



WRAAC ASSOCIATION (VICTORIA) INC.

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NEWSLETTER

December 2009 – No 4/2009

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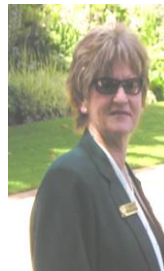
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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Members,

Welcome to the final edition of your Newsletter for 2009. As we look back on the past 12 months we could really ask for a recount as this year has gone much too fast.

The Association's year began just as the terrible news of the Victorian Bush Fires overwhelmed us with sadness and pain, then to learn of the devastating floods in Queensland was just too much to comprehend.

This was in my thoughts as I met with a former ex-servicewoman whose attitude to life is amazing and during her service life faced sights, sounds and situations we could never imagine. It was during our conversation she reflected on chapters of her service life and Australia in general. In passing I asked her what would have happened if Australia had fallen into enemy hands during WWII and our Allies had lost the battle. Her answer to me was "we never thought we would lose, it never entered our heads, we were there to see it through and get back to living our lives again."

I admire her attitude and respect this lady greatly and think there's a lesson for us all, don't give up. Keep positive and embrace each day as a new adventure. It always takes a great woman to put everything into perspective doesn't it?

Yours in friendship

Jude (Wood) Pinkerton-Treloar

*The President & Committee
wish you all a happy & healthy
Christmas & New Year.
Keep safe.*



ARISING FROM OUR COMMITTEE MEETING

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1100hrs Saturday 24th October 2009

We can report all current members of the Committee have been returned for a further 12 months.

Thank you to all for your confidence and support.
(Attachment No.1 is a copy of the President's Report)

SWAN HILL EX-SERVICEWOMEN'S REUNION Sunday 11th April 2010

The Swan Hill Ex-servicewomen's Reunion 2010 will be held on the second weekend in April, the reunion luncheon is Sunday 11th April at the RSL Club, Curlewis Street, Swan Hill. Registration and morning tea will be available from 10.00am. Luncheon will be at the RSL Club at approximately 12.30pm. Bookings will close on 11th February 2010 and the cost will be \$20.00 per person. Please send a stamped self-addressed envelope with your remittance by the 11 February 2010. Cheques should be made payable to Swan Hill & District Ex-servicewomen's Association and sent to Secretary Maralyn Toppinen 13 Clarke Street Swan Hill 3585. On receipt of your acceptance and remittance, Name Tags will be forwarded to you.

POLAR FLEECE JACKETS

If you wish to purchase a green polar fleece jacket as seen at the luncheon recently Brenda has sourced a supplier as we looked for the best option with cost a priority. The cost of a blazer is astronomical with several Associations looking at purchasing fabric and members having their own tailor made, once again at significant cost. We know a jacket does not look as smart as a blazer but the jacket is another option.

The committee is looking at woven badges to go on the jacket with the cost once again a consideration. If you have any contacts regarding blazers and or fabric please contact Brenda Walters on 03 9846 2152.

If you have a blazer continue to wear it as the polar jacket is an option for members unable to source a blazer.

To order a Ladies Polar Fleece Jacket contact:
www.gcapparel.com.au.

Order on line robyn@gcapparel.com.au
Biz Collection PF631-Colour Forrest
Telephone : 1300 663 890
Approximate Cost \$36.00 per garment (includes postage)

91ST ANNIVERSARY OF REMEMBRANCE DAY (ARMISTICE DAY) 11TH NOVEMBER 2009

A warm sunny day greeted a large group of Veterans, their families and friends including many ex-service personnel to commemorate the 91st Anniversary of Remembrance Day (Armistice Day) at Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital (Austin Health).

Representatives of various Service Organizations placed floral tributes in remembrance of the courage and sacrifice made by all Veterans and War Widows. Musicians from the Pipes and Drums and The Light Horse Quartet provided music for the service.

A group of local school children seated nearby clutched bunches of flowers to place at the Flag Pole and listened intently as the service progressed, waiting for the fly over by a restored WWII Mustang at 1115hrs.

I actually felt a cold shiver down my spine as I heard the distinctive sound of the aircraft engine overhead, and I thought, I'm so glad this is a symbolic gesture as the Mustang, with a formidable history was able to operate in a dive bomber role during WWII and the Korean conflict. The tension left me when CAPT Gwenda Walker (WRAAC Transport) with a smile on her face suggested the Mustang appeared to misfire due to a faulty spark plug.

