. Set in the heart of the valley and close to the restaurant and pool, these unpowered camp and caravan sites will be the perfect location to take advantage of the facilities and be part of the unique pearling community.

Your experience at the farm can be as stimulating or as relaxing as you like. Visit for a day, a night, or a week. Whichever you choose, there is so much to see, do and explore. Either way, you will learn that every oyster has a story, and your visit to this unique part of the world will turn into a story of your own. ■

The Port Stephens Koala Sanctuary is a partnership between Port Stephens Council and Port Stephens Koala Hospital, a volunteer group that aims to provide the world best practice standards of care to sick, injured and orphaned koalas to give them the best opportunity to be returned to the wild.



These School Holidays the Port Stephens Koala Sanctuary is opened daily from 9am to 5pm and includes the following activities and features:

- Koala Centre – visitor admissions and guest reception areas
- Sanctuary Story Walk - offering visitors an immersive educational experience of the koala habitat
- Koala Hospital - Visit the state-of-the-art Koala Hospital with large glass viewing window
- Newcastle Airport SKYwalk and elevated viewing platform - offering a unique treetop perspective into the koala's natural habitat, a perfect photo opportunity
- Fat Possum Café - offering an extensive range of delicious menu items and 'grab and go' eats and treats, great barista coffees and a huge range of quality souvenirs, a lasting memento of your visit
- Deluxe 4 star accommodation - guests will be able to wake up with the koalas by staying in onsite four star glamping tents.

DAY VISITORS TO THE SANCTUARY ENJOY:

- Unique experiences with koalas in a natural and idyllic bushland setting
- Tailored education sessions from local guides on koala care, rehabilitation and eventual return back to the wild
- A new opportunity to directly contribute to the preservation of local koalas in Port Stephens.

NATURAL SETTING

Unique experiences with koalas in a natural and idyllic bushland setting.

NEWCASTLE AIRPORT SKYwalk & Viewing Platform

The Newcastle Airport SKYwalk and viewing platform is a 225 metre in length elevated pathway and viewing platform, offering a unique 'tree top' perspective into the koala's natural habitat, a perfect photo opportunity and educational experience.

KOALA HOSPITAL

Visit the state-of-the-art Koala Hospital with Intensive Care Unit treatment rooms and holding pens. Take a look through the hospital viewing window as veterinary staff carry out *examinations and administer treatment to koala inpatients (*subject to treatment times).

FAT POSSUM CAFÉ

Offers an extensive range of delicious menu items and 'grab and go' eats and treats, baristas made coffees as well as offering a huge range of quality souvenirs and gifts, a lasting memento of your visit

Opened daily from 9am to 5pm, the Koala Sanctuary offers visitors a unique opportunity to see koalas in their natural habitat. It will also support their long-term rehabilitation and preservation.

SCHOOL HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES

These School Holiday visitors can enjoy morning 'Sanctuary Talks' hosted by the Educational Officers from the Port Stephens Koala Hospital. These informative talks will provide information and explanations on the plights affecting koalas today and give general tips on how you can assist ensure the long term survivability of koalas in the wild.

Check the Sanctuary's social medias for 'Talk Dates and Times'.

Sailing the Stella Mia

Stella Mia is a Beneteau Oceanis 45, sailed around the world by Dierk and Sabrina Meyerheinrich. Married for almost 40 years, their passion for the ocean includes surfing, sailboarding and their adventures on this amazing boat.

Sabrina is the daughter of TLP's editor Greg's friend and Italian Olympian Luciano Sandrin.

20/8

It was at last time to leave Rhodes. We had wintered the boat at Nereus Marina for three years over the Covid period, left there this year to discover the south coast of Turkey and back again. I went to see Elias, the owner of the boat yard and bade him farewell. Also we thanked Nico, the Yachting agent for his help.

Maria Rosa, Giancarlo and Valentina had left for Italy. We had to plan a challenging sail to Crete. The waters are particularly difficult because the Meltimi wind funnels through two straights, Stenon Karpathou, between Rhodes and Karpathos and Stenon Kasou between Karpathos and Crete. The water in these straights are relatively shallow and the sea has a huge fetch down the Aegean Sea, so often waves build up against a slight counter current. Rod Heikel, who writes the Pilot Books for sailors calls these angry seas... a bit of ring twitch going on. Not only that, we were travelling against prevailing winds, tight on the breeze.

I spoke to a local captain and advised the conditions currently were good. I asked whether we should take a northern or southern route. He did not commit himself, so we chose the southern route. We would sail to Lindos on the south coast of Rhodes and wait for the right conditions, sail to Karpathos, the next day to Kasos and onto Crete the following day.

We were to remain at anchor in Lindos for one night only, but passing thunderstorms on the morning we were due to leave forced us to stay another night. The very next day we left in light airs but albeit cloudy conditions. Incidentally, anchoring in Lindos was quite challenging due to large rocks scattered everywhere. We had heard that some of the larger motor yachts had to conscript Scuba divers to wrestle their anchors out of the rocks and ledges. We were lucky because we found a sandy patch. By the way, if ever in Rhodes, Lindos is definitely worth a visit. It is a small natural harbour and was the principal city on Rhodes in 408 BC. It's narrow streets are packed tightly and the beaches resemble something from Cannes, so they say. Furthermore, in the village, you find many houses have black and white mosaic pebbles on floors and paths, a legacy from the prosperous middle ages. There is also a well preserved castle atop a hill. The town becomes packed with tourists from Rhodes, especially when the cruise ships are in.

Back to the boring stuff, sailing. As we entered the straight between Rhodes and Karpathos we were met with rain squalls, stiff breezes on the nose and swell. Not ideal, so with two reefs we kept going all the way to Karpathos in challenging conditions.

Once in Karpathos we anchored on the quay and cracked a well earned Mythos beer. Karpathos is a very wind swept island. They say more Karpathians live in Athens then on the island. None the less it was still quite attractive. Unfortunately, we could not stay. Our weather window was still open.

The following day we motor sailed to Kasos, a small desolate island between Karpathos and Crete. Once on the quay, the Port Police cam and inspected our Transit Log. We were the only yacht here and he explained that he did not see many due to the strength of the Meltimi wind here. The islands in its path are desolate, very few trees. Kasos was fun though, totally relaxing. A Greek woman approached us while we were on the beach and invited us to a celebration on the island the following day. We had to respectively decline due to our time schedule. So kind, and that is more often than not the nature of Greek people.

The next day, off to Crete. A big day with light winds. That afternoon we arrived in Sitia. I reported to the Port Police. They were fairly officious until one of them said, "You Aussie, do you know AC/DC?". Of coarse I do. He loved Aussie metal bands. I told him about Midnight Oil, so we looked them up on Youtube and played "Beds are Burning" He was stoked, so listened to the Oils for a few minutes before departing, soooo funny. ■

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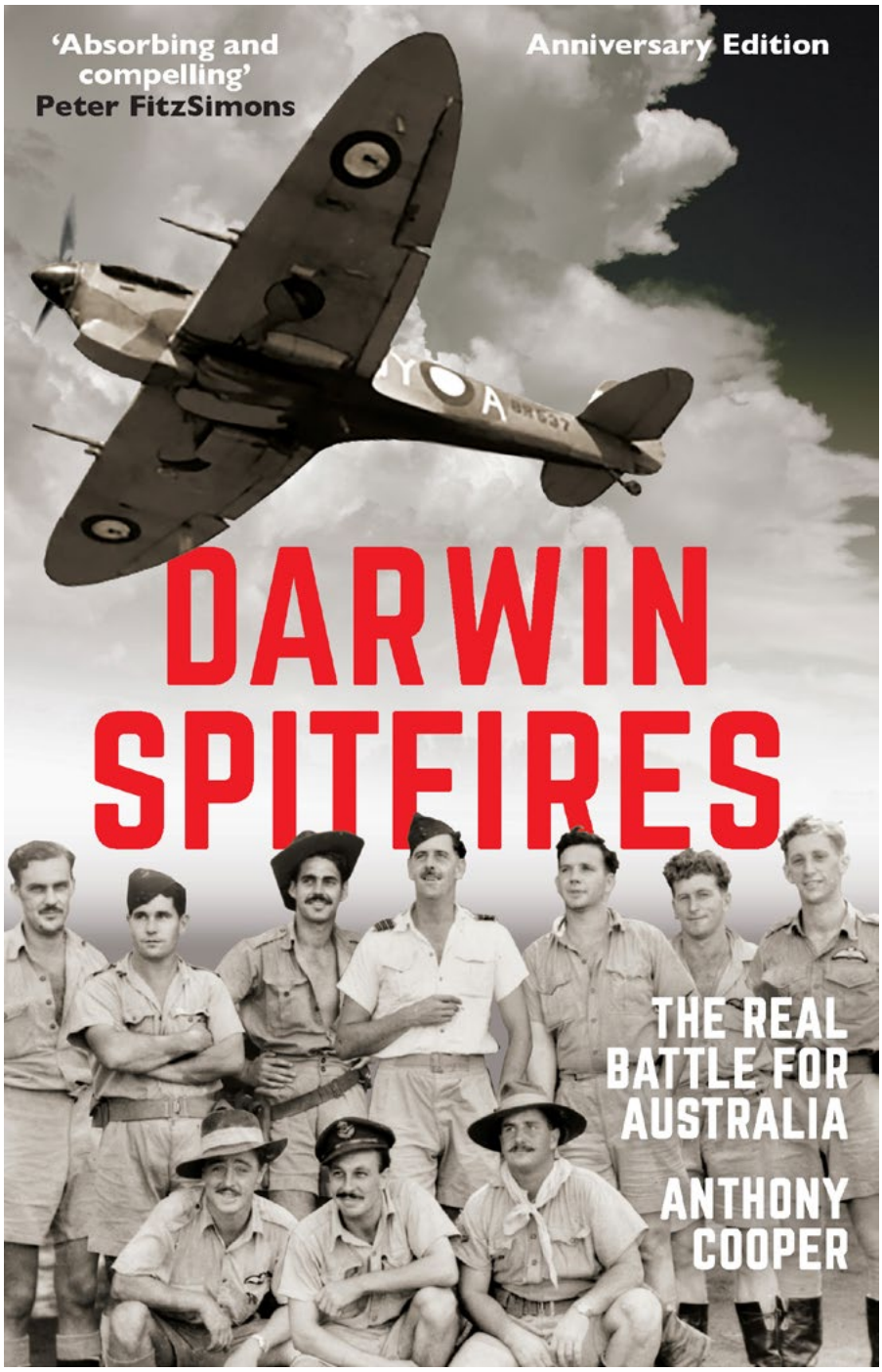
EDITED EXTRACT FROM

DARWIN SPITFIRES: THE REAL BATTLE FOR AUSTRALIA

BY ANTHONY COOPER, NEW SOUTH BOOKS



OPPOSITE PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:

Bomb damage to the RAN's harbour-side oil tanks in the 15 March raid. Fire crews shelter from the heat behind an asbestos shield while directing a hose onto the fire. AWM Negative 157291.

Hudson bomber A16-242 of 2 Squadron RAAF at Batchelor airfield on 28 October 1942, about to be bombed-up for a raid. Note the revetment walls in the background and the shadow of the camouflage net overhead. AWM Negative 027611.

Zero over Australia: a Model 32 Zero is test-flown over south-east Queensland, 8 December 1943. Abandoned by the 2nd Air Group, it was found in unserviceable condition on Buna airfield in December 1942 and rebuilt by the Allied Technical Air Intelligence Unit at Eagle Farm airfield in Brisbane. AWM Negative P01097.007.

Many Australians are aware of the great bombing raid that struck Darwin on 19 February 1942, but few are aware of what followed. For almost two years, the airspace over north-west Australia was routinely penetrated by Japanese raids, a total of more than 70 being tallied against targets that included not only the area around Darwin, but places further along the coast such as Broome, Wyndham, Drysdale Mission (present-day Kalumburu) and Milingimbi Island. The Japanese air offensive extended as far west as the Pilbara region in Western Australia, as far south as Katherine and as far east as Arnhem Land, on the western edge of the Gulf of Carpentaria.

The first raid occurred in February 1942 and the last in November 1943, so the campaign was broadly of two years' duration. Within this timeframe, the Japanese waged two daylight raiding campaigns, one in each of the respective dry seasons: March–August 1942 and March–September 1943. The 1942 campaign of day raids was opposed by the 49th Fighter Group of the United States Army Air Forces (USAAF), while the 1943 campaign was opposed by the Royal Australian Air Force's (RAAF) No. 1 Fighter Wing, made up of both Australian and British units.

This book provides a detailed narrative of the 1943 season of raids, because the defence of Darwin by Commonwealth Spitfire pilots is an important and dramatic national story – but one that has been neglected in Australian history writing. The 19 February raid has been the subject of a number of books since the 1960s, whereas the ongoing raids afterwards have received little attention, with the result that the majority of Australians have no idea that they even occurred. Even the 2001 Centenary History of the RAAF avoided any reference to this campaign: despite one of its chapters being entitled 'The Battle for Australia', this book strangely ignored the only sustained campaign where Australians (along with Americans and Britons) fought and died in the direct defence of the Australian mainland. The original Australian Official History made the best effort to document the 1943 air battles, but has apparently been little read. Only one full-length book exclusively devoted to the topic has ever been published, by Jim Grant, a 1 Fighter Wing veteran. The depth of historical and cultural neglect of 1 Fighter Wing's story is shown by the review of Grant's book in the RAAF News, which unselfconsciously referred to the 1943 defensive campaign as 'little known operations over Darwin'.

