

DECEMBER 2024



AUXILIARY NEWS

Welcome to the latest Auxiliary newsletter. Christmas is just around the corner and 2024 has flown by! The RSL NSW Auxiliaries have had an incredibly busy year, filled with hard work and amazing achievements, and we are incredibly proud of all our members.

Thank you for your dedication to supporting veterans and their families in your local community, whether that is through fundraising, commemorations, sport and recreation or wellbeing support. We're looking forward to continuing to work together in the New Year.

Before we go any further, we want to acknowledge another great year for the 'Thank You For Your Service' quilt team. Unless you sew or crochet, you cannot image the mammoth job this is and it wouldn't be possible without Kaye Brown, Ann-Maree Jacobs and Jan Hawkins. (Truly sorry if we have missed anyone!)

Thank you to all the Auxiliary members that have contributed to the newsletter. We love seeing your photos and reading your stories! If you haven't sent anything in yet, make 2025 the year that you do. Our next newsletter will be published at the end of March, so please send any contributions in before Monday 3 March 2025.

We would also like to express our gratitude to all of the Auxiliary members who came into ANZAC House to help with preparation for this year's City2Surf and the ANZAC and Poppy Appeals (more than \$94,000 was raised for RSL LifeCare Veteran Services).

Finally, thank you to all the wonderful staff at ANZAC House for their ongoing help and support. We have surely caused them a few grey hairs!

This is our final newsletter for the year, and since our last edition, we've had a busy few months. Congress was held, the Lady Woodward Cup was awarded, and Remembrance Day commemorations kept us busy, so there's a lot to catch up on. Let's dive in!

Sue & Pauline

IMPORTANT UPDATES

Fundraising Toolkit available for ANZAC Day

To assist with fundraising efforts, ANZAC House has created a Fundraising Toolkit for sub-Branches and Auxiliaries. The toolkit makes it easy to purchase RSL NSW branded marquees, tablecloths, pull-up banners and merchandise, as well as fundraising tokens and boxes, with flat-rate shipping. To view the Fundraising Toolkit, please [click here](#). If your sub-Branch requires financial assistance to purchase branded merchandise or fundraising tokens, support is available through the Support and Assistance Fund.

2024 Congress and AGM

The 2024 State Congress and Annual General Meeting was held at the end of October. Many Auxiliary members were able to tune in and follow proceedings, thanks to the livestream. If you missed it, you can find the link for the recording on the [RSL NSW YouTube page](#).

All sub-Branch Delegates should report back to provide members with a comprehensive understanding of the discussions that took place. You can visit the RSL NSW website to read a [full Congress wrap-up](#) and list of [approved motions from the AGM](#).



Certificate of Merit and Gold Badge

The Certificate of Merit and Gold Badge is the highest award that can be made by the League to a person who is not a Service member. It recognises outstanding honorary service rendered to the League, Ex-Service personnel or their dependants – and at Congress this year, it was awarded to Auxiliary member Diane Traveller.

Di has been a dedicated and invaluable member of RSL NSW for more than 30 years. Her dedication, professionalism, and leadership have contributed significantly to the success of the Balgowlah-Seaforth-Clontarf RSL sub-Branch, and her unwavering commitment to supporting veterans, their families, and the RSL community is exemplary.

Active Membership:

- Joined the RSL Auxiliary in February 2002

Leadership Roles:

- Honorary Secretary (2008-2009)
- Honorary Secretary & Treasurer (2009-2019)
- Auxiliary Coordinator (2019-present)
- Balgowlah Seaforth Clontarf sub-Branch Treasurer, Auxiliary Coordinator, and Membership Officer (current)

Significant Achievements:

- Life Membership awarded in September 2019
- Instrumental in the smooth transition of the Women's Auxiliary to the RSL Auxiliary
- Provided crucial support to the sub-Branch, including administration, record-keeping, and event planning
- Offered guidance and education to sub-Branch executives
- Actively participated in fundraising activities and welfare initiatives



Di was unable to attend Congress, so Pauline presented the award to her at the Balgowlah-Seaforth-Clontarf RSL sub-Branch Christmas function. Congratulations, Di, on this well-deserved award!

Lady Woodward Cup

A total of nine entries were received for the Lady Woodward Cup this year, and the Auxiliaries that entered raised a collective \$175,000.

The Lady Woodward Cup is not awarded to the Auxiliary that raises the most money – as well as fundraising, nominees must demonstrate the ways in which they support veterans and families through diverse activities and engage with the local community. However, this year, a new Certificate of Recognition was introduced for the Auxiliary that raised the largest amount.