That reassured me!

Following the service we walked to the Acacia Room where a band called The Blue Ramblers entertained us. The music, a mixture of WWII and 60s tunes played as all assembled enjoyed light refreshments and reflected on the meaning of the day. The children joined in the spirit of the day dancing with teachers and hospital staff.

At the service we caught up with Margaret Bull, Dawn and Frank Ciechowski and many other service mates.

FACT- In Australia Mustangs remained in service with Citizen's Air Force Squadrons until they were withdrawn in 1959.

COUNCIL OF EX-SERVICEWOMEN'S ASSOCIATION (VIC) INC. ANNUAL PILGRIMAGE AND LUNCHEON Saturday 21st November 2009

The Women's Pioneer Garden looked magnificent as we gathered at the Memorial Cairn to Commemorate the 24th Anniversary of the Dedication of the Ex-Servicewomen's Memorial.

Melbourne's changeable Spring weather decided to be kind to us this year and we certainly made the most of it with a simple wreath laying service prior to the luncheon at ANZAC House.

Colonel Jan McCarthy AARC welcomed all in attendance with Major Jean Smart OAM, Salvation Army saying the opening prayer. Jude Pinkerton-Treloar read a tribute to all Servicewomen and acknowledged their role in Australia's history.

Our thanks to Major Maggie More and the Shrine of Remembrance Staff for their help with the sound equipment and the welcome chairs providing seating for all.

Our own Margaret Jager made the wreaths this year using native and seasonal flowers and they added to the significance of the day. Major Jessie Perkins and Mrs Dorothy Holmquest placed wreaths in memory of all Servicewomen and all in attendance were invited to place a poppy in remembrance.

The service over we then met at ANZAC House for a welcome drink and lots of time to join together and renew the friendships of other service organizations. We enjoyed the atmosphere of ANZAC House and the catering was just perfect in fact it appeared to be a day enjoyed by all in attendance.

This year the guest speakers were Jean Parry (Middle East VAD Association) and Betty Davies (AWAS Association). Jean and Betty talked about their service life during the Second World War and we all left feeling privileged to know these inspirational women.

The Council expects the Memorial Cairn to be relocated to the Remembrance Garden at the Shrine of Remembrance in 2010 and this year was possibly the last Pilgrimage at its present site.

WRAAC 60TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS 2011

A sub-committee has been formed to co-ordinate the celebrations for this special year.

The committee is currently discussing with the Shrine of Remembrance an exhibition of WRAAC History to be held in conjunction with Corps day celebrations. We need you to clear out your cupboards and check for any WRAAC uniforms, stories, photos or history you may have. More information will be available at a later date.

Other states will be holding celebrations for 60th Anniversary of WRAAC.

Check: www.wraacmemories.com for more information.

WRAAC MEMORIAL ROLL

The WRAAC Association (NSW) sub committee 2011 plans to prepare a Memorial Roll to honour members of the WRAAC who have passed away. The list will include WRAAC ARA, CMF and Army Reserve containing "service names with married names in brackets. Could you please send names of any WRAAC who has passed away to Cheryl Brown WRAAC Association (Vic) Inc. Post Office Box 307, San Remo Vic. 3925. Or Email: rayhyd@bigpond.com.

AWAS SIGNALS

I have always listened with a great deal of interest to former members of the AWAS (Signals) as they discuss the Australian Special Wireless Group (ASWG) and then often

follow with the mystical sounding word Kana, sometimes in hushed tones.

Interest in the history of the AWAS began for me when it was part of the WRAAC Recruit training syllabus and as a result always considered these women never gained the recognition they so richly deserved.

The AWAS story is one all Australian women should be proud of and to be amongst a group of former AWAS members is inspirational and a living history lesson.

When recording AWAS history it relates to a young Australia facing tough war time conditions and it's also about young women ready to postpone their hopes and dreams to help our Nation fight for its life.

In July 1941 the Australian Army gained approval to recruit women into an auxiliary force known as the Australian Women's Army Service and on August 14th 1941 approved of the formation of the AWAS.

This news would have altered the dynamics of so many Australian families as prior to and following WWII Australian women were still classed as chattels along with the pots and pans and the family cutlery.

With the formation of 1st and 2nd Australian Signals Training Battalions (AWAS) in June 1942 Australian women became key players in communications and have proved their worth ever since.