Moreover, 1 Fighter Wing's combat record has been shrouded in controversy among the specialist aviation readership ever since Christopher Shores entered the field in the 1970s, for this pioneering

British historian used newly accessed Japanese sources to dispute the wing's claimed victory tally. In short, the Spitfire pilots were credited at the time with more than 60 Japanese aircraft 'confirmed' shot down throughout the 1943 raids, whereas the research into Japanese records commissioned by Shores supports less than one-third this number of losses. Thus the whole combat reputation of the RAAF and Royal Air Force (RAF) Spitfire units that defended Darwin has unavoidably been brought into question. Most authors, both British and Australian, have responded to this research by ignoring it. However, if indeed the Spitfire pilots did perform poorly in their air combat operations against the Japanese, the historian owes it to posterity to inquire into the reasons for this.

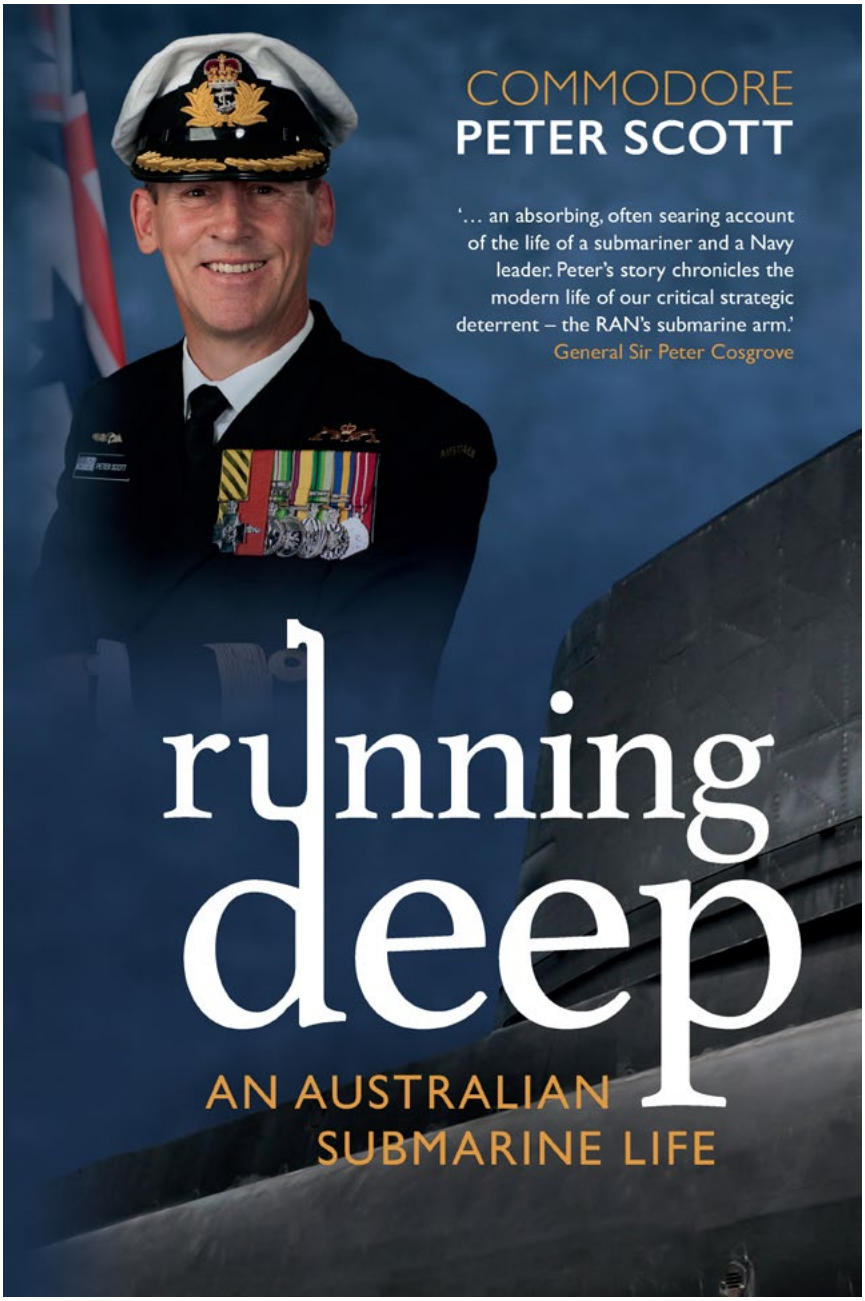
By telling the story of the Australian and British Spitfire pilots in 1943, I hope that Australians will recover a slice of national memory. The 1942–43 air raids on Darwin constitute the only sustained and intensive direct assault on Australian mainland territory in the whole of World War II – indeed, in the whole history of post-1788 Australia. In a war where Australians fought and died overseas, the pilots who lost their lives in this campaign met their deaths

in Australian skies, on Australian soil and in the waters off the Australian coast. It is a good story: in 1943 a small band of inexperienced Australian and British fighter pilots, numbering few more than 100, fought an ongoing air battle in defence of Australia's front-line northern base, flying against a formidably skilled and proficient opponent who invariably outnumbered them. If there has ever been a chapter of Australia's military history that needs to be rediscovered, this compelling and dramatic story is it. ■

EDITED EXTRACT FROM

RUNNING DEEP: THE AN AUSTRALIAN SUBMARINE LIFE

BY COMMODORE PETER SCOTT, FREMANTLE PRESS



From conducting top-secret missions to making history commanding the farthest deployment of Australian submarine service, Commodore Peter Scott depicts what it takes to be a Submariner.

Over a decorated 34-year career, Commodore Scott served in 10 submarines, passed the most demanding military command course in the world and served as the Head of Profession of the Submarine Arm of the Royal Australian Navy. During that time his character was forged by the challenges of naval service, success and failure as a leader, catastrophic onboard disasters while dived, and life-threatening traumas. Along the way, he also endured personal battles with self-doubt, addiction, depression and anxiety.

In this honest and enlightening tale, he shares his quest for self-acceptance, and for the courage, commitment and compassion to lead the warriors of Australia's Silent Service.

While it was often heavily disguised under a veil of contempt,I found the encouragement and support the crew provided was directly proportionate to the effort they saw me put into my training. I truly felt I could shape my destiny here.

Within a week, we are letting go lines to deploy. This first day at sea in *Oxley* stretches out beyond imagination: not for tedium, but for the raw concentration of new experience. As we depart in the fierce blow that rips across Cockburn Sound, two sailors securing berthing lines are swept off the aft casing and onto the ballast tanks only moments after I go below. They each find a handhold, saving themselves from washing aft and down into the churning screws, and are hauled back on deck. Not quite a man overboard, but pretty damn close, and a cautionary start to the voyage.

Sailing by the entrance to Fremantle Harbour and past low-lying Rottnest Island, we shape a northerly course. Perched at the front of the fin on the open and windswept bridge for my first surfaced watch, I'm exhilarated. I now have a passion for the majesty and the humility of life at sea, but this is something else. As the long black hull pushes through the approaching seas, which spray away from and then collapse over the egg-shaped sonar dome on the bow, I am tingling with nervous energy. The Torpedo Officer, an old chum from Naval College days, hands me the tannoy to order 'Diving Stations' and report our progress clearing the bridge.

Summoned to the fore-ends, I make my way below and join the XO. Already relaxed into sandals, old shorts and a faded blue work shirt, he moves through the submarine from forward to aft at a rapid and practiced pace as we deliberately check the state of hundreds of valves to ensure the submarine is correctly 'opened up' for diving. Although this has already been proven in each compartment and reported to the control room by the crew, there's no room for doubt as the submarine transitions from the surface to a dived state. And the crew take no offence that their work is checked.

Back in the control room, now packed with more people than I thought possible, every station is manned and then some. The Captain orders the Officer of the Watch and lookout below. They make their way down through the fin and into the cramped conning tower that separates the pressure hull from the outside world. I distinctly hear the clang of the upper lid being shut, banishing the outside world, and the accompanying reports.

'Upper lid shut. Upper lid shut, 2 clips, 2 pins.'

'Diving now, diving now,' crackles over main broadcast.

'Open main vents,' orders the Captain.

Switches are flicked, indicator lights blink. I hear Number 4 main vents, located on either side of the control room, thud open. Outside the submarine, seventeen geysers spray up from the vent holes as air rushes from the ballast tanks, pushed out by the seawater now barging in through free flood holes in the bottom of the tanks. In an instant, our buoyancy is gone and we are on our way.

‘1, 2, 4, 6 and 7 main vents open, double indication on 6 starboard,’ reports the panel watchkeeper.

‘Full dive on the planes, 6 down, 75 feet back to 57,’ again from the Captain.

‘Full dive on the planes, 6 down, 75 feet back to 57,’ acknowledges the Coxswain, Oxley’s most senior sailor and experienced planesman. He pushes forward on the single control mechanism, at once manoeuvring the rudder to steer the boat as well as the forward and aft planes to change pitch and depth.

‘Report 6 starboard main vent,’ orders the engineer on the trim seat. ‘6 starboard main vent open,’ is the immediate reply over main broadcast.

‘Raise forward.’

The panel watchkeeper lifts the short brass lever controlling the attack periscope. The sleek steel of the mast rises swiftly through the deck with a quiet hydraulic hiss. The watchkeeper’s gaze is intent on the Captain, a few feet away, to ensure it stops the instant the periscope handles are lowered and his eye meets the monocle.

‘Dome under,’ reports the Captain, sighting the bow as it slips beneath the surface.

‘5 down, 30 feet. 6 down,’ says the Coxswain, reporting the keel depth while nursing the down angle on the boat.

‘Flooding the masts,’ calls the panel watchkeeper as seawater flushes into the induction and exhaust masts above our heads, gurgling past the sight glass.

‘35 feet.’

‘Blow Q,’ orders the Captain, sending high pressure air into this trimming tank and displacing 800 gallons of seawater to lighten the bow.

‘40 feet.’

‘Upper lid dry,’ from the Torpedo Officer – ‘Torps’ – standing by the tower and ready to climb back to the bridge should we need to surface in emergency.

‘50 feet.’

‘Shut the lower lid, shut the lower voice pipe cock.’

‘Vent Q,’ to the rasp of air being released back into the fore-ends.

‘Q vented, Q-vent shut.’

‘65 feet, Sir.’

‘Shut the lower lid, speed for trimming.’

‘Stop together, group down, half ahead together,’ from the trim seat, swiftly aligning the telegraphs.

‘75 feet, Sir. 1 up, 2 up, coming up.’

‘60 feet.’

‘Raise forward, nothing close, keep 54 feet. Set watch search. Set watch warner. Carry out long post-diving checks.’

‘56 feet, 54 feet, on depth. On course, 170.’

‘Captain, Sir, sound room. All sonars operating correctly with the exception of PIPRS, two contacts held faint. Sonar 21, bearing 079, held attacker, ranger. Sonar 40 bearing 216, held ranger only.’

‘Main vents cycled, all main vents indicating shut.’

‘Officer of the Watch. Captain. Pipe the watch “First watch, watch dived, patrol-quiet state”.’

With this cacophony of orders and acknowledgements and tightly choreographed actions, the submarine is brought safely beneath the surface. I see the crew, highly attuned to their environment, are at once diligent and relaxed throughout this barrage. Experiencing it for the first time, I know I can make sense of each order and action in isolation, but the rapidity with which the reports come – from every corner of the control room and every compartment of the submarine, in what sounds like a stream of disjointed conversations – is overwhelming. I thought I was prepared for this. My head pounds. It takes a moment to realise that it’s all gone quiet. We’re under. After five and a half years in the Navy, I am at sea in a dived submarine. ■

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:
Di Skewes: In uniform, The physiotherapy department, In 'greens', Outside her living quarters, At work.

LIEUTENANT DIANNE SKEWES

"If I ever have flashbacks it would be this … to go into ICU and see a hale and hearty body put halfway down the bed because they don't have any legs I think is something I will never forget."
Di Fairhead (née Skewes).

In 1969 Dianne Skewes, responded to an advertisement: "Physiotherapist required for twelve months' service in Vietnam urgently."

Aged 25 and recently returned from England, Di did not realise at first that the job was with the Army. "At that stage I was not strongly for or against Australian soldiers being in Vietnam, but figured if they needed a physio I was happy and able to be in it." .

Di's induction to Army life was brief: a mere six weeks at the 2nd Military Hospital at Ingleburn before being issued 'greens', GP (general purpose) boots, a helmet and a brown felt hat retrieved from 1944 war storage.

Arriving at 1AFH in July 1969 she was struck by the austerity of the 106-bed hospital. As the first physiotherapist at 1AFH, her immediate task was to establish a functioning 'out-patient department' from scratch, at the end of a cement floored Nissen hut. Di's priorities were an exercise bike, free weights and (most importantly, given the heat, and lack of air conditioning) a fan.

Almost all of her patients were Australians or New Zealanders injured by gunshot wounds and mines.

One of her primary responsibilities was to provide chest physiotherapy for patients in intensive care. It was hard work, and uncomfortable for the soldiers she treated.

"…On one occasion, I can remember there was one guy in there who had a really bad chest and I'd been giving him a really hard time… If you think of anyone who's got a fractured rib or a little incision, coughing is the worst thing they want to do..."

Di also treated American soldiers and occasionally members of the Vietcong prisoners of war (POWs) but to her disappointment, did not treat civilians.

Her working hours began at seven in the morning: Monday to Saturday as a matter of routine and Sundays when busy.

Female officers were a rare commodity. When the battalions had rest periods at Nui Dat or the RAAF Base in Vung Tau there were parties, and Di was often invited, along with female nurses and 'Red Cross girls', hitching a lift in a helicopter or RAAF Caribou.

On one occasion, the CO granted permission for Di to attend a US Physical Therapist Conference at Nha Trang on the treatment of leprosy and burns. Getting to the conference was a feat in itself, flying north, along the coast, on the well-established 'Wallaby Run'. Even though the journey was punctuated by 'hairy' take-offs and landings, and rocket attacks on the town of Nha Trang itself, Di felt fortunate to have seen so much of the country.

