



RETURNED and SERVICES LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA

EPPING RSL SUB-BRANCH
ROUTINE ORDERS



Vol 29 No5

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October - December 2026

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Message from the President



We began this period of the year coming to terms with the passing of our past Secretary, comrade and good friend Leslie John Prestidge. Since John's passing many good memories about his life and time at the sub-Branch were discussed amongst his fellow members. John formed a large part of the sub-Branch, and he will be remembered for years to come. Our thoughts and continued support go out to his wife Merrill and his family.

The sub-Branch held its annual VP Day Commemoration and Wreath Laying Ceremony at the Boronia Park Cenotaph on Saturday 15th August. The Commemoration was well supported by the local politicians including Parramatta Deputy Lord Mayor Colin Chen, Councillors Raffoul and Valjak, the Federal Member for Berowra, Julian Leeser MP and the Member for Epping, Monica Tudhope MP. The event was also well supported by 322 Squadron AAFC Cadets who provided the Catafalque Party, James Ruse Agricultural High School Army Cadet Unit who recited the Act of Remembrance and Epping Boys High School who recited the Ode.

The prayers were led by Minister Tom Barrett and the Prologue was delivered by one of our members Brigadier David Leece AM PSM RFD ED (Retd) and the music of the pipes was provided by our regular Piper Ian McGrath.

The sub-Branch's next major commemoration ceremony will be Remembrance Day to be held on Wednesday 11th November 2026 at the Boronia Park Cenotaph. Our Ceremonial Officer John Curdie OAM has all the arrangements well

underway and has secured a speaker to deliver the prologue, Lieutenant Colonel Andrew Lam

The sub-Branch continues to support the two Year 9 students from Epping Boys High School as they work towards their Duke of Edinburgh Award. They have provided some useful assistance on Wednesday afternoons by alphabetising the books in the sub-Branch office library and beginning the process of entering them into a database created to maintain an accurate record of the collection and assisting with the cleaning out the sub-Branch storage cage. We appreciate their enthusiasm and the value of their work.

Lest we forget.

Andy Brayshaw

President, Epping RSL subBranch

REMEMBRANCE DAY

11 NOVEMBER 2026

Join us for a commemorative service at Boronia Park Cenotaph.

Assemble at 1015 for service commencing at 1030.

Following the service, join us at The Epping Club for refreshments.

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

VALE

“WE WILL REMEMBER THEM”

During the months of August - September 2026, no advice has been received of the passing of Service Members:

STAND EASY

Stand Easy is an informal daytime gathering on the third Wednesday of the month between 1300 and 1500 hours. It is held in 45 on Rawson at The Epping Club.

This provides an opportunity for all members of the sub-Branch to relax with a drink and nibbles and solve the problems of the world. Those who are unable to attend the evening monthly meetings catch up on sub-Branch activities and enjoy companionship.

Upcoming Stand Easy meetings will be held on:

21 October
18 November
16 December
20 January 2027

WELLBEING SUPPORT OFFICER

Andrew (Andy) Brayshaw

Mobile: 0435 879 258

Email: wellbeing@eppingsubbranch.com

Visit Andy in the sub-Branch office on Wednesday mornings between 9 a.m. and noon.

WSOs can offer:

referrals for training and employment pathways, housing providers, counselling and health services, and claims and compensation advocacy

support to claims Advocates,

visits to veterans at home, and in hospital and aged-care facilities

support services, such as driving and shopping trips

support at funerals

assistance organising domestic assistance or home maintenance services

assistance with administrative duties in a volunteer capacity

support organising and conducting social, family and Sport & Recreation Program activities

non-clinical and non-advocacy support to a veteran's family during time of grief, loss, and bereavement

ROUTINE ORDERS is issued 5 times per year, in January, April, June, August and October.

Contributions for inclusion in ROUTINE ORDERS, such as forward activities, interesting personal notes etc. are always welcome. Items for the next issue on Monday 25 January 2027 are required before Wednesday 13 January 2027.

Earlier would be appreciated. Electronic copy preferred if possible.

Routine Orders editor Barry Hoschke bhoschke@tpg.com.au.