Australian Special Wireless Group

On enlistment into the AWAS (Sigs) women were selected for a "special job" within the ASWG and this was following an aptitude test including sending and receiving Morse.

Once recruited as a member of the ASWG the girls were kitted out and began their training, for many it was Bonegilla (A Signals Training Camp situated near Albury NSW)

Bonegilla appeared to host a reserve of trained signal operators ready to be mobilized when and if required. The courses lasted between six weeks and three months with women achieving Morse speed of twenty words per minute. I have read where once you were part of the ASWG it was not an easy group to leave, however pregnancy and promotion was always an option.

The role of the ASWG was to intercept enemy wireless traffic and also monitor ours and Allied traffic. This could include checking for clandestine stations and Diplomatic work. The AWAS worked at a gruelling pace many taking a straight 6hr shift or the 2hr on and 2hr off Naval shift and years later many of the women developed a chronic tiredness that re-occurred over many years. This we now know is common with shift workers and has a significant impact on the internal body clock.

The need for accuracy was paramount and operators had to concentrate tirelessly always listening for changes in frequency as the enemy was good at subterfuge. There was always a sense of urgency and Signalwomen were needed to train as quickly as possible and here we introduce Kana.

Kana is the word for the symbols of the Japanese Morse Code and is a simple pictorial means of phoneticizing the Japanese spoken language. Kana consists of long and short beeps or dots and dashes which are written down and sorted into groups of characters.

The work was so vital it was hoped the Japanese did not learn about what was going on in Bonegilla but of course

they did and chatter was intercepted from Tokyo regarding an incident in Albury the day before, Australia's enemies didn't go to sleep or take breaks.

In fact many Australians did not know about this Top Secret work for many decades and that was only due to the lifting of the Official Secrets Act 1987.

The Signalwomen accomplished so much during the War years and through their knowledge and expertise helped secure victory.

The signalwomen intercepted messages from Ambon, New Guinea, Finschafen, Hollandia and Tokyo just to name a few. As the Allies advanced the Japanese became more talkative and our knowledge of Kana was invaluable. It was noted by 1945 some AWAS were allowed to serve at the advanced Headquarters in Lae and some sent to Hollandia. There were ASWG sections all around Australia including Darwin, Park Orchards, Ferny Creek and Broome.

The young women selected for this incredible work were under strict orders never to discuss their work with anyone. The women were also directed to remove their respected Signal patches whenever they left their camp area, it was not a good idea to advertise a Signals base. The first group of AWAS chosen for ASWG were told, **"Not only do you not exist but you never will have existed. You will remain for always unknown and unacknowledged. There will be no awards, no glory. There are no medals in this unit."**

These words have always made me feel ashamed that these amazing women have not fully received the recognition they deserve and it's sad to think our Grandchildren may never fully understand the significant role Australian women played in our early history.

If you wish to gain more information check Australians at War at www.australiansatwar.gov.au.

No Medals in this Unit by Jean Hillier, Mundulla South Australia.

To Betty Davies a former member of ASWG, well done.

My sincere thanks to Brenda Johnson and Gwenda Walker for their inspiration and friendship.

AROUND THE WRAAC PACK

VALE

MAJOR PATRICIA RAWLINGS OAM ASM

It is with great sadness we report the passing of Major Patricia Rawlings OAM ASM

Patricia Rawlings at the age of sixteen joined the British Auxiliary Territorial Service in 1939 and later as a Warrant Officer was sent to the Middle East and became part of the first all female unit on active service in the Western Desert.

Major Rawlings joined the WRAAC in July 1951 and was the Chief Instructor for the first Recruit Training Course at Studley Park and went on to serve with WRAAC for 23 years. Over the course of her 23 years service with the Women's Royal Australian Army Corps she rose from the rank of Warrant Officer to that of Major.

There are documented stories of her bravery and courage when the then LT Patricia Rawlings and LT Patricia Shaw were awarded the Bronze Medal in 1953 by the Royal Humane Society as they attempted to save the life of a fellow WRAAC from drowning at a beach near Mornington, Victoria. The tragic drowning of PTE O'Sullivan is indeed a sad chapter in our short history.