Throughout her deployment, Di was constantly reminded of the horrors of conflict. The sound of Iroquis helicopters, that brought her patients, stayed with her for years:

"It just gets in your bones, you just feel the vibrations, you just know…. Everyone who served in Vietnam is affected by that sound.

Following Vietnam, Di left the Army, married Fred, a career Army Officer in the 6th Battalion, continuing as a physiotherapist, while bringing up a family.

Like others, she remembers feeling estranged on her return and reluctant to discuss her experiences. "When I came back, people said 'How was it?' They wanted a sentence, but there's no way you can explain it to someone who hasn't been there."

In 1992, at the dedication of the Australian Vietnam Forces National Memorial in Canberra, Di finally allowed herself "the luxury of remembering", recalling a time that had polarised a nation and remained "locked away with the letters and photos in a cupboard and the memories way back in my mind,".

In July 1970, Di was replaced by Lieutenant Susan Woolley, a physiotherapist from Perth. Susan inherited a well-established unit but the 'hand over' was brief - a simple chat between two women at Saigon Airport.

Susan, in turn, was replaced by Captain Shirley Rae from New South Wales – the last physiotherapist to serve in Vietnam. ■

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David Wilton

Greg T Ross: Welcome to The Last Post podcast interview series, Dave. Dave Wilton from CSC and the Vets Hub. How are you, Dave?

Dave Wilton: Yeah, really, really good. Thanks, Greg. Living the dream up here in Coolum Beach at the moment, I have to say. It's a beautiful day, but yeah, it's great to be with you. Thanks for the invite.

GTR: Yeah, no, ditto. And I did tell you, and I'll inform for those that are interested, I did go to school at Coolum when I was much, much, much, much younger, and so very happy memories of that area. So I look forward to catching up with you in person up there soon. Dave, the Vets Hub, you're a veteran. I mean, you're the national manager of Defence and Veterans, you're a liaison. You're also obviously with CSC. How do those things combine to help veterans, Dave?

DW: Yeah, that's exactly the point, Greg. I mean, for me it's all about better outcomes for veterans and their families. And there was a bit of a journey a few years ago, I guess, when I came to CSC after my service in Army, that it was really apparent that we needed to reduce complexity, make it a little bit simpler. There's all that conversation out there in the veteran community that was seen through productivity commissions, inquiries, now the Royal Commission. So what was the thing that would make it easier and simpler for veterans? So I think of it as something they can identify with, single source of truth if you like, and a place where we are connected as well, Greg.

I mean we can talk about this in a while if you like, but everyone's trying to do a similar kind of thing. Have this connected hub environment out there, trusted partners, better access and all that kind of thing. CSC probably wasn't do doing that as well as it could have back then. So that was another part of the initiative of Vets Hub is to better connect with partners and make it easier for veterans to find what they want, if you like. So we're expanding it as we go. We've got a few partnerships now already with Legacy Australia, with the Australian National Maritime Museum, Veterans' Wellbeing Hubs around the country, that kind of thing. So if I can put it in three words, single front door is the logic, and I'm sure you've heard that before.

GTR: Yeah. That's interesting you say that too, Dave. The single front door mantra is something, I guess. I mean, are there too many veterans organisations around? Were you drawn to it because of the seeming complexity of some organisations despite their best attempts? Did you want to clarify that for veterans and cut through the jungle? Was that the idea?

DW: Yeah, look, there is a lot of red tape, a lot of bureaucracy out there. There's no doubt about that. Generally, yes, to your question. I was up in Townsville a few years ago now, and we had a gathering of half a dozen or so veteran support organisations, ESOs, that are up that way, the Oasis as well, who are well known. It's a pretty simple model in my mind. We're all serving the same person, all trying to get to the same outcome, the same mission in the defense language, a better outcome for them.

Then why wouldn't we work together, in the same room, at the same time, rather than have that veteran have to go from A to B to C to D and to continually repeat themselves, which I know is one of the really, really big frustrations, especially with government. I get that totally.

So yes, better connectivity. You're right. There's thousands out there, ESOs, VSOs across the country. But yeah, I come from the position that they're all trying to do the right thing. They've all got their little niches. Certainly up here on the Sunny Coast in Queensland, there's little groups all over the place, but they're important because certain groups of veterans identify with them. There's a motorcycle club here, there's the Diggers Rest, there's a group who do donuts, there's a surfing group, whatever it is. The RSL sub- branch is the traditional ones, that kind of thing.

So I'm just trying to find a way for CSC, for the Vets Hub to be connected with them. I really like to think about it from a grassroots, regional approach as well, Greg. There's sometimes too much talk about the big end of town and big solutions, big government solutions that perhaps don't identify with who those veterans are in their communities as well. So we're doing our best to get out and understand that and connect with them.

GTR: Yeah, that's right. And the big solutions, as you put it, they look good on paper, but then transferring that to real life situations, that's I guess when the red tape starts, Dave. So is it true that the Vets Hub was established in 2020?

DW: Yeah, late 2020. It started to grow in '21. We're growing again now. Originally more of an online community with a few touchpoints out there. But I'm a one man band at CSC, so as I go, I make my way around the country and connect with others, we continue to grow the partnerships and the like. What I really want to do for those who are listening, is feature on our website, on our Vets Hub website, what others are doing in the veteran community so we can connect as well. And I'd encourage people to get in touch with me as well and talk about that.

GTR: Yeah. When you left the ADF, did you have your eyes on a role similar to this or was this something that came out of the blue? How did you actually connect with the CSC?

DW: Yeah, I don't know if it's a good story, but it's a story, Greg. I was coming back from deployment in Afghanistan and I was starting to think about what was next, I suppose, because I was facing another posting away from my family, which would've been six, seven years on the trot, not actually living in my own house and living out of a suitcase as many of us do. So we made the decision, we were up here in Coolum, I think I was painting the house or something like that, and a mate in Army headquarters called me up and said, "Hey Dave, can you come back and do a bit of project work in the reserve for three months?" I went, oh yeah, that sounds all right. It's three years later that we finished that project.

But the good thing about that was that it introduced me to someone who introduced me to someone else who introduced me to CSC, who were at the time looking to expand its engagement and connections with the veteran community. So I'm the first person to do this role at CSC, which is actually quite wonderful, so a blank sheet of paper and crack on if you like, in that army language.

So I think to answer your question, yeah, I was probably drawn to something working in the veteran community. I was doing some volunteer work up here with local RSL sub-branches and the like. But I really saw this as a big opportunity to actually make some change that was enduring, lasting, beneficial across the country, not just in my own backyard.

GTR: And I guess one of the challenges for you and indeed the hub I guess, is the diversity of the veteran community. For all the different reasons there are for transitioning out of ADF, there are so many diverse sections within the veteran community. Have you found this?

— *INTERVIEW* —

David Wilton is the National Manager of Defence and Veterans Liaison at Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation (CSC) David is also the creator of the Vets Hub, a single front door dedicated to improving financial wellbeing for veterans and families through a collaborative network of support and information.

DW: Yes. You're so right, Greg. Yes. And I think to go to where we're going, we're really trying hard to understand the journey if you like, in service. Some agencies, some organisations have a slice of that journey, maybe when you're serving, maybe after serving. It's interesting for CSC that I guess if you do it right and your membership thinks you're doing okay, then you'll have a relationship for life. So the journey is joining the ADF, serving, and all those life events that happen during service, postings, promotions, families, children, buying a house, that kind of thing. And then the next part comes to thinking about leaving the ADF, transitioning from the ADF and then life after service. And for CSC, most importantly, transition to retirement, retirement outcomes.

So we really want to understand that full picture. And then I think we're doing it pretty well, and then help our partners understand that better as well. Particularly the big end of town, but also the other partners that we work with. So that people can see that it's not just a transactional engagement with serving ADF members or veterans, but it's got to have that more holistic wellness view to the combined outcomes of what CSC does and what others do.

GTR: Yeah, that's a pretty challenging and big umbrella, isn't it? To do that with the wellbeing and of course very, very important. Just as big as it is, it's just as important, What actually do you offer, some of the things that you offer veterans? Actually before we ask that, just one more question regarding transition. Do you think it's possible, Dave, that in the past, we'll say some veterans have held on longer because they were worried about the transition period and the challenges involved in that?

DW: If I can call it the ecosystem if you like, of people who are supporting veterans when they're thinking about transition, I think in the past we didn't do enough to help them prepare and understand the challenges they're going to face afterwards. And if I can use my own example, Greg, that's the best one. I had a pretty successful transition. I had a great career in Army, I loved it. I was doing that project work that I mentioned before and there was a day when I decided my wife and I

PODCASTS: **www.thelastpostmagazine.com/tlp-interviews**

should go for a bit of a drive. We were up on the beach at Noosa North Shore and I was living the dream, cooking a barbecue on the beach and watching the whales go by. But my wife turned around to, and quite rightly, she said, "Dave, if this is your plan, if this is your transition, then the army has wasted a hell of a lot of money on you."

It made me think about what I didn't do, didn't think about or perhaps didn't know to help me. And I was doing okay, but well aware of all the not so great cases that we've read about over the years past and people who haven't done well. And it all comes back to, for me, earlier engagement for them while they're serving, better preparation, better access to the resources and the like. What we're trying to change, Greg, and not just CSC, not just Dave Wilton, but the system is taking a different view. So instead of saying, this is what you need to do in order to prepare for transition, how about we ask the question, who are you? What's in it for you? What's important to you? What's important to your family? And then let the system wrap around that, reduce that complexity, make it a little bit simpler, because everyone's circumstances are different, right?

GTR: Yeah. You're spot on.

DW: So we've got to take a more systems holistic view. And I know it's easy to say, it's hard to do, but that's where we're going.

GTR: And of course you can be living the dream, but it can be sometimes a way of perhaps not dealing with things that should be dealt with. How important is trust? And I guess this is one of the things that offer, you're a personable person, if that makes sense, and CSC is doing some good work. Is it important to incorporate trust into what you do?

DW: Oh look, it's essential, isn't it? Absolutely essential. And that goes back to that point I made about the lifetime journey. Veterans are not going to stay with CSC if they don't trust us to do the right thing by them and their family, look after their interests. That's what we're about. Yeah. And the trust goes to who you're working with, the partners and the like, as well, for me personally. CSC has to have the right people in the same room as I mentioned before, to build that trust. But I think maybe the point is there's a lot of narrative out there still about distrust in government, distrust in the system.

There's a lot of narrative about vulnerable veterans and that kind of thing, and that's appropriate. We've got to do more there. We have to absolutely do more. But the reality is that 75% of veterans have a pretty good transition from the ADF, for the most part. I often say to my team, we focus a lot on the vulnerable side, appropriately, what are we doing to help those people as well? Because trust is one of those things that obviously you've got to build over time, you've got to have respect, you've got to be in the community, engaged in things that are important to them, not necessarily important to you, play your role when you need to play your role, step up, step back, that kind of language. So yeah, it's a complicated picture, not something that I personally assume that I can just step over and go, righto, I'm here, your problems are over.

GTR: Of course, trust is so closely intertwined with respect and of course all the things that bring out the best in others. And I guess that's what you're doing at CSC, Dave, is bringing out the best in yourself and others, in regards to helping veterans and their transition.

Couple of questions to finish off though. What do you offer veterans? What's the wide gamut of things that you can offer veterans? Obviously the wellbeing, and everything else...

DW: Yeah, well look, I like to think that being a one man band sometimes, and I say that, but the CSC team, we are across that spectrum of partners through that journey. So as I was saying before, as a veteran goes through that journey of service and in life after service and so on, they'll come in and out of various life events and circumstances and things. And I think you'll find that CSC is pretty well connected to help through that journey. Not just a one-off because we are about a relationship for life. But I mean technically, Greg, we do two things in the super fund. We're about retirement outcomes, and if people can't work for whatever reason and there's a lot of those, then maybe they can access some insurance through their superannuation. We're here to help in that regard. That's the technical side.

What are we doing to help veterans actually? So can I highlight the legacy partnership that we have just quickly?

GTR: Yes, of course.

DW: A few years back I sat down with the ex-CEO, Scott Warr and we had a conversation, and we were talking about vulnerable families and the experiences that they were going through when they lost a loved one. And we had a live case that was pressing my button if you like, at CSC. What we did was essentially threw out the playbook, and worked with Legacy over a period of time, to understand what their experience was with families, the difficulties that families were going through and that kind of thing. And then Legacy helped us rewrite the playbook. So we actually brought them in as a partner as close as we could. Now the end result of that is we've got an end-to-end process.

So if you think back to 2017 it was difficult for a family if they lost a loved one to go through the bureaucracy and red tape. Today, one phone call and an end-to-end process, over the phone applications and all that kind of thing. We do all the work in the background and if the Legacy advocates are also involved, then we work together with them, in the same room, at the same time, with the family. So the stress is taken out of it, all that kind of thing, and it's pretty quick. I mean these days, for a family, if they're looking for a benefit to be paid because they've lost a loved one, we can do that in a couple of days. Done and dusted. That was not the case years ago.

So we're going through a transformation in other areas of our business as well, particularly for ADF members who are going out of the ADF on a medical transition. That's our highest priority at the moment. And a similar model is being rolled out, so an end-to-end transaction if you like, proper case management, proper triage and that kind of thing. I don't want veterans to be calling CSC and then having to email and email and email and call back. I just want it done once. I mean we're getting there.

GTR: You're a bit like me in that regard. People sometimes say thanks for answering the email so quickly, but of course if you don't, it builds up. So it's a similar thing with consultations, and talking about consultations too, Dave, CSC provide free consultations to the veterans. Is that right?

DW: Yeah, exactly. We do. If you're a customer, absolutely. We have a pretty small team who travel the country so they can do face-to-face consultations, and that same team also work at all the ADF transition seminars across the country. There's about 30 of those each year. At the moment, we're probably doing three to 4,000 one-on-one individual consultations per annum and that number's growing, which is good and I'd encourage that. But yeah, serving members, people who have retired, whatever they are, preparing for transition, then get on the website, have a look. There is a link there and you can look that up. You can book yourself a consultation. But the message is, get prepared as early as you can. Don't do what Dave Wilton did and leave it till the last minute and think about your superannuation on the day you're getting out because that's not a good answer.