The winners of the 2024 Lady Woodward Cup are:

- 1. Old Bar Beach RSL sub-Branch Auxiliary**
- 2. Castle Hill & District RSL sub-Branch Auxiliary**
- 3. Forestville RSL sub-Branch Auxiliary**

And the Auxiliary with the highest fundraising is: **East Maitland RSL sub-Branch Auxiliary**

Congratulations to everyone who took part! All Auxiliaries are encouraged to enter next year. It is a simple process, with three parts to the nomination form:

- Fundraising for Veteran Services (worth up to 50% of total mark)
- Supporting the local veteran community (worth up to 25% of total mark)
- Engaging with the local community (worth up to 25% of total mark)

It is the RSL Auxiliary that achieves the highest score across all categories that wins the Cup.

For examples of events and activities, please see the [October 2023 newsletter](#).

Old Bar Beach RSL sub-Branch President Jeff Earley was delighted to present the Lady Woodward Cup Award to Auxiliary Coordinators Vickie Jackson and Jan Crockett. Jeff recognised the Auxiliary as the backbone of the sub-Branch and highlighted the hard work of Auxiliary members, who fundraise, provide wellbeing support, and volunteer for any task asked of them. In response, Vickie expressed her gratitude to the Auxiliary, emphasising the importance of teamwork and the value of every member's contribution.



Old Bar RSL sub-Branch Auxiliary

"The Old Bar Auxiliary is a vital and active part of the Old Bar Beach RSL sub-Branch. We are not separate entities but equal, valued contributors working with the members to support our veterans, their families, and the community. President Jeff Earley calls the Auxiliary the 'back bone' of the Old Bar Beach RSL sub-Branch.

Founded just three years ago by Teresa Earley and Vickie Jackson, the Auxiliary has grown from a small group of 10 members to a thriving team of 39, including 10 male members. Our ages range from 28 to 88, and many of our members are family of service or ex-service men and women, motivated by a strong desire to give back to those who have served. We are a diverse group with a broad range of skills and experiences, from legal and grant writing expertise to organisational talents, singing, and a strong spirit of volunteerism.

We work alongside the RSL members to run weekly and monthly meat raffles, organise stalls and raffles for Anzac and Remembrance Days, and fundraise to promote and support our commemorations. Our Auxiliary is always there to help with preparing and packing up before and after commemorative events, and we take great pride in hosting the Anzac shotgun breakfast, which last year fed over 200 people. We also distribute programs and rosemary to the community during these events and support RSL members with local school and preschool visits, where we educate students about the importance of Anzac and Remembrance Days.

In addition to our fundraising efforts, the Auxiliary is proud to have an active Wellbeing Team, which was formed in September 2023. Starting with 5 members, we've now expanded to 6. Several of our Wellbeing Team members have attended courses run by Lifeline and DVA to better support our members. We make regular phone calls to check on members' wellbeing, offer assistance accessing household support, and visit members in their homes or in hospital.

Our Auxiliary also hosts a bimonthly morning tea, where RSL members can listen to experts talk about services available to veterans. We've had speakers from Manning Audiology, our local Chemist, and a registered nurse. In the New Year, we'll have a psychologist joining us to discuss PTSD programs and services. The positive feedback we've received from members indicates that our wellbeing efforts are making a real difference to their lives.

Additionally, one of our Wellbeing Team members worked closely with our Advocate to create a spreadsheet of clients, tracking their details and progress with claims.

As Coordinator of the Auxiliary, I encourage all members to contribute where and when they can, acknowledging that each of us has unique skills, time constraints, and family commitments. Every little bit helps, and together we are all essential pieces of the Auxiliary puzzle.

Within our sub-Branch, we consider everyone to be family. This sense of unity is at the heart of what makes us such a strong, effective team. We also warmly encourage members to bring along their children or grandchildren to events, helping to pass on the spirit of service and remembrance to the next generation.

The Old Bar Beach RSL sub-Branch Auxiliary is delighted to have won the Lady Woodward Cup because it is a testament to the dedication, hard work, and passion of our members. This recognition reflects the collective efforts of our team in supporting veterans, their families, and the community. We are proud to contribute to the legacy of service and remembrance, and this award inspires us to continue our work with even greater commitment.

Vickie Jackson, Auxiliary Coordinator, Old Bar Beach RSL sub-Branch

Auxiliary Coordinator Role

Have you considered nominating to become an Auxiliary Coordinator? Are you concerned that the responsibilities that come with the role will be too onerous? They needn't be!