Patricia's courage was again tested on Black Tuesday 1967 when the devastating Tasmanian Bushfires surrounded 6 WRAAC Company camp at Brighton near the city of Hobart. WRAAC members fought bravely to secure the area with just the help of nine signalmen, all ably led by then Captain Patricia Rawlings. It was noted all WRAAC members involved were later praised by the civil authorities for their magnificent effort.

Patricia Rawlings was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia on the 26th January 1991 and the Australian Sports Medal on 13th September 2000.

It was following a visit to Australia by our Late Colonel in Chief HRH The Princess Margaret that Patricia Rawlings and a group of Former WRAAC members thought it would a wonderful idea to form an ex-WRAAC Association and Patricia then went on to hold executive positions in both State and National groups. Major Rawlings was the Patron of the WRAAC Association of Australia.

To Major Patricia Rawlings family and friends our sincere condolences to you all.

THE WRAAC PRAYER

Almighty God, we ask you to reveal yourself in the fullness of your love, to all who reach out to you. Help us to recognize ourselves as your children. Let the day soon dawn when we will allow your love to right every wrong.

Give us the courage and self-control to play our part as former members of the Women's Royal Australian Army Corps to help our Kingdom come to earth.

Lead us in the Pathway of life as your own wisdom and love see best, we are anxious only to do your will.

We ask you to give us the grace to rise above temptation, to be patient when tired, to be kind and helpful towards others.

To all members of our Army grant the special blessing that we need. Preserve us from selfishness. Bless every member of our Corps, our family and friends.

We come to you as children as our Father, asking these and all other blessings, in the name of Jesus Christ, Our Lord.

Amen

PADDY

We were saddened to learn of the passing of Paddy following a fall in September 2009.

The story of Paddy (Gendarme VIII) is close to our hearts as our much loved life member Elizabeth (Liz) Salmon is the wife of Mick Salmon (refer story below).

Our thoughts are with you at the loss of such a beautiful and gentle horse as many of us have special memories of Gendarme.



**Man's best friend: Paddy and drum major Mike Salmon
In their police force days**

Horse in line for bravery award

(Herald Sun Friday, 18th September 2009)

Retired Victoria Police drum horse Paddy is expected to be honoured as a hero for sheltering pet sheep and goats under his huge frame during the Black Saturday bushfires.

The big bay Clydesdale with the white blaze led many parades through Melbourne when appointed "Gendarme VIII", a serving member of the police mounted branch.

The gentle giant carried two drums and his master drum major Mike Salmon.

Mike Salmon was riding his horse this week when Paddy 19, stumbled and died.

After a perfect working relationship, the pair retired together to Mr Salmon's Happy Valley property in northeast Victoria which came under extreme threat in February when flames razed much of the state.

While Mr Salmon worked to save his house, Paddy rounded up the two sheep and pair of goats, keeping them calm and sheltered by his sheer bulk.

Albury RSPCA president Arthur Fraunfelder said Paddy would be nominated for a Purple Cross for protecting smaller animals as embers rained on him.

"His owner was hosing the house and every time he got a gap or break he checked the horse, hosed him off and then returned to protecting his property," Dr Fraunfelder said.

Two awards - the Purple Cross and Animal Valour Award - will be nominated to the national RSPCA.

SICK PARADE

To all our members who are not feeling well at this time our thoughts and prayers are with you. If you wish to have a chat please do not hesitate to contact a committee member (telephone numbers on front cover) or our Chaplain Rev. William (Bill) Pugh – Editor

WEDDING NEWS

Congratulations to our honorary member Ella Brown on her recent engagement to Robert Burton of York (UK)

The happy couple will be married at her parents' property at San Remo Victoria overlooking the magnificent Western Port in January 2010.

Ella is the daughter of Cheryle and Ron Brown who are both former members of the CMF/ARES.

WELL DONE ELIZABETH



Elizabeth Gibson apart from being our long standing Treasurer has another role and it was acknowledged in St Mary's Catholic Church Newsletter recently.

Elizabeth has been a volunteer at St Mary's for a long, long, time! For twenty years she has been responsible for keeping the records up to date for those parishioners, who are part of the Parish Thanksgiving Campaign. The Parish acknowledged her contribution.

We also remember WO1 Elizabeth Gibson as our Drill Instructor and the sound of her gentle melodious voice challenging us to march in step or else. The wonderful stories we could all share about Elizabeth could fill a book so all that is left to be said is Elizabeth you are an inspiration, well done and congratulations from the Association.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

**Shirley Cornish
Joy Paton
Verna Phillips**

They are all Ex-AWAS girls.