GTR: That's right, that's right. Well Dave Wilton from CSC Vets Hub, it's been an absolute privilege to talk with you and to find out exactly what's happening and what CSC Vets Hub offers veterans. So thanks once again, Dave.

DW: Thank you, Greg. It's been great to catch up with you, mate. I look forward to our next chat. ■

Vets Hub

Your front door to financial wellbeing

The Vets Hub is a single front door for veterans and families to access services they need to ensure their financial wellbeing is taken care of.

Find out more at
csc.gov.au/vets-hub

CSC Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation

csc.gov.au

10 minutes of aerobic exercise with exposure therapy reduces PTSD symptoms: study

A short burst of aerobic exercise is believed to promote a molecule in the brain that is crucial for learning to feel safe.

Exposure therapy is one of the leading treatments for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), but up to a half of all patients don't respond to it.

But now a study led by UNSW Sydney psychologists has found that augmenting the therapy with 10 minutes of aerobic exercise has led to patients reporting greater reduction to PTSD symptom severity six months after the nine-week treatment ended.

In the first known single-blind randomised control trial of its kind, researchers in Sydney recruited 130 adults with clinically diagnosed PTSD and assigned them to two groups. People in both groups received nine 90-minute exposure therapy sessions. At the end of each session, one group was put through 10 minutes of aerobic exercises, while members of the control group were given 10 minutes of passive stretching.

People in the aerobic exercise group on average reported lower severity of PTSD symptoms – as measured on the CAPS-2 scale – than those who had their exposure therapy augmented by stretching exercises at the six-month follow-up. Interestingly, there were no clear differences between the two groups one week after the treatment program ended, suggesting the benefits take time to develop.

The findings were reported overnight in The Lancet Psychiatry.

Extinction learning

Scientia Professor Richard Bryant oversaw the clinical research which ran between 2012 and 2018. He says the goal of exposure therapy in treating PTSD is extinction learning, where a patient learns to equate something that up until now they have associated with the trauma, with a feeling of safety.

For example, a person who has experienced sexual violence may associate some of the stimuli that were present at the time of the trauma – such as night-time, sexual activity, the smell of aftershave etc. – with threat. Exposure therapy would focus on these triggers and try to demonstrate they offer no threat, with the hope that after repeated, gradual exposure, extinction learning is embedded in the brain of the sufferer.

"Extinction learning is not unlearning the bad experience," Prof. Bryant says. "It's a new learning that inhibits the old learning.

"Past studies have shown that very brief bouts of aerobic exercise can be helpful because they actually promote extinction learning in rats, and have also been shown to promote it in humans under experimental conditions."

But the theory hadn't been tested in clinical conditions until now. Prof. Bryant and colleagues say they think brief, intense exercise promotes a particular growth molecule in the brain called Brain-Derived Neurotrophic Factor, or BDNF.

"Why that's really important is it actually promotes synaptic plasticity in the brain, which is really important for learning. And we know that this underpins extinction learning. So if we can get this BDNF more active in the brain, at the time of exposure therapy, theoretically, that should lead to better extinction."

More studies needed

To Prof. Bryant's knowledge, this is the first time the benefits of aerobic exercise in conjunction with exposure therapy have been observed in a clinical setting. But despite being pleasantly surprised by the results, he says the study needs to be replicated a number of times before this therapy tweak is recommended, standard practice, or is used to treat other psychological conditions.

"'I'd really like to emphasise that this is the first trial that's shown this in an anxiety disorder and I don't think we should get too excited by it," he says.

"But as with all of these things, you always need multiple trials to actually have any faith in it. So I'm certainly not telling people to run out and start doing exercise after all your exposure therapy, because I think it's premature after one trial. But having said that, this is very encouraging."

Prof. Bryant says there is a large trial replicating the method happening in Melbourne at the moment which he and his peers will be watching with interest.

UNSW SYDNEY

Say hi to WEHI

You may know us as Australia's oldest medical research institute but how much do you know about the history and achievements of WEHI?

100 years of discoveries

WEHI (Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research) has been shining a light on the most difficult scientific questions and solving the biggest health problems for more than 100 years. We have helped more than 20 million cancer patients worldwide recover from debilitating chemotherapy and changed how cancer is understood and treated.

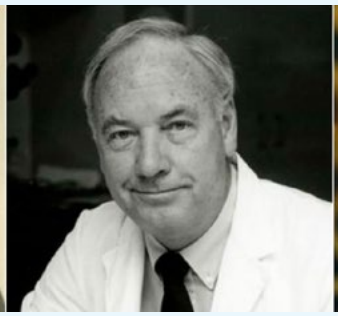
Our research has revolutionised the way we understand immunology, transformed the way the world treats autoimmune diseases and contributed to global efforts to combat COVID-19.

Some of the most iconic names in medical research

Collectively, our scientists have forged landmark discoveries and driven our culture of scientific excellence. Here are just a few:

Fannie Eleanor Williams

WEHI's first female medical research scientist, she co-authored 55 research papers and established Australia's first blood bank with Dr Ian Wood in 1939.



Professor Don Metcalf

His discovery of colony stimulating factors (CSFs) have helped millions of cancer patients boost their white cell count and recover from chemotherapy.

Professor Suzanne Cory

Researched the genetic components of a variety of cancers, discovering the genetic mutations that lead to Burkitt's lymphoma and Follicular lymphoma.

Sir Gustav Nossal

Pioneered research in immunology to understand how our immune system generates antibodies to protect us from infectious diseases.

What we focus on:

- **Cancer research and treatments**
- **Infection, inflammation and immunity**
- **Healthy development and ageing**
- **New medicines and advanced technologies**
- **Computational biology**

Some recent discoveries:

Parkinson's breakthrough

Our researchers have solved a decade-long mystery about a critical protein linked to Parkinson's disease, that could help fast-track treatments for the incurable disease.

Type 1 diabetes clue

We have discovered that type 1 diabetes is associated with changes in the gut microbiome during pregnancy. This means risks to mother and baby may be modified by dietary changes.

Cancer treatment

WEHI researchers have developed a way to put cancer cells to sleep – an entirely new approach to cancer treatment without the harmful side effects of conventional therapies.

WEHI was established with a single act of generosity. Philanthropy has been in our roots since Eliza Hall's first gift (through the Trust that she established), and it continues to propel us forward. This generous support over generations has enabled WEHI scientists to keep alive Walter and Eliza Hall's vision for research, collaboration and innovation to make medical discoveries that help people live healthier for longer. If this is what has been achieved in one century, imagine what could be possible in the next?

If you would like to know more, we would be delighted to speak with you any time. Please call or email Anne Rady or Heather Kiley:
Anne Rady | Manager, Future Giving **rady.a@wehi.edu.au (03) 9345 2929**
Heather Kiley | Senior Officer, Future Giving **kiley.h@wehi.edu.au (03) 9345 2555**
You can also keep up with our latest research discoveries through our quarterly newsletter Illuminate.
See the latest issue and subscribe at **www.wehi.edu.au/illuminate**.

Over 100 years of discoveries for humanity

For more than 100 years, medical researchers at Melbourne's WEHI – the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research – have been making life-changing discoveries so we can stay healthy as we get older.

Our success has been a shared journey supported by thousands of donors, many of whom have made gifts to WEHI in their Will.

It is these gifts that help us tackle the world's most complex health problems, including dementia and neurodegenerative diseases so we can all live healthier, longer lives.

Together we can ensure future generations of Australians continue to benefit from world-class medical research and treatments.

WEHI
brighter together

For confidential enquiries about making a donation or leaving a gift in Will to WEHI, contact Anne Rady, Manager Future Giving

03 9345 2929 | rady.a@wehi.edu.au

Associate Professor Grant Dewson (pictured) is leading a research collaboration to develop early diagnostic tests and improved treatments for Parkinson's disease.

Your Life, Your Rights.

Decision making and having a say in the things that affect your life.

When you have someone who helps you with making decisions about financial, personal or health matters in your life, it's important to understand your rights when it comes to making a decision or having a say.

ADAAustralia

Your aged and disability advocates

Your say, your rights in aged care

Help with aged care issues

Understanding aged care costs and fees

Having a say in your care

Free, Confidential, Independent

1800 700 600

www.adaaustralia.com.au

You may have a formal decision maker such as an Attorney under an enacted Enduring Power of Attorney, or it might simply be children, friends or other family members who help you organise things in your life on an informal basis.

Most of us take for granted the ability to live our lives autonomously, and make our own decisions (good or bad), but what happens when your freedom to make decisions gets impeded or taken away unnecessarily?

As advocates we often see situations where other people may be concerned about your 'capacity' or ability to make decisions, particularly after an illness, and they start the process of restricting your right to keep making your own decisions. They may apply to a tribunal to formally appoint a person/s to make decisions on your behalf, or they may ask a Doctor for help to enact your Enduring Power of Attorney document. These events may occur with or without your knowledge.

However, there are some key things to know when it comes to determining your decision-making capacity.

Capacity is not static:

- Capacity must be presumed – unless it is proven otherwise.
- Capacity is decision-specific and time-specific - someone might have capacity to make certain types of decisions (eg. a personal decision about where to live) and not others (eg. a financial decision about whether to sell their house).
- Capacity can improve or fluctuate – a person with a medical condition or illness may temporarily lose capacity, but then regain capacity at a later date. On the other hand, an adult with dementia or delirium, for example, might have capacity on some days (or during some parts of the day) and not others.
- Capacity can change with support – a person's capacity can improve depending on the support available to them. For this reason, we should not be found to lack capacity until all practical steps have been taken to provide the support and information needed to make the decision.
- A 'bad' decision does not mean you lack capacity – you have a right to make unpopular decisions, or decisions that other people don't agree with. It alone does not mean you cannot make decisions.

So how do you get back in charge of your life?

Get a second opinion. If a formal decision maker has been appointed by a Tribunal, you are able to request a review to change or revoke the appointment. You will need to present evidence of your capacity which would include an assessment by your GP or health professional. If your Enduring Power of Attorney documents has been enacted, you should seek a health professional assessment to get an updated opinion.

Mediation is another option. In the aged care, health, and disability sectors, a family meeting may be convened, for example, this is often led by a social worker who is a member of the hospital treating team, or it can be with an independent facilitator or mediator. This may go some way to helping you work out a better situation with your decision makers.

For informal arrangements, family counselling services or community legal services may be able to assist you to talk with loved ones about your concerns and rights to be included in decisions about your life. We know that family and friends are often coming from a place of well-meaning but are just not aware of the principles for supporting decisions or have not considered the basic human right to autonomy that we all hold.

It's your right to have a say in the things that affect your life... your money, your home, your belongings, your friends, your activities and your health care.

If you feel like you are being shut out of decisions about your life, contact ADA Law in Queensland on **1800 700 600**, or visit **www.clcs.org.au** to find a Community Legal Service in your state or territory.

GEOFF ROWE

Geoff Rowe is the CEO for Aged and Disability Advocacy Australia, the Queensland aged care advocacy provider and a community legal service. Geoff's career in the human services sector spans 40 years, including senior and executive positions in the Queensland Government, and in the not-for-profit sector. Geoff has a strong interest in social justice, human rights and inclusion.

OPAN | Older Persons Advocacy Network

Aged care support service

Chat with us - free and confidential

Do you need advice about your government-funded aged care services, either in your own home or in residential care?

Our experienced aged care advocates can help you with the following, and other aged care issues:

- ☐ Aged care provider services or fees.
- ☐ Assistance with visits or services.
- ☐ Supported decision-making.
- ☐ How to speak up for better aged care
- ☐ Concern that you may not be treated respectfully, fairly, or appropriately.

If you ticked any box above or you simply want advice regarding your government-funded aged care services:

Chat with us - 1800 700 600

To find out more visit **opan.org.au** or scan the QR code.

Supported decision-making will prevent abuse

Most people retain the ability make their own decisions all their lives.

To prevent the sort of issues described in Alan's story (right), we must enshrine that right in law.

While the Older Person's Advocacy Network (OPAN) acknowledges the importance of appointing a substitute decision-maker (such as a guardian or power of attorney) as part of any advanced care plan – those extraordinary legal powers should only be used a last resort, and only in accordance with the older person's will, preferences, and rights.

Supported decision-making, which is endorsed by the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, is the first and preferred alternative.

Under this model, people are provided with the support and information they need to actively make their own choices.

People with cognitive conditions, such as dementia, might need more formalised assistance, but it's rare for anyone to be incapable of making any decisions for themselves.

While someone may not have the ability to understand the extent of, and manage, their assets, for example, they can still make decisions about where they want to live and who they wish to spend time with.

In a recently released position statement, OPAN is calling for supported decision-making to be embedded across aged care to maximise the rights of older people and minimise abuse.

Aged care workers and service providers will require training and support and OPAN urges government and sector stakeholders to plan for this as part of the new Aged Care Act.

OPAN believes older people have the right to make decisions about the care and services they receive and the risks they are willing to take and that this right should be equally recognised under the law.

Making one's own life choices is a basic human right. It also enables an older person to maintain their dignity, independence, and self-respect.

CRAIG GEAR
CEO OPAN

Small acts of freedom

Alan Stewart only went to hospital for minor surgery, but he wound up getting his life back.

While Alan was in his ward, a concerned social worker put him in touch with Ramnik (Nik) Walia, one of Darwin Community Legal Services' aged and disability rights advocates.

'If it wasn't for Nik, I'd be in a dementia ward by now," says the retired carpenter.

The staff at Alan's residential aged care home had been treating him as if he was incapable of making his own decisions.

'I wasn't allowed to leave – even to sit on a bench outside.'