An Auxiliary Coordinator is a member of an RSL Auxiliary sub-branch who takes on a coordinating role. They act as a liaison between the sub-branch and its members, facilitating communication and collaboration. Responsibilities may include:

Event Coordination:

- Collaborate with the sub-Branch to identify potential fundraising and event opportunities
- Gather input and participation from Auxiliary members
- Coordinate logistics, such as scheduling, volunteer assignments, and resource allocation

Member Engagement:

- Encourage member participation in events and activities
- Address member questions and concerns
- Foster a positive and inclusive environment within the Auxiliary

Communication:

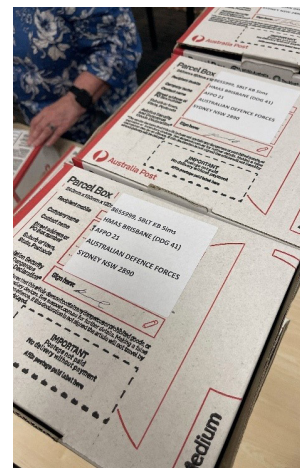
- Maintain regular communication with the RSL sub-Branch and Auxiliary members
- Share event details, updates, announcements, and other important information
- Identify and use effective communication channels (email, phone, social media, etc.)

While the Auxiliary Coordinator plays a vital role in coordinating events and activities, they do not hold a position of authority or decision-making power. Their primary function is to facilitate collaboration and ensure smooth operations within the Auxiliary.

If you have questions about the Auxiliary Coordinator role, please email auxiliaries@rslnsw.org.au

Care Packages for HMAS Brisbane

A big shout out to the amazing volunteers at Castle Hill & District RSL sub-Branch Auxiliary, Penrith RSL sub-Branch Auxiliary, Forestville RSL sub-Branch Auxiliary, Canterbury/Hurlstone Park RSL sub-Branch Auxiliary and Balgowlah-Seaforth-Clontarf RSL sub-Branch Auxiliary for making care packages to send to the deployed crew of HMAS Brisbane for Christmas. They will be much appreciated!



Anzac Memorial: 90 Treasures Exhibition and Book



To celebrate 90 years of the Anzac Memorial, a new exhibition in Sydney is showcasing 90 Treasures that have been donated to the Memorial since its opening in 1934. One of the items on display is the Banner from Balmain Rozelle Women's Auxiliary. It was discovered by a builder who was renovating a house and reached out to the RSL NSW Auxiliaries.

The banner has also been included in the 'Ninety Treasures - 90 Years' book, which includes 144 pages of vivid illustrations and narratives that showcase the depth of the Memorial's collection. The book is available to purchase [online](#) or at the Anzac Memorial.

Community Nutbush in Wingham

Congratulations to all the Auxiliary members who took part in the community Nutbush event hosted by Wingham RSL sub-Branch for Veterans Health Week.

It was terrific to see so many RSL NSW members and members of the community kicking up their heels to support veterans and their families. Check out the video of the event [here](#).



RSL LifeCare Poppy Ball

The second annual RSL LifeCare Poppy Ball gala took place at Victoria Barracks on 23 November 2024 to raise funds for RSL NSW partner charity RSL LifeCare Veteran Services. Guests enjoyed drinks and canapes, exclusive access to the Victoria Barracks Army Museum and performances from John Schumann, the Australian Federation Guard Precision Drill team, the Scots College Pipe & Drum band, and the Army Rock Band.

Supported by donations from RSL sub-Branches around NSW, RSL LifeCare Veteran Services provides veterans and their families with free services and support, including access to claims advocacy and wellbeing support, employment and housing assistance, and supported referral pathways to other physical and mental health services, and social connectivity programs.

Here are some photos from the Poppy Ball fundraising gala:



AROUND THE AUXILIARIES

Auxiliaries across NSW have been busy fundraising for the Poppy Appeal, working together with sub-Branches and the community to raise funds for local veterans and their families.