MEMBERSHIP

We would like **YOU** to contact any ladies whom you may know who were in the Army (ARA CMF ARes) regarding joining the Association.

Please contact our Membership Officer Diane Sherry on (03) 9478 1073 or email at dishe1946@yahoo.com.au and she will post out the appropriate form.

Could you let Diane Sherry know if you have an Email address and if you are able to access the Newsletter on the website? Her contact details are listed above.

Can You Help

We have lost contact with some of our life members. Can you help us to locate the following members:

CPL Dorothy Berry
Ms Barbara (Hutton) Birthisel
SGT Kerrie Brindell
WO1 Jenny Brown
Ms Shirley Brown
Mrs Judith (Dunn) Bulleid
Ms Marilyn (Stephenson & Murray) Dell
Mrs Pat (Harvey) Franks
Ms (Christina) Robyn (Vincent) Gibson
Ms Pamela (Walsh) Hunt
Ms Angela Jones
Mrs Irene (Trench) Lakeman
Ms Cynthia Neal
Mrs Joan O'Brien
Mrs Joyce (Cory) Payne
Ms Marilyn (Bates, Wuchatsch) Ross
Ms Debbie Umpleby
Ms Winifred Webster
Ms Sallyann Welton

Please contact Diane Sherry on telephone (03) 9478 1073, mobile 0408 553 412 or email: dishe1946@yahoo.com.au.

SHRINE NEWS

EXHIBITIONS

A voice from the deep
A story of an Australian Sailor

Western Visitor Centre
23rd October – 31st December 2009

Petty Officer Ted McHaffie's story is told through his sketchbooks, family memorabilia and interpreted through the art of his nephew, Robert Hoskin. A career sailor, Ted was the ship's painter on HMAS Sydney II and lost his life when it sank with all on board in 1941. He sailed with the Sydney on its maiden voyage in 1935-36. Correspondence from Ted to

his mother and sisters continued until his last letter, sent from Fremantle before the ship's final voyage.

History of the Shrine 75th Anniversary

Eastern Visitors Centre
6th November – 31st December 2009

Architect Phillip Hudson wrote of his design for the Shrine of Remembrance that it would be "a building with a soul." A history of the Shrine exhibition has been developed for the celebration of the 75th anniversary of the dedication of the Shrine in 1934. A rich archive of images, Shrine memorabilia, sculptures and a model of the Shrine traces the evolution of the Shrine and its place within Victoria as a site for public and personal reflection.

History of the Shrine Travelling Exhibition December 2009 - January 2010

This exhibition is touring regional Victorian centres until 2011. For a complete listing please visit www.shrine.org.au/exhibitions.

<u>Location</u>	<u>Dates</u>
Yarra Plenty Watsonia Library	27 Nov – 18 Dec
Yarra Plenty Diamond Valley Library	23 Dec – 8 Jan

SHRINE LEARNING PROGRAMS

The Shrine of Remembrance has an inspiring range of learning programs for students of all ages. All of the programs are provided free of charge and schools may be eligible for travel assistance kindly provided through Metlink. Bookings essential.

Enquiries: education@shrine.org.au or
Telephone (03) 9661 8113.

Storytelling for Children

First Sunday of the month, 2pm. These sessions are the ideal way to introduce young children to the Shrine for the first time. A discovery tour follows each storytelling session. Bookings Essential: programs@shrine.org.au or
Telephone (03) 9661 8100

Shrine Web Site:

For all information about Shrine programs visit the website at www.shrine.org.au. or
Telephone (03) 9654 8415

FOR THE DIARY DECEMBER 2009 – APRIL 2010 0		
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Feb 2010	Ex-WRAAC Social Group Pub Lunch	Orrong Hotel
11 th April 2010	Swan Hill & District Ex-Servicewomen's Association Re-union	RSL Club Curlewis Street Swan Hill
19/20 th February 2011	WRAAC 60 th Birthday Celebrations Victoria	To be advised

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment No. 1 - President's Report from Annual General Meeting





WOMEN'S ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ARMY CORPS ASSOCIATION (VICTORIA) INCORPORATED

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Saturday 24th October 2009

Starting at 1100 hrs

Education Centre

Shrine of Remembrance

Melbourne.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

It is a great honour to deliver the President's report covering the year 2008-2009 as one has a sense of pride working with a team of such dedicated and creative ex-servicewomen.