Alan couldn't so much as go to the dentist without a chaperone.

'That was very depressing. I had myself, my walker and a family member sitting there watching me get my teeth filled,' he recalls.

Ramnik helped Alan organise a test at a local memory clinic, which Alan passed with flying colours.

Once his cognitive capacity had been established, Alan was able to fully embrace his right to 'dignity of risk', which is included in the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission's Quality Standards.

That enabled him to come and go as he pleased.

'You need a passcode to get in and out the front door. I've got the number now so I can open the door by myself and walk out.'

Half-price taxi vouchers mean Alan can visit the local shopping centre for a cappuccino and a plate of chips. There is a kettle in his room so he can make himself a coffee. And he has regained control over his finances.

A lot of people are hesitant about calling advocate because they worry it might make their situation worse. Alan's advice?

'If you have to get an advocate in, you can't make it worse. It can stay the same … or if you get Nik, he'll make it 100 per cent better.'

For information or support regarding your aged care services, call the Older Persons Advocacy Network on **1800 700 600** or visit **opan.org.au**

Fighting to be heard

Advocating – or speaking up – for someone doesn't mean doing "what's best for them."

It means asking that person what they would like to happen and listening – really listening – to what they have to say.

For Gwenda Darling, a member of the OPAN's National Older Persons Reference Group, the ability to make her own decisions is integral to her sense of self-respect.

"It's about maintaining your own power; the power you have had all your life," she says.

"It's too easy for families and others to come in and take over because they think they know what's best for you – especially when you have a diagnosis of dementia.

"If I lose my voice, if I am not heard, I feel like I am passed my use-by date.

"I might as well give up, because I am no good to myself or to anybody else."

By speaking up, the aged care advocate has been able to negotiate for the services she needs, such as cleaning and gardening.

"It's a way of creating a space for yourself to age well."

For Ms Darling, that means living in a rainbow-coloured house in rural NSW.

To speak up for yourself and others about aged care services, you need to know what you can reasonably expect from those who deliver them.

OPAN's Self-advocacy toolkit provides the resources you need
opan.org.au/toolkit

Help Legacy to 'Keep the Promise'

For almost 100 years, Legacy has helped 'keep the promise' by always being there for veterans' families in need. We can only do this thanks to the support of generous people who help ensure that no veteran's child or partner is disadvantaged due to their loved one's service. Although the number of Australian lives lost in wars has lessened over time, the need for the work of Legacy is in no way diminishing.

Today, the world understands trauma better than ever before. Not only does trauma affect those who experience it, but their families as well. What's more, trauma can significantly impact the next generations too. Legacy is a recognised leader and innovator in meeting the complex needs of younger veterans' families… and with your generous support, they can build their best future!

That is why your support is so important – and not just for the here and now. A gift in your Will reflects your lifetime values. It ensures the work you support – caring for veterans' families – can continue long into the future… allowing Legacy to keep the promise for generations to come.

For more information on how you can help 'keep the promise' by leaving a gift to Legacy in your Will contact us on **1800 LEGACY (534 229)**

"As our defence personnel continue to make sacrifices to serve our country, we need to ensure their families are remembered and cared for, well into the future. Whatever you decide, whatever you can give, please know that Legacy is an extremely worthy organisation. When you include Legacy in your Will, your gift is sure to make a real difference for our veterans' families – for generations to come."

- Noelle

LEGACY®

1800 LEGACY (534 229)
legacy.com.au

People Matter Children Matter Lives Matter

Welcome to Stand Beside Them.

I am the partner of a Veteran who has mental and physical war service injuries. During these past nine year we have faced untold challenges. Prior to my partner's diagnosis we experienced the fragility and confrontational cost of a war veteran's life. PTSD and trauma had a huge impact on our family and now, as we recover, we would like to help other families.

At the very beginning I found it extremely challenging to navigate and access the services and organisations needed to support our family and help us thrive and function together.

Stand Beside Them is not a clinical professional or government organisation.

It has evolved through the experiences of many returned veteran families, and I am relieved and happy to say we are all on the path of recovery.

Our aim with Stand Beside Them, is to help other families reach out and connect while providing them with access to services quickly and efficiently and to this end we are providing:

Online - One stop! One call! One Life!

As CEO and Founder, I bring to Stand Beside Them, over 30 years, experience teaching in varied sectors and age groups from adult education, through to project management in the corporate industry, innovation, and entrepreneurial experience. It is my belief that individuals, families and communities thrive when they have a sense of belonging and purpose.

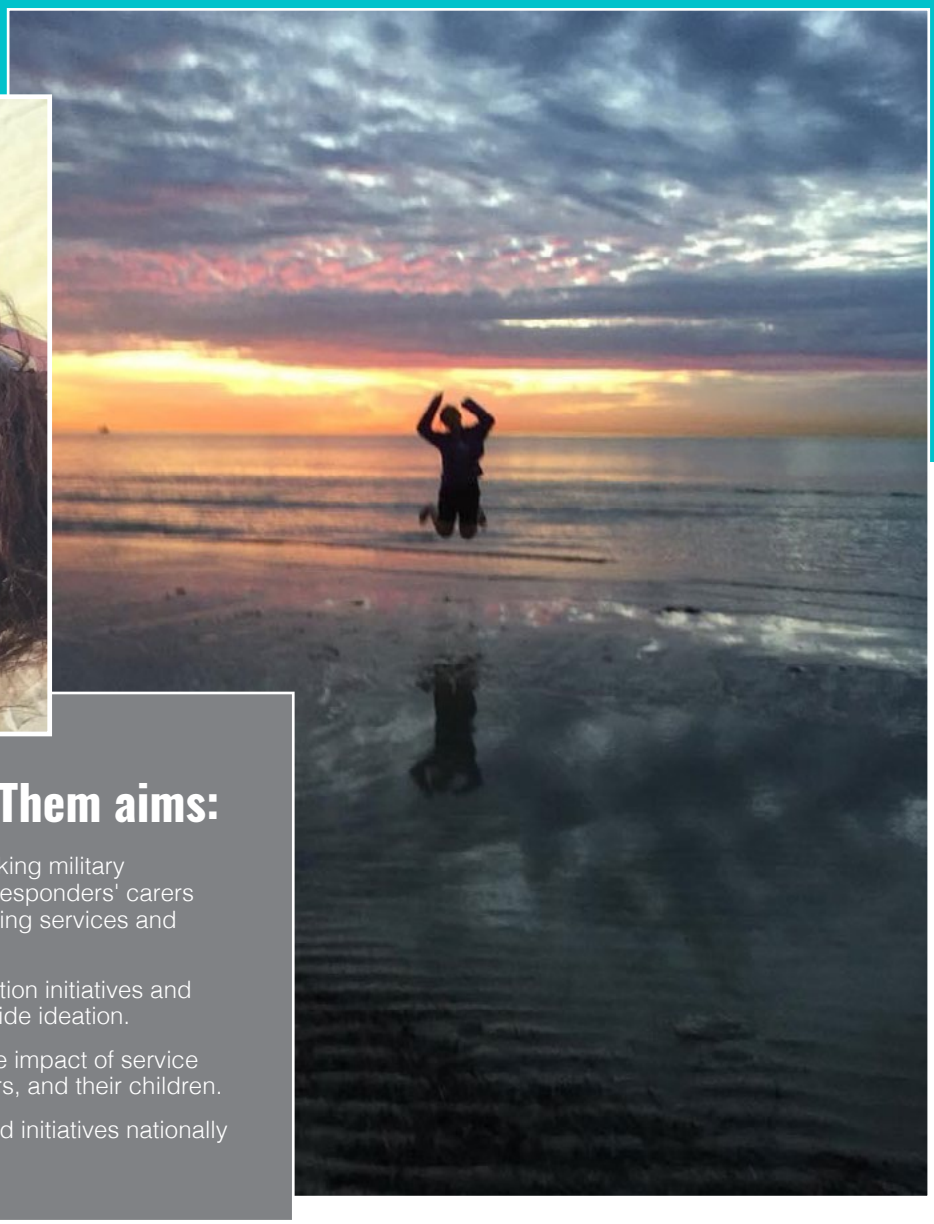
Our Mission is to stop the generational cycle of service trauma in families, restore relationships and stop Veteran/First responders' suicide.

Our Vision is to empower people through education, to advance social and public welfare and to improve and support health and educational initiatives.

In 2023 we will be contacting services/organisations to write about their services and the kind of support they offer our community.

LIDIA HALL
CEO and Founder, Stand Besiide Them

Poppy painting by Edelweiss O'Keefe.



Stand Beside Them aims:

To provide support by linking military personnel/Veteran/First Responders' carers and their children to existing services and organisations.

To develop early intervention initiatives and programs to prevent suicide ideation.

To bring awareness to the impact of service trauma on carers, partners, and their children.

To develop solution-based initiatives nationally and globally.

We are excited to announce our first two major projects for 2023!

1 standbesidethemvirtual.org:

standbesidethemvirtual.org is in development. It will be an online National and Global directory of services and organisations available to Military/First Responders personnel serving and non serving.

2 Education Backpack:

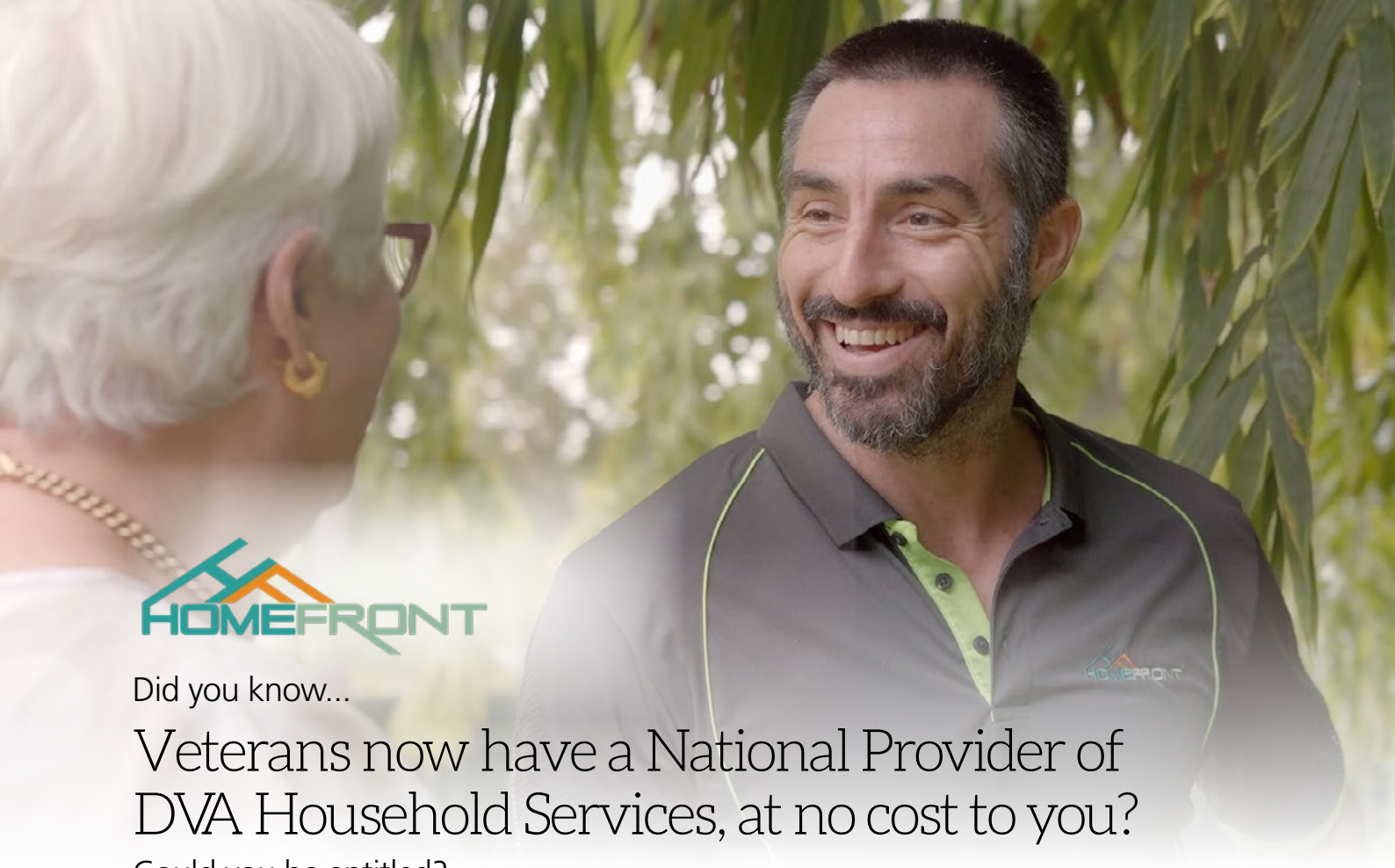
Education Backpack is an initiative for schools and universities and is currently in development; we are liaising with stakeholders.

Please Join Us:

Please join us in stopping the generational cycle of service trauma, restore relationships and stop Veteran/First Responder suicide ideation.

hello@standbesidethem.com.au

https://www.facebook.com/groups/1228047821090266
#standbesidethem #standbesidethemaustralia



HOMEFRONT

Did you know...

Veterans now have a National Provider of DVA Household Services, at no cost to you?

Could you be entitled?

Many Veterans, including younger Veterans, have service injuries making it impossible to stay on top of household chores. Whether from shoulders, backs and knees cruelled in the line of duty, to the constant spectre of anxiety and depression, registering your condition with DVA is the most important part.

Under the Medical Rehabilitation Compensation Act (MRCA) and the Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act – Defence (DRCA), the Department can then approve those services required for the proper running and maintenance of your household. This includes domestic cleaning, mowing and gardening, gutter, window and solar panel cleaning, laundry, meal preparation, dog walking and more.

With the help of your GP, medical information and evidence regarding the practical implications of your condition should be detailed in your **Claim Form** to help DVA make a positive determination about your eligibility.