Nelson Bay RSL sub-Branch Auxiliary:



Mudgee RSL sub-Branch Auxiliary:



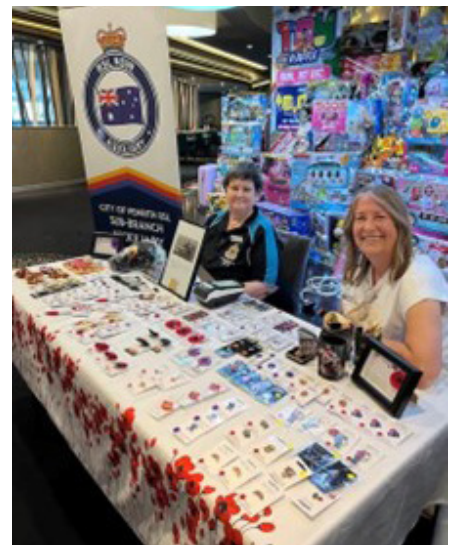
Wingham (left) and Doyalson Wye (right) RSL sub-Branch Auxiliary:



East Maitland RSL sub-Branch Auxiliary:



City of Penrith RSL sub-Branch Auxiliary:



Balgowlah-Seaforth-Clontarf (left) and City of Lismore (right) RSL sub-Branch Auxiliary:



Uralla RSL sub-Branch Auxiliary

From Monday 4 November until Sunday 10 November, Uralla RSL sub-Branch Auxiliary set up a daily street stall to sell poppies, badges and pens, as well as lovely items handmade by Auxiliary members and a raffle with great prizes!



Old Bar Beach RSL sub-Branch Auxiliary

Auxiliary members visited the Old Bar Community Preschool to lead a book reading and craft project in honour of Remembrance Day. This was an opportunity to engage the local community and get the next generation thinking about the bravery and the sacrifices of Australian Defence Force personnel.

They explained to the children why we wear poppies and how moments of silence show respect to those who have worked hard to protect our freedom. The children made paper poppies with the Auxiliary.

The Auxiliary also made an impressive poppy display for Remembrance Day.



Auxiliary members appeared in a TV story for *A Current Affair* about how Nabic and Old Bar Beach RSL sub-Branches are engaging the veteran community and growing membership. Watch the clip [here](#). They were also featured in the *Manning River Times*!

Forestville RSL sub-Branch Auxiliary

As well as actively fundraising at Bunnings Belrose and at the Forestville RSL Club, the Forestville RSL sub-Branch Auxiliary hosted their annual Fashion Parade on 24 October. Guests enjoyed fashion, food, fun and friendship, as comedian Claudia Green took everyone back over decades of trends.



St George RSL Auxiliary

Auxiliary members enjoyed a Christmas social event at the Maso's Club, Roberts Ave, Mortdale on 14 December, 2024 - needless to say, a good time was had by all! After a year of active fundraising and RSL promotion, members were able to relax, unwind and catch up. Absent but not forgotten were: Therese Gardner, Shirley Hagarty, Marlene and Reg Forwood and Norm Moses. Ideas are already being discussed for next year's fundraising. Bring on 2025!



Cardiff RSL sub-Branch Auxiliary

On 16 November, members from near and far gathered to celebrate 90 years of the Cardiff RSL sub-Branch Auxiliary! The event was a great chance to connect, share stories, and enjoy the festive season. The Cardiff RSL sub-Branch Auxiliary has been a cornerstone of the local community, providing essential support and fostering unity, and has a bright future ahead.



Canterbury/Hurlstone Park RSL sub-Branch Auxiliary

Congratulations to the Canterbury/Hurlstone Park RSL sub-Branch Auxiliary, who celebrated their 85th Anniversary with cake and a special award presentation.



Castle Hill & District RSL sub Branch Auxiliary

Auxiliary members from Castle Hill & District gathered to create beautiful, crocheted poppies for Remembrance Day stalls. These gorgeous handmade creations were displayed and available for sale in the foyer of Castle Hill RSL Club and Lynwood Country Club.



Do you have photos of your Auxiliary?

Share them via auxiliaries@rslnsw.org.au or marketing@rslnsw.org.au, so that we can feature them on the RSL NSW website, social channels and in *Reveille*. Ensure your photos are clear, high-resolution, and showcase the amazing work done by your Auxiliary.

'THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE' QUILTS

RSL NSW Auxiliaries proudly acknowledged the dedication of four Service Members who volunteer as Cenotaph Attendants.

As a custodian of the Cenotaph in Martin Place, Sydney, RSL NSW appoints Cenotaph Attendants to be present at all approved commemorations and ceremonies held at the memorial. These volunteer Service Members are responsible for preparing the site, assisting guests during wreath laying and ensuring the appropriate flags are flown.

For 78 years, Mr Walter (Wally) Scott-Smith OAM served as a Cenotaph Attendant, becoming Chief Attendant in 1999, a position he held until his retirement on ANZAC Day 2018, aged 96. During his time, Wally recruited four of the current attendants, who were all presented with 'Thank You for Your Service' Quilts at a morning tea at ANZAC House on 9 December.