The year began for the committee with an assessment of previous goals and a critical evaluation of our overall performance.

The primary goal for the Association was based on the continued promotion of social contact for members and to preserve the history and traditions of the WRAAC.

This cannot be achieved if you do not provide a welcoming environment for members and the committee has worked very hard to ensure this via the Newsletter our web-site and follow up contact with members.

The long term goal was the overall survival of the Association and the need to promote and profile our organization and the way to achieve this was to be pro-active and attract new members.

We have a dedicated Membership Officer in Diane Sherry who has been a wonderful Ambassador for the Association, Diane is diligently tracking down members we have lost contact and to a point mending broken bridges.

Diane is usually the initial contact point for future members and first impressions play a most important role in making a prospective member feel welcome.

The current committee boasts members spanning several decades of service and this in turn offers us fresh ideas and a credible contact base to a wider circle of membership.

We have achieved excellent results with the web-site and it is an invaluable tool in the world of instant contact and immediate answers.

The web-site has been a blessing for former WRAAC members attempting to track down friends and to access information. We still need your input to keep our site interesting and informative.

The Committee on your behalf attended various service organization meetings and functions where ideas are exchanged and friendships strengthened.

The reality is, declining membership is the dark cloud hovering over so many service Organizations and if you add to the mix the natural ageing process many Associations are considering winding down in the near future and this is a prime topic of conversation.

A point closer to home is the recent winding up of the SA WRAAC Association and this has left us with a deep sense of sadness.

This term of office your representatives have been:

Brenda Walters - Kindred Organisations and Unit Associations Committee.

Cheryle Brown liaises with Reserve Forces Day Council. Heather Fry has had to step down as our delegate.

Jessie Perkins and myself are the delegates attending the Council of Ex-servicewomen's Association Vic Inc.

Maggie More and myself attend the AWAS Association meetings. Maggie More being the junior Vice President of the AWAS Association.

WRAAC ASSOCIATION (VIC) INC. COMMITTEE MEETINGS

As a committee we continue to hold regular meetings at the Shrine of Remembrance and we acknowledge and value the help and support we receive from the wonderful Shrine Staff.

EVENTS

2009 Luncheon

The Committee received positive feedback from membership following the Annual Luncheon held at the International of Brighton in July, with numbers up and the welcome addition of a guest speaker added to a memorable day.

Our sincere thanks to Liz McLaine, Brenda Walters and Margaret Jager for their organizing and artistic skills all playing a significant role on the day.

At this stage we will continue to hold the luncheon at the International.

Combined AWAS and WRAAC Service

On Sunday 17th May the combined AWAS and WRAAC Service was once again held at the Shrine of Remembrance, the Shrine staff were extremely helpful in allowing us full use of the facilities. This year we were given the use of the Lone Pine Room and it was very comfortable as it enabled us to spread out and enjoy a cup of tea and the delicious finger food organized by Margaret Jager and the committee. The day is significant due to the close bond we share with the AWAS Association and we intend to hold the service again next year.

The only down side to the day is the small number in attendance and this is an issue for the committee to address.

ANZAC Day

The weather was kind to us again this year and even the constant moving from one march off point to the other was not too bad in fact it made the day brighter. One should always keep a sense of humour.

Next year we will have our new banner to march proudly behind and we hope more members join us on the day.

Web Site

Our web site continues to be a great success and our sincere thanks to Heather Fry and Ella Brown for their ongoing contribution to the site.

We still need your input to keep our information interesting and informative.

Ex-WRAAC Social Group Pub Lunch

We always look forward to the Pub Lunch held in February and October each year and our sincere thanks to Liz McLaine, Bev Bond and Lyn Board for their contribution in making this a great get together for all.

Please remember to have your name added to the contact list by contacting Liz Maclaine.

Association Banner

This year we took possession of our new WRAAC Banner and it was proudly paraded before us for the first time at the annual luncheon in July.

The Association is extremely grateful to our life member Carol King and her husband Grant for their generous gift of the Banner. The banner will be blessed at the WRAAC Plaque in May following the combined AWAS and WRAAC service.

WRAAC Plaque

Our WRAAC Plaque situated in the Remembrance Garden at the Shrine of Remembrance continues to leave us with a sense of pride and achievement, we are so fortunate to have such a site to visit and remember our former Corps and service friends from ARA, CMF and ARES. The Plaque is significant in that it is part Australia's Military History.