Once your entitlement is approved via a Determination letter from DVA, HomeFront Australia steps in to take care of your service delivery quickly, easily, and without hassle, anywhere in Australia and at no cost to you.

To find out more information about your eligibility for these services ring
DVA on 1800 838 372
and say **"Household Services"** when prompted by the voice recording.

To apply for Household Services, fill in the **Claim Form** with the help of your GP, and forward it to **HHS@dva.gov.au**.

To commence your services with HomeFront, or to find out more information about the services HomeFront delivers:

scan the **QR Code**
visit us at **homefrontaustralia.com.au**
write to us at **info@homefrontaustralia.com.au**
or call us on **1300 20 60 40** Monday to Friday.

Access your Claim Form here:
dva.gov.au/sites/default/files/dvaforms/d9319.pdf

HomeFront is a Veteran-run organisation providing premium DVA Household Services to other Veterans everywhere in Australia at no out of pocket expense, under the MRCA and DRCA legislations.

LEFT: Lieutenant-General Sir Stanley Savige KBE, CB, DSO, MC, ED.

ABOVE: General Gellibrand and his 6th brigade staff having breakfast in shell-hole near Pozières. Gellibrand is 3rd from the left and behind him is Stan Savige. Image source: Australian War Memorial.

The history of Melbourne Legacy

Legend: Melbourne Legacy was formed from friendships forged on the battlefield and a promise look after the missus and kids of the dying soldiers who had not been able to return to Australia.

Facts: In 1923, then Lieutenant, Stan Savige was asked by his General, John Gellibrand to gather a group together to do what they could to help returned soldiers, similar to the Remembrance Club Gellibrand had started in Hobart. However, they realised the greatest need was to help the families of the soldiers who did not return. They owed these men, who had fought alongside them and not survived, a debt.

Melbourne Legacy was formed from these men that Stan Savige gathered together, some of whom had been with Savige and Gellibrand in the battlefield of Pozieres. So easily could the finger of fate pointed the other way and it would be their own families in dire need. The debt they could repay was to stand as father figure and mentor to the children and to aid and support the widows. To look after the 'missus and the kids'.

In the second meeting of the club, a member said, 'Legacy is the name, with its meaning in reverse. It is our legacy to serve and to give without receiving anything in return.' The title Legatee was quickly adopted which removed the hierarchy of the Army, and meant all Legatees were on an equal footing regardless of what rank they had attained during service.

Work started with providing classes for the young boys, such as debating and gymnastics. Then camps over summer where the city boys were given a dose of the great outdoors. Initially they slept in tents loaned from the Army on Stan Savige's property on the Somers foreshore before a camp club-house was erected in the 1930s.

1927 saw classes for the young girls, including eurythmic, dance and elocution. The skills the children gathered through the year were showcased in an annual concert at the Melbourne Town. All the while the Legatees were supporting the widows with all types of tasks from gardening, cutting wood and home maintenance, to debt control and pension advice.

It was fundamental to the Legatees that the children would not miss out of opportunities due to the loss of their father. There was a focus on teaching the children citizenship and service. Many junior legatees enlisted to serve in World War II.

The Torch emblem was designed by an early legatee in 1926, who wrote: 'The badge of Legacy symbolises in its Torch the undying flame of service and sacrifice handed to us by our comrades from the Great War who passed on. In its wreath of laurel, with its points inverted in remembrance, is the guerdon of honour that is the meed of those who gave their lives for their country.'

The 1920s was also a crucial time for building the Shrine of Remembrance. Although the design had been determined by a competition in 1923 the impetus to build it had been lost due to several factors. An alternate proposal was being pushed for a public square instead. It was Melbourne Legacy, and in particular Legatee Kemsley, that stood up to fight to reinstate the original design and helped to raise public debate that swung the decision, including persuading Sir John Monash to publicly declare his support. The fight for the Shrine gained considerable publicity for Legacy, and firmly established Legacy's reputation as an advocate for the ex-servicemen's cause. It has been reported that without Legacy the Shrine would not have been built. A Legacy representative has served on the Board of the Shrine ever since.

Strong ties between Stan Savige and Geelong meant the first club outside Melbourne was Geelong in 1925. Others quickly followed, Sydney started in 1926 when a founding legatee was transferred north due to his employment. By 1928 all capital cities had a Legacy Club, except Hobart which retained the name Remembrance Club until 1944 when it became Hobart Legacy. There are currently 45 clubs, including one in London.

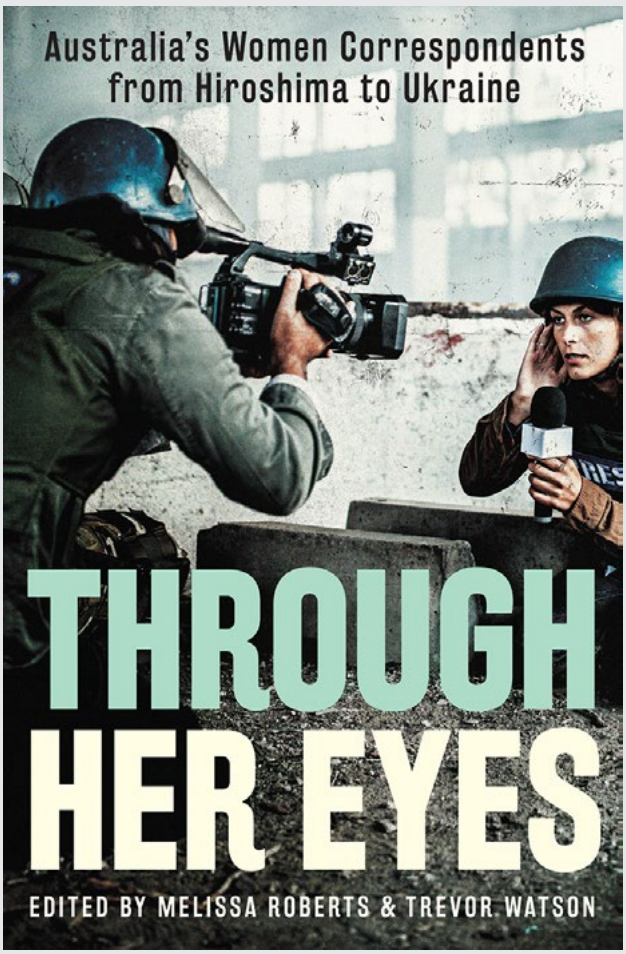
A newspaper article in 1956 mentions that Legacy: "founded by the late Lieutenant-General Sir Stanley Savige, has salvaged more happiness and achievement from the wreck and sorrow of war than perhaps any other movement of its kind in the world." ■

REVIEW

THROUGH HER EYES:

AUSTRALIAN WOMEN CORRESPONDENTS FROM HIROSHIMA TO UKRAINE.

EDITED BY MELISSA ROBERTS & TREVOR WATSON, HARDIE GRANT BOOKS



"LORRAINE STUMM WAS A PIVOTAL AND INSPIRING INFLUENCE ON MYSELF AS A TEENAGER, ENCOURAGING ME TO TAKE UP JOURNALISM AS AN HONOURABLE PROFESSION WHICH NEEDED "GOOD WOMEN." – DI MORRISSEY

Reading Through Her Eyes, is both exhilarating and horrifying. Exhilarating in the sense that you cannot help becoming caught up in the stories each correspondent recounts; horrifying as you visualise the danger and hardships they had to endure.

It is a collection of personal experiences by Australian women foreign correspondents who have witnessed world events … from the devastation of the city of Hiroshima in Japan in August 1945 to outrageous constant bombing of civilian targets in Ukraine in 2022.

It is as much an adventure story of courage and risk-taking, as it is of sheer luck where one wrong step may have cost many of these brave women their lives.

They come from different backgrounds throughout Australia, but all share one thing. They have an intense love of story telling and of exposing unfair and barbaric behaviour. Through the decades their stories and others like them constantly need retelling.

Their memories of their experiences prove they are as spirited, fearless and truthful as their male counterpart. They also bring an important feminine perspective; heartfelt explanations as to why such events are being played out and the huge price women and children pay during war time and through political upheavals.

My interest in this extraordinary book lies in the simple fact that one of those included is my mother Lorraine Stumm, a war correspondent in the South Pacific during World War 11, writing for the London Daily Mirror and attached to the US Command.

Australian women were often refused accreditation by the Australian army, the reason given - they lacked stamina and an ability to report accurately under difficult conditions.

Indeed, these stories more than show how she and her counterparts in this collection were, and are, extremely capable of chronicling world events.

I am extremely proud of my mother's reporting achievements in New Guinea, the Philippines and Japan. Reading her story alongside the twenty- eight other outstanding journalists, I realise how stubborn and fearless she was in her determination to bring the stories of the men and women in the war zones to her readers.

The odd thing is that she never planned to become a war correspondent. Reporting stories was what she loved and fought to obtain in London as a young woman. It was as she says, "a quirk of history" she ended up writing stories in often dangerous circumstances.

She used to tell me as she got older that what she saw while working in a war, she could not unsee. Hiroshima particularly haunted her until the day she died.

Originally her plan was simply to use her journalistic experience to remain close to her Australian RAF husband whom she had married in Brisbane just 6 weeks before he was called up to serve in Singapore.

Arriving in Singapore to take up a job as a reporter on the Malaya Tribune, she settled down to enjoy what she describes in her autobiography - I Saw Too Much - as an idyllic married life, reporting on local issues and giving birth to her first and only child - me. She had no plans to go into active war zones, even though she was covering daily press conferences in Singapore as the Japanese closed in.

She managed to escape from Singapore just before it fell to the Japanese invasion in early in 1942, arriving in Darwin to learn her husband had been evacuated with his RAF squadron to India.

LEFT: Lorraine Stumm and Cary Cooper.

BELOW: Lorraine Stumm, a mentor of Di at a Di Morrissey book launch.

She made plans to board one of three ships making a run across the Indian Ocean to Columbo, in Ceylon, (now Sri Lanka) to join him. This was despite being warned that ships were being bombed in the Indian Ocean particularly during 1943-1944. She also defied her mother who wanted her to leave her baby daughter behind.

Lorraine joined her newspaper colleague George (My Brother Jack) Johnson on board, who assured her if the ship was sunk, he would grab the baby if she would grab the life jackets.

It was madness but they made it and Lorraine once again took a job with the British Ministry of Information in Delhi where she was working when a telegram arrived in March 1943 only six weeks after starting work telling her of her husband's death while on active service.

Returning to her family in Brisbane, she gradually picked up her life when she was asked by the London Daily Mirror, her former employer, to become their accredited war correspondent at General MacArthur's HQ in Brisbane.

She insists it was not courage, "just doing her job", when she asked to be sent to report in the war zones in Palau, the Philippines, New Guinea and later Japan at the signing of the surrender in 1945.

Her work as a war correspondent is set out very clearly in Melissa Roberts' account of her life in this splendid book. I know my mother would be honoured to have her time as a correspondent told alongside the stories of these brave and resourceful young women who risked their lives, as she did, to cover wars and revolutions; to tell of the horrors and bloodshed that were, and are, still taking place.

The book, Through Her Eyes, is set out in three distinct categories of reporting. The first part, Breaking News, covers largely world affairs in such places as Ukraine, China and Afghanistan, by the journalists whose names are perhaps better known today than that of my mother. The most chilling in this section for me is Cate Cadell's China term (2014 to 2021) where she spells out the prowess of the shrewd technocrat and President, Xi Jinping, who has within a few short years transformed China's internet into what she calls the world's biggest digital laboratory for authoritarian governance.

There is also a special piece from Monica Attard covering her six tumultuous years, 1989-1995 in Russia including her contacts in Russia who now tell her of Putin's resolve to continue the war in Ukraine.

Part two, Making History, leads with Lorraine's story

I Saw Too Much and covers stories from young women journalists at critical moments in history in Beirut, Pakistan, Syria, Gaza, Cambodia and New York.

One such story is Ruth Pollard's riveting dispatches for the Sydney Morning Herald which recounts her harrowing time on the frontline as she dodged bullets in the Syrian war during 2012.

Asked what it is like to cover war as a woman, Pollard answers, "for women in wartime conditions, our days revolve around the most basic needs; a safe place to go to the toilet, transport, a trusted driver, a supply of water and somewhere secure to sleep. Getting food is of secondary importance compared to filing our stories on time."

Part three, Being a Correspondent, concludes the book with a wide range of distinguished women journalists on the myriad predicaments facing them as they ply their trade in "hot spots" such as Jerusalem, Delhi, Liberia, the Middle East, Malaysia and Manila.

Sue-Lin Wong tells of being called a "race traitor" while covering Hong Kong rallies in 2014; while Prue Clarke paints a picture of justice and luck in Liberia, West Africa where after fourteen years of civil war she says has resulted in child soldiers, cannibalism, sex slaves, rape and violence against women and children happening on a scale rarely seen before.

The conclusion I reached after I finished reading such a timely and important collection of stories was that this type of reporting is far from romantic and definitely not for the faint hearted. It needs to be told. ■

SHERIDAN STUMM
Manning Community News

World First Veteran Lifesaving team heads to Italy for World Championships, farewelled by the Hon Matt Thistlethwaite MP

On Sunday 18th September at South Coogee Beach, The Hon Matt Thistlethwaite, Assistant Minster for Veterans & Defence Personnel, and Co-Chair of the Parliamentary Friends of Surf Life Saving, farewelled the first ever military Veteran team to compete at the Lifesaving World Championships in Italy.

Assistant Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Defence, the Hon Matt Thistlethwaite MP said, "The Albanese Government is committed to supporting our serving personnel, veterans and families. And we are proud to see a team of current and former-serving military personnel from surf clubs across Australia competing now for the first time under a single cap. Team Veteran Australia is showing how sport at all levels of competition can benefit our nation's veterans during and post-military service."