Nominate a quilt recipient from your sub-Branch:

'Thank You For Your Service' quilts are hand-crafted by volunteers from the RSL NSW Auxiliary network, and awarded to recognise the dedication of past and current-serving ADF members, who offer ongoing support to the veteran community.

If you would like to nominate someone from your sub-Branch to receive a 'Thank You For Your Service' Quilt, please email your nomination directly to support@rslnsw.org.au



Rod Holtham
 Rose Bay RSL sub-Branch
 Member since 1990
 Cenotaph attendant since 2009



Ron Webb
 Combined Services RSL sub-Branch
 Member since 2012
 Cenotaph attendant since 2011



Wally Murans
 Combined Services RSL sub-Branch
 Member since 2013
 Cenotaph attendant for more than 10 years



Charles Gallagher
 President of Rose Bay RSL sub-Branch
 Member since 2004
 Cenotaph attendant since 2013

To learn more about the history of the Cenotaph in Martin Place and the RSL NSW Cenotaph Attendants, or to view upcoming services and commemorations, please visit the [Cenotaph page on the RSL NSW website](#).

GARDEN OF REMEMBRANCE

Vale Bev Oliver - Ingleburn RSL sub-Branch Auxiliary

Mrs Bev Oliver was a hard-working member of Ingleburn RSL sub Branch Auxiliary for many years prior to moving to a nursing home. Bev made beautiful handcrafted goods for trading table and also was ready to help when needed even after moving.

In 2023, Bev made hundreds of red poppies for the Poppy Ball on board HMAS Adelaide.




Mabel (Anita) West OAM

Anita passed away on the 16 October 2024, age 104. She would have been 105 on the 20th December this year.

Anita served in the UK's Women's Auxiliary Air Force (WAAF) from 1939-1946 in signals and as a teleprinter operator attaining the rank of Sergeant. She was also required to complete three years in the WAAF Reserve following the end of the Second World War. She immigrated to Australia after completion of her service in November 1949 and became an Australian citizen.

This remarkable lady gave so much of her life to various veteran services, our Auxiliary the RSL Sub Branch Legacy Widow's Club, Torchbearers for Legacy and the St John Ambulance Association.

Anita was awarded an Order of Australia Medal (OAM) for services to veterans and their families.



To all the Auxiliary members who are not feeling the best at the moment, we are thinking of you and sending our best wishes.



Robin McKinnon - North Ryde and Port Macquarie RSL sub-Branch Auxiliaries and Past President CCWA

We have been deeply saddened to hear of Robin's passing. Those who have been around a long time will know that Robin played a huge role in the RSL NSW Auxiliaries – in fact, it was Robin who approached me to be a Councillor. I kept saying no and she kept ringing and wore me down. She told me it would only be for six months, I'm still here 11 years later...

Robin joined North Ryde RSL sub-Branch Auxiliary in 1975, held many roles and dedicated a huge amount of her time. In Central Council, she held the positions of Councillor, State Secretary, State Treasure and then State President until she retired in 2014. Robin was a Life Member and received her Gold Badge and Certificate of Merit for her outstanding service to the RSL Women's Auxiliary at local, State and National level.

On her retirement, Robin relocated to Port Macquarie and became an active member of the Port Macquarie RSL Sub Branch Auxiliary.

Robin passed away 8 October, 2024, her funeral was held 5 November, 2024 at Ungari. Pauline represented RSL NSW Auxiliaries on the day.

Our thoughts are with Shirley Saunders from Canterbury/Hurlstone Park RSL sub-Branch Auxiliary, who slipped while selling poppies for Remembrance Day and broke her pelvis in two places and her shoulder. Love and best wishes for a speedy recovery!





Auxiliaries with Facebook pages

Ingleburn

RSL NSW

St George

Bundeena

Leeton

Port Macquarie

Woonona Bulli

Doyalson Wyee

Toukley

Woy Woy/Ettalong/Hardys Bay

If your Auxiliary has a Facebook page and is not listed here, please email us so we can add your details to the next newsletter.

FIND US ON FACEBOOK

For those who use Facebook, did you know we have both an Auxiliary Facebook page and group? Click on the links below to join us!

RSL NSW Auxiliary Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/163434587113422>

Auxiliary Facebook Group:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/345503682455520>

Battlefields from WWII, Gareth McCray OAM has regular posts, poems from Bill Charlton, and so much more.

Helping Our Veterans Craft Group

Heicke Keefe has set up a Facebook group for all of the crafters amongst us. Pop over and join! There are great ideas to help raise funds:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/345503682455520>

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