Grant

After several meetings, phone calls and the patient gathering of many quotes we can report our application for a Grant is in the process of seeking approval.

We need the grant to help supplement Association plans for 2011.

Reserve Forces Day

Reserve Forces Day 2009 was a disappointment to many of us participating in the march. The weather certainly played a huge part in the overall mood of the day.

The purpose of the day is supposed to be a tribute or recognition to currently serving Reservists and to former members of CMF, ARes and National Servicemen.

The day allegedly highlights the contribution made by employers and families of Reservists, they to deserve recognition for their input and support.

To our members who were CMF or ARes the day appears to lack significance and this has been a fact for several years.

The feedback from participating Associations and Units appears to be let's hope we receive positive action from the organizing committee for next year.

The WRAAC Association (Vic) Inc. intends to send a letter outlining our observations of the day.

Following the march Lorraine Onans placed flowers at the WRAAC Plaque and we acknowledged the contribution made by members of WRAAC CMF and ARes. At least we were able to honour Reserve Forces Day in a dignified and significant way.

Jackets

The Association has been able to source a supplier to provide us with a forest green polar fleece jacket as we found the cost of a blazer far too expensive for members to purchase. The jacket whilst not as smart as a blazer is a comfortable alternative.

We are looking at a woven badge and a new scarf to compliment the jacket, cost being a huge factor.

Fund Raising (WRAAC Collectors)

Our fund raising co-ordinator Margaret Jager reports our special effort is going well and funds collected will help with the ongoing web-site costs and 2011 celebrations.

Our sincere thanks to all for your wonderful contribution to the Association.

Newsletter

Thank you for the feedback regarding the Association Newsletter we appreciate your input but we always need more from you.

The Newsletter still appears to be the most important mode of communication with membership as it keeps you informed and part of the Association wherever you may live. (Emails and notes from members assure us of that.)

Now we always look forward to follow up calls following a Newsletter as it keeps us on our toes looking for the next interesting story.

Swan Hill Ex-Servicewomen's Reunion 2009

Swan Hill 2009 was another wonderful weekend to enjoy the company of fellow ex-servicewomen and the friendly hospitality of the Swan Hill RSL.

We thought the reunions were coming to an end but the Swan Hill RSL stepped up and next year the reunion will be held on Sunday 11th April 2010 at the RSL Club. If you wish to attend next year please check the Newsletter or web site for further information or collect a brochure before you leave. Remember to book accommodation as early as possible.

Our Association proudly boasts the new Secretary of the Swan Hill & District Ex-Service Women's Association, Maralyn Toppinen and we wish her well in her new role.

We met Maralyn last year at the reunion and we are very proud of her.

60TH ANIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS WRAAC 2011

In conjunction with the WRAAC Social Group we hope to celebrate with a reunion Luncheon at the Orrong Hotel on Saturday 19th February 2011 to reflect and enjoy time spent together as former members of the WRAAC. There will be more details to follow as plans develop.

The planning is well underway to have an exhibition of WRAAC history and memorabilia at the Shrine of Remembrance on Sunday 20th February 2011 as part of the celebrations Australia wide.

The Plan

After gathering at the Shrine Forecourt we are looking at a march past at the eternal flame then a march to the WRAAC Plaque where we will remember the Corps with a wreath laying ceremony. We then proceed to the exhibition area at the Shrine for the official opening of the WRAAC History exhibits.

A small catered reception will follow in the outdoor area of the Shrine which is a wonderful entertaining area. We are working towards the day being at no cost to members.

We have decided to have our celebrations a week after NSW so as not to conflict with WRAAC NSW activities.

FLAG

The committee has long held a dream that the Association should have our own flag, to fly proudly overhead at the Shrine of Remembrance and yet be able to be carried and displayed.

We have been fortunate to locate a flag maker and we are currently in discussion with them.

Once again cost is always an issue but we think the Association can afford to purchase such an item with the assistance of a grant.

ACKNOWLEDEMENTS

We wish to acknowledge our Patron Jessie Perkins for her guidance and encouragement to the Association over so many years.

To Maggie More and Gwenda Walker for their continued support of the Association, we thank you so much.

I thank each Committee members for their support and contribution through out the year.

Jude Pinkerton-Treloar