Invictus Australia, with the support of Surf Life Saving Australia, was granted permission by the International Life Saving Federation to enter a combined military veteran team into the Riccione 2022 Lifesaving World Championship that runs from 18 September to 3 October, 2022.

Michael Hartung, CEO of Invictus Australia, says the inclusion of Team Veteran Australia in this year's Surf Lifesaving World Championships is another example of the positive impact sport can have in the lives of veterans and their families.

"The power of sport has a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of veterans and their families. To see this team of veterans compete at the Surf Lifesaving World Championships provides another amazing example of how sport is providing aspiration, purpose, community and opportunity during and post service to connect."

"Both competitive and community sport provide a range of opportunities and substantial physical and mental health benefits. Getting involved as a competitor, a social participant or a volunteer can help individuals and their families to tackle physical or mental health challenges they are facing or be a proactive way to prevent them in the first place. We hope this team of veterans serve as inspiration for others to get involved in sport."

"We are thrilled to be able to support Team Veteran Australia on their journey to Riccione and wish them all the best." Michael said. ■

QUOTES FROM THE TEAM

SBLT, Dana Richards, RAN
Shellharbour, Sydney

'Why is this opportunity to compete at the Worlds under the Team Veteran banner so important to you?'

It is great to be able to link my sport and the communities of Surf Lifesaving and Team Veteran together. I have been a long standing member of SLSA, SLSNSW and my local Surf Lifesaving club at Shellharbour on the South Coast of NSW.

The networks and community of my surf club has allowed my whole family a healthy lifestyle. I have actively patrolled the beaches for close to 30 years as a volunteer, and the friendships and memories are part of my whole being.

As a current serving RAN member, it is somewhat similar. The friendships and comradery that I currently have, plus the support networks Australia wide from past and present serving members is a community that has also provided so many fond memories as well.

I feel that as an ADF member, past or present we have special bonds, we have this community at our fingertips and it is becoming more visible to the public through programs within Invictus Australia.

I want others to see that we are all team players, whether past or present ADF, as it has been ingrained from our training and service, the connections and community provide us a sense of belonging and this is why Team Veteran is so important to me, I want to encourage these conversations and create an inclusive space where it doesn't matter what ability you have at sport or fitness, just need to get up and be part of this community as it is embracing and powerful.

Team Veteran is an amazing opportunity that I am grateful for, to travel as a team with the support of Invictus Australia is really exciting. For me, the training journey is fun, the process of setting goals is enjoyable and it gives me a purpose every single day to try and be a better version of myself than the day before.

What role does SLS play in your overall wellbeing – whether it's physical, mental, emotional or social?

My overall wellbeing is a reflection of my physical activities, and that I will give anything a go. I have a little mantra about my physical and mental capabilities being that I am on the shorter side of life, and that is 'look at what my body can do, and I control it through my own healthy thoughts and the power of the mind, heart and body'

SLS gives me an outlet and purpose to get up and do some kind of physical activity every single day. Some days are harder than others, physically I have carried injuries over the years and it affects your mental wellbeing, as physically my body doesn't want to do what my brain is trying to tell it to do. But by doing my training and sometimes just thrashing it out in the water, or just going and diving in or catching some waves is my reset button.

I love the ocean, it is my happy place and has created a social space for me. Years ago, I worked out that by ocean swimming, I could block out the white noise and not think about anything else apart from the water movement, the sand beneath me and sometimes the beautiful ocean creatures that would often join me in my swims. I have found a great group of people where I live, who also enjoy similar things to myself. So often we schedule in our swims, board or ski sessions and then we have a coffee and a chat afterwards.

If I travel, the first thing I look for is a group to join in with to have a swim in the ocean, if I can't find a group and there are so many now up and down the East coast of Australia, I'll just go by myself or my daughter will often join me. This SLS lifestyle has provided my whole family with healthy coping mechanisms around the sport and the ocean and I plan on being a part of the SLS community for a long time.

Kelly Marsh
Freshwater, NSW

"This team opportunity has been both life-changing and life saving. Access to participation in sport has reconnected me to community and various local sports, giving me back the confidence and space to develop new skills and importantly connection. I will be forever grateful for our journey, the support of Invictus Australia, our mateships and adventures so far.

"My inclusion in the team in 2020 was my motivation to reconnect to sport, challenging myself and facing fears, engaging in community and importantly a return to surf club culture in a supported healthy environment. It's been the driving force behind my development to new skills, self-growth and health. The pandemic allowed our journey to be extended and presented more opportunities to participate and extend ourselves beyond anything I imagined. My highlights so far has seen me inspired by each sporting community and members I have met along the way. Both this and my family are my motivation each day to keep saying yes to new adventures."

"I love the mateship, connections and community engagement that both Surf Life Saving and the Defence Force shares. It is my hope that our Team Veteran journey can open opportunities for others, reminding clubs of the importance of sport- encouraging them to provide access, inclusion and participation for every one in every community."

I hope my journey can inspire anyone, but particularly veterans & families, to 'be brave, to 'just start' and 'say yes'. You won't regret it!"

Sean Lawler, Team Manager
Sydney, NSW

"Over the past 30 years, Surf Life Saving and Military Service has had a major influence on my life.

Prior to enlisting, I volunteered my time patrolling Park Beach for the Coffs Harbour Surf Life Saving Club. Learning skills that I would eventually carry with me into my military life. Looking back on what I have achieved, it is these core values I learnt as a young Surf Club member and Serviceman that I now attribute to whom I have become.

During my service, I sustained a various injuries which I now carry with me. If it wasn't for the support of Invictus Australia and the opportunity to compete at the Invictus Games, I may not have been able to manage my injuries to an extent I am able to today.

Surf Life Saving and Defence have similar core values, allowing us to help the community on a local and national scale. It seems natural that Surf Life Saving Australia and Invictus Australia partner with each other to help support those individuals who not only help protect their local community, but who also sacrifice more often than not, their physical and mental wellbeing during operations in the best interest of the Australian public.

This team of unique individuals represent not only themselves, but also the ability to utilise sport as a pathway to rehabilitation.

I cannot over state how important it is to remain connected. We as soldiers, tend to lose our identity once we leave the Military. Local community organisations such as Surf Life Saving Clubs can provide an environment whereby we are able to regain a sense of self worth.

Team Veteran Australia will showcase the importance of remaining healthy. No matter how injured or old you are, there are always opportunities to regain your former self.

You need only take the first step."

The Legacy Centenary Torch Relay 2023 presented by Defence Health is a six-month campaign, with satellite events (relays), travelling from Pozieres France, on April 23rd, leading up to ANZAC Day 2023, through to the city of London, before returning home to Australia, landing in Perth, Western Australia in May 2023.

The Legacy Centenary Torch Relay 2023 will continue its journey throughout local towns and cities across Australia, visiting all 45 Legacy Club locations, concluding in Melbourne in October 2023. The Torch will travel 55,000 km, through 100 stops, carried by approx. 1,500 torch bearers.

The concept of the Legacy Centenary Torch Relay 2023 has been identified as a once in a life-time opportunity for the Legacy movement and for all clubs across Australia as Legacy celebrates its centenary year in 2023.

The symbol of Legacy is a torch that signifies the undying flame of service and sacrifice of those who gave their lives for their country. To this day Legacy looks after over 40,000 widows and their families across Australia.

The Legacy Centenary Torch (details on purchasing the limited edition commemorative torch can be found here: **legacytorchrelay.com.au/make-a-donation**)

Join us on the journey', register to be a volunteer and/or show your support by making a donation, please visit **legacytorchrelay.com.au** or download the Legacy Centenary Torch Relay mobile app!

Canberra: Legacy's Graham Boyd and Eric Easterbrook OAM at the Legacy Week commemorative launch in Canberra.

Torch Bearers announced who unveiled the uniform were: (L-R) Sarnia Birch OAM, Legacy Australia Board; Annabelle Wilson, Legacy beneficiary representative; Nathan Sawan, young Legacy representative and Jack Blackley, Defence Consulting Capability Lead, Accenture.

The official unveiling of The Legacy Centenary Torch Relay torch was carried by 90+ year old Legacy beneficiary, Jennifer Sheppard and Stan Waters (grandson of Legacy founder Sir Stanley Savige), along with the Torch Bearers as named above.

Map of the Legacy Centenary Torch Relay 2023.

The official Torch Bearer torch for The Legacy Centenary Torch Relay, 2023, presented by Defence Health.

Can Australians separate sports and gambling?

We have to get to the heart of our culture's obsession with sports gambling before we can see change, says UNSW media and advertising expert.

Online gambling and gambling harm are the subject of a current parliamentary inquiry, which is reviewing existing consumer protections and gambling regulations and has already implemented harsher advertising warnings.

Sports betting platforms, in particular, have come under intense scrutiny, with some groups suggesting a ban on advertising at sporting events and during the broadcast of sporting events. There's also increasing concern about how gambling ads affect young people who are exposed to them during sporting events as well as those struggling to overcome gambling addiction.

UNSW Arts, Design & Architecture advertising and cultural studies lecturer Dr Nicholas Richardson says it's time for a discussion about the meaning of sport spectatorship and what place gambling has within it.

"At the moment the conversation is very black and white. Sport betting is characterised as either a long-established Aussie pastime or it is an addictive social problem. The truth is more nuanced, as it can be both these things and more.

"This means that collectively, we have to unpack our culture's obsession with gambling in connection with sporting events before we can see changes in the nature of gambling ads. Such a conversation will also be useful when it comes to encouraging behaviour change," he says.

Sport – selling mateship to the highest bidder

Sports content licences and contracts are costly. One of the main ways broadcasters recoup these costs is through advertising. Unfortunately, the highest bidders tend to belong to industries that can promote the sale of controversial products and services.

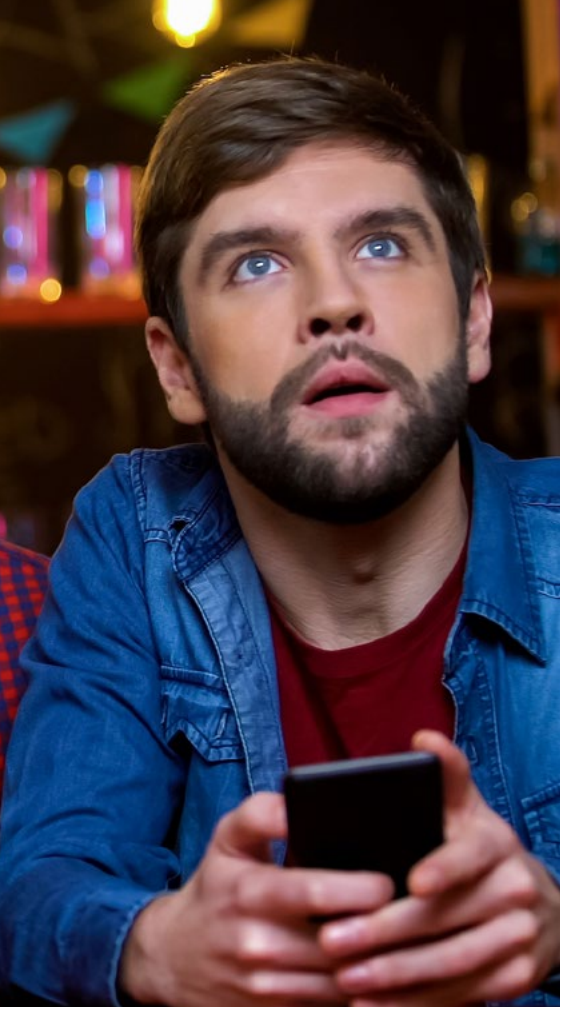
"Advertising throughout sports content has always had an undercurrent of subversive male behaviour: things that blokes do," says Dr Richardson.

"It used to be smoking ads, then it was alcohol – these were the previous male 'vices' that underpinned much of the advertising in sports.

"Of course, these days we no longer have the Winfield Cup in the NRL or the Benson & Hedges World Series in cricket due to hard regulation and cultural renegotiation of what place smoking has in our society."

Watching sport is a part of Australian culture and sports gambling ads are very clever, Dr Richardson says. They have latched onto a lucrative cultural market and created a strong association between sports and gambling.

"The ad creators of sports gambling platforms put forward that having a bet or a 'punt', as it's colloquially known, is a necessary part of mateship in our culture. Even some responsible gambling ads operate through the same frame of mateship – that gambling is something you do with friends, and it's tied into the



overall entertainment package when you watch sports. And for many, the image projected by advertisers may well be realised. Of course, the reality for problem gamblers is often the exact opposite," he says.

Previously the tobacco industry had tapped into sport and made us believe you couldn't have one without the other, says Dr Richardson. But that's changed as we've renegotiated smoking's role in society generally and in watching sports.

"Something similar would have to take place with gambling – but despite the devastation gambling has caused to some, as a societal issue, it isn't as black and white as the health concerns related to smoking. Therefore, we need to have a collective conversation about gambling's place in society as well as in sports," Dr Richardson says.

An increase in gambling ads

The Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) has rules and restrictions around when gambling ads are allowed to air during live sport broadcasts and livestreams. However, Neilsen data shows there's 'skyrocketing expenditure' outside of live sport broadcast time slots.

It's likely that growing community concern about gambling advertising has increased alongside the frequency of gambling ads themselves. The Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation reports the gambling industry spent $287.2 million on advertising in Australia in 2021 – a substantial increase from the $89.7 million they spent only 10 years before (this excludes in-stadium advertising or sponsorships).

Also, according to the Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation, gambling advertising has increased rapidly over the past decade due to online platforms opening up advertising opportunities. A High Court decision in 2008 also had the effect of allowing bookmakers to offer bets anywhere in Australia, which made it difficult for states and territories to be able to ban advertising from other parts of the country.

"The last time we had a collective reckoning about gambling in sport was when representatives from gambling companies were presented as part of the sports commentary team throughout sporting games," says Dr Richardson. "These presenters were like undisclosed advertorials embedded in the sports game and commentating on live betting odds in a way that sought to integrate gambling into the broader 'action' of the game. Naturally this led to community outrage and changes to the gambling advertising rules."

But the gambling industry doesn't have to wait to address another blunder before it creates change, says Dr Richardson.

"The tobacco industry received the big stick approach, which they fought tooth and nail," says Dr Richardson. "Meanwhile, the alcohol industry observed, and decided they didn't want to go the way of the cigarette industry. And so, they got together and developed a code to get ahead of government. Today, all alcohol ads are approved by the industry regulator – it's a self-regulation success story.

"But first, the gambling industry has to recognise it's a business that causes real and catastrophic problems for people."

Algorithms target gambling ads

The current inquiry into gambling and its associated ads has an explicit focus on the online world and with good reason, says Dr Richardson.

Reddit users are complaining about the difficulty of trying to recover from gambling addiction in the world of big data and algorithms, which has resulted in targeted gambling ads 'stalking' them online.

"Online advertising platforms that use big data and algorithms are blunt tools and don't operate subtly," says Dr Richardson. "The data on individuals that websites and apps collect are very broadly applied. So if someone visits a gambling website once, or even a gambling addiction recovery resource, they could consequently become trapped by gambling ads on their browser for a long time.

"This is the worst of the advertising industry and it's obvious what they are doing in their targeting. As an advertising professional, it's not the type of advertising I want to see in the industry."

Also, gambling is no longer confined to a physical location, like the racecourse or sports field. Anyone can place a bet, anywhere, anytime, as long as they have internet access and a credit card. This makes it difficult to 'ban' individuals who show signs of problematic gambling, says Dr Richardson.

Clever counter-advertising is an option

With community concern growing and the government inquiry outcomes pending, would it be realistic to expect a ban on all gambling ads?

"Just stating that gambling is wrong and implementing a ban on ads won't make the problem go away unfortunately," says Dr Richardson. "Although gambling does destroy the lives of those addicted, there are plenty who participate in gambling and would say 'in my reality gambling is a bit of harmless fun'.

"Instead, we have to take our attitudes, values and beliefs along for the ride. Great campaigns and counter-advertising work when it gets people to collectively understand there's an issue here."

Current responsible gambling ads are too soft and need to demonstrate the harms of gambling in a more persuasive way, Dr Richardson says.

"Rather than trying to demonstrate the bad side of gambling in a strong or shocking way, my preference is for clever ads that get to the heart of the issue and unpack how embedded gambling or other behaviours are in our culture."

For example, the 'pinkie' ads from the NSW Roads and Traffic Authority that aired between 2007 and 2009 were part of a behaviour change campaign, encouraging younger drivers to not speed. The Sydney Morning Herald reports that this campaign was not only memorable, but also became one of NSW's most successful.

"We can renegotiate masculinity and behaviours associated with male identity by getting at the core of the issue like the 'pinkie' ads did with speeding," says Dr Richardson. "At the moment, if we look at one responsible gambling ad, in particular, the mate who takes his betting 'a bit far' is actually reinforcing a part of the myth of Aussie mateship. That's not a strong enough message to my mind." ■

UNSW SYDNEY

Rebels without applause: It's time to recognise World Series records

It's unfair to describe the current Australia-England one-day cricket series as meaningless. It has meaning for the participants and for those watching, few though they may be. Baffling perhaps, poorly scheduled, but meaningless? Whatever its meaning is, it is made concrete in international cricket records. There will be no asterisk next to Dawid Malan's very fine century in Adelaide on Thursday to say 'Not sure why they were playing or what it meant'. An international hundred is an international hundred.

Exactly 45 years ago, some of the most meaningful international cricket was played, and yet it is still being ghosted by the International Cricket Council.

Consider what World Series Cricket started and what it left behind. Cricket played under lights in coloured clothing with a white ball – the sport's most influential innovation since 1877. Drop-in pitches. Field restrictions to enhance limited-overs cricket. Life-saving helmets. Cameras down the pitch from both ends. Stump microphones. The packaging of the game to provide careers for players who would otherwise have been lost.

There is not enough room here to summarise the Packer revolution. Its legacy is now incorporated into formats, including Test cricket, that have their status reverentially protected and curated by the International Cricket Council.

All of its legacy is acknowledged, except what the players did.

WSC might have seemed meaningless in the early summer of 1977, thanks to loyalty to 'establishment cricket' and the initial weirdness of the WSC presentation. If you saw the first 'Supertest' (the word 'Test' was protected by ICC copyright), you weren't quite sure what you were watching. Some of the players seemed to be wearing WSC merch. You could hear the players' bats tap the crease and hit the ball, you could hear their boots scrape the turf as they bowled, and you could hear them swear at each other.

Occasionally, you also heard them swear at an interviewer as they came off. You got disoriented because the game appeared to be played from just one end, until you realised that you weren't watching half the game from behind the wicketkeeper's back anymore because – amazingly – cricket telecasting now had cameras at each end. It was very quiet: there was practically nobody in VFL Park. At first. But soon, because of the players and the games, spectators came and things got very noisy.

What earned WSC its credibility and audience was the exploits of the best cricketers seen before or since. All-time greats like the Chappells, Dennis Lillee, Clive Lloyd, Viv Richards, Imran Khan and Barry Richards said it was the toughest, most competitive, most serious cricket they ever played. The West Indies' rise from 'Calypso cricketers' to an unmatched world force took place during World Series. Over two seasons in Australia and one in the West Indies, a short tour of New Zealand and a long one of grateful Australian country centres, some astonishing games and achievements took place.

Ian Chappell drives the ball from Asif Iqbal at VFL Park. The Age Archives.

The spine still tingles at footage of Wayne Daniel clubbing Mick Malone for six off the last ball to win one of the first-ever night matches.

That, and the inaugural Sydney Cricket Ground day-night match in front of a crowd that literally could not be counted because the gates were thrown open, marked the birth of cricket under lights.

Individually, Greg Chappell would be unquestionably rated Australia's second-best batter after Don Bradman if his 1415 Supertest runs were added to his 7110 official runs. Imagine averaging more than 50 against the quickest pace attack on some rough and ready but always spicy pitches. The standing of Lillee, both of the Richards, Lloyd, Andy Roberts, Michael Holding and many others would be burnished if their statistics were incorporated into their official Test numbers.

But those are, as Ian Chappell and others said when Cricket Australia decided to 'recognise' them in a separate category in 2015, just numbers. For the greats, the stats just make them greater.

Consider some of the others. Australia's Rob Langer and Wayne Prior, the West Indies' Jim Allen and South Africa's Clive Rice and Garth Le Roux are not officially 'Test' cricketers, yet they played Supertests of higher calibre than most Test cricket seen in their lifetimes. Many others whose official international records are fleeting would be dignified with the substance they deserve if their WSC records were recognised. Bruce Laird, as one example among many, scored three Supertest hundreds against Andy Roberts, Joel Garner, Michael Holding and Colin Croft. Laird never made a century in his 21 official Test matches. After 45 years, it's time.

There have been periodic pushes to get WSC recognised, and the arguments against it get weaker over time. It used to be maintained that as the laws of cricket, also under ICC copyright, did not apply to WSC, they weren't 'real' Test matches. Baloney. All sorts of rogue variations – three-day Tests, timeless Tests, private tours, exhibitions – are incorporated into official records going back to 1877. There is nothing fixed and sanctified about 'Test cricket' that can bar Supertests from official status. The fact that some Supertests were played by a World XI does not rule them out either, as the ICC recognises other World XI fixtures. Several dozen WSC one-day internationals also deserve official recognition.

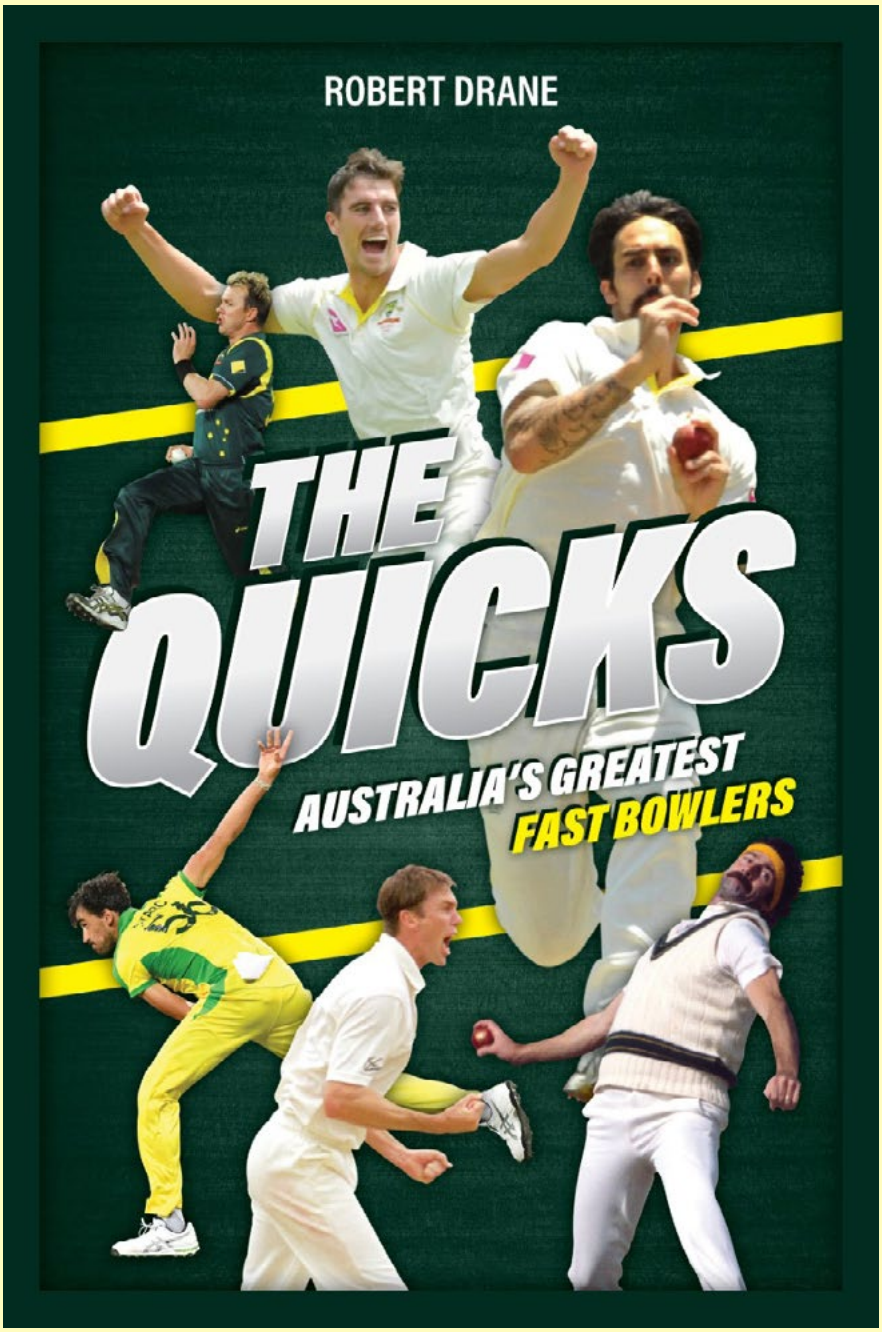
The only conceivable reason for the ICC's ongoing inaction is that the two countries that were significantly under-represented in WSC, England and India, now the most powerful in the game, have no stake in it. If cricket were steered instead by Australia, the West Indies and Pakistan, we wouldn't be having this conversation.

When it can be hard to find the meaning in some of today's fixtures, why is it important to give it to those that took place 45 years ago? It is a sad matter to state why this should be a frontline issue. The youngest WSC players are now close to seventy, and the oldest – West Indian Lance Gibbs – is 88. Fellow West Indian David Holford passed away this year at 82. The cricket world lost Rod Marsh, Ashley Mallett, Gary Gilmour, David Hookes, Tony Greig and Bob Woolmer before their WSC contributions were given their due.

Imran is facing more pressing matters than his cricket record, but the least the cricket world can do is to fully respect these players' place in history while they can still appreciate it. There are many ways a sporting event can be given meaning. Meaning is fluid, and may not just evaporate with time. One day cricket will come to its senses and fix this anomaly. Why wait until it's too late for those who care most? ■

MALCOLM KNOX
The Sydney Morning Herald.

THE QUICKS:
AUSTRALIA'S GREATEST FAST BOWLERS
EDITED BY ROBERT DRANE, GELDING STREET PRESS



Intimidation. Cunning. Distain. The greatest pace bowlers have a vast arsenal at their disposal.

Australian quicks have perfected the art of re-arranging batsmen's ribcages and life-priorities. Death stares and old-fashion lip are used in combination with explosive pace, tactical guile and the ability to make a cricket ball do unprecedentedly vicious things.

The Quicks profiles the most successful, frighteningly-fast and charismatic Australian bowlers to ever terrorise the Poms… and every other cricketing nation.

Author Robert Drane tells the stories of the men who have captivated the Australian sporting public, from Lillee and Thomson, to McGrath, Johnson and the modern menace of Stark, Cummins and Hazelwood.

ROBERT DRANE

Robert Drane is a multi-award-winning Australian writer, editor and consultant. He is a lifelong student of the game of cricket and appreciator of its finer points and many characters.

Robert spent four years as editor of Inside Cricket magazine and contributed countless articles to Inside Sport over nearly three decades. He has created other cricket publications including 100 Great Ashes Moments, Cricket Australia programmes and was a major contributor to Australia's Sporting Heroes.

His previous books include Fighters by Trade and Fighting the Demons: the Lester Ellis story. This is his first book for Gelding Street Press.

Robert grew up in Sydney but has long been Melbourne-based.

Many of his articles and books can be discovered online at:
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