EPHING RSL SUB-BRANCH

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY OCTOBER 2026 – JANUARY 2027

OCTOBER 2026

Sunday 4	DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME BEGINS	0200
Monday 5	LABOUR DAY PUBLIC HOLIDAY	
Monday 12	Families of Veterans Guild of NSW -War Widows	1030
Monday 12	Epping RSL sub-Branch Committee Meeting	1800
Wednesday 21	Stand Easy	1300
Friday 23 - Sunday 25	RSLNSW State Congress, Tamworth	
Monday 26	Epping RSL sub-Branch Monthly General Meeting	1930

NOVEMBER 2026

Monday 2	Families of Veterans Guild of NSW -War Widows	1030
Tuesday 3	MELBOURNE CUP	
Monday 9	Epping RSL sub-Branch Committee Meeting	1800
Wednesday 11	Remembrance Day service at Boronia Park Cenotaph: Assemble	1015
	For service commencing	1030
Wednesday 18	Stand Easy	1300
Monday 30	Epping RSL sub-Branch Monthly General Meeting	1930

DECEMBER 2026

Sunday 6	Epping RSL sub-Branch Christmas Luncheon	1200
Monday 7	Families of Veterans Guild of NSW -War Widows	1030
Monday 14	Epping RSL sub-Branch Committee Meeting	1800
Wednesday 16	Stand Easy	1300

JANUARY 2027

Monday 11	Epping RSL sub-Branch Committee Meeting	1800
Wednesday 20	Stand Easy	1300
Monday 25	Epping RSL sub-Branch Monthly General Meeting	1930
Tuesday 26	AUSTRALIA DAY PUBLIC HOLIDAY	

Origins of Remembrance Day

Australian War Memorial

Why is this day special to Australians?

At 11 am on 11 November 1918 the guns on the Western Front fell silent after more than four years of continuous warfare. The allied armies had driven the German invaders back, having inflicted heavy defeats upon them over the preceding four months. In November the Germans called for an armistice (suspension of fighting) in order to secure a peace settlement. They accepted allied terms that amounted to unconditional surrender.

The 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month attained a special significance in the post-war years. The moment when hostilities ceased on the Western Front became universally associated with the remembrance of those who had died in the war. This first modern world conflict had brought about the mobilisation of over 70 million people and left between 9 and 13 million dead, perhaps as many as one-third of them with no known grave. The allied nations chose this day and time for the commemoration of their war dead.

On the first anniversary of the armistice in 1919 two minutes' silence was instituted as part of the main commemorative ceremony at the new Cenotaph in London. The silence was proposed by Australian journalist Edward Honey, who was working in Fleet Street. At about the same time, a South African statesman made a similar proposal to the British Cabinet, which endorsed it. King George V personally requested all the people of the British Empire to suspend normal activities for two minutes on the hour of the armistice "which stayed the worldwide carnage of the four preceding years and marked the victory of Right and Freedom". The two minutes' silence was popularly adopted and it became a central feature of commemorations on Armistice Day.

On the second anniversary of the armistice in 1920 the commemoration was given added significance when it became a funeral, with the return of the remains of an unknown soldier from the battlefields of the Western Front. Unknown soldiers were interred with full military honours

in Westminster Abbey in London and at the Arc de Triumph in Paris. The entombment in London attracted over one million people within a week to pay their respects at the unknown soldier's tomb. Most other allied nations adopted the tradition of entombing unknown soldiers over the following decade.

After the end of the Second World War, the Australian and British governments changed the name to Remembrance Day. Armistice Day was no longer an appropriate title for a day which would commemorate all war dead.

In Australia on the 75th anniversary of the armistice in 1993 Remembrance Day ceremonies again became the focus of national attention. The remains of an unknown Australian soldier, exhumed from a First World War military cemetery in France, were ceremonially entombed in the Memorial's Hall of Memory. Remembrance Day ceremonies were conducted simultaneously in towns and cities all over the country, culminating at the moment of burial at 11 am and coinciding with the traditional two minutes' silence. This ceremony, which touched a chord across the Australian nation, re-established Remembrance Day as a significant day of commemoration.

Four years later, in 1997, Governor-General Sir William Deane issued a proclamation formally declaring 11 November to be Remembrance Day, urging all Australians to observe one minute's silence at 11 am on 11 November each year to remember those who died or suffered for Australia's cause in all wars and armed conflicts.

Last updated: 17 April 2020

Dad Jokes

My Dad told me a joke about boxing.
I guess I missed the punchline.

Why did the math book look sad?
Because it had too many problems.

How do you make 7 even?
Take away the s.

I used to love my job collecting leaves.
I was raking it in.

Victory Pacific Day 15th August 2026 Boronia Park Epping



Photos Irene Rowe

Arr John Curdie

The red poppy

The Flanders poppy was immortalised by Lieutenant-Colonel John McCrae's poem *In Flanders Fields* (1915) and became the enduring symbol of the war for veterans and remembered as the only flower to bloom in the shattered landscape of no man's land. The artillery shells and shrapnel stirred up the earth in France and Belgium and exposed the seeds to the light they needed to germinate. According to folklore they were red from the blood of fallen soldiers.

McCrae served as a medical officer with the first Canadian Contingent in France during the First World War. When in charge of a small first-aid post at the second battle of Ypres in 1915, he wrote the now very famous poem

*In Flanders' fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row
That mark our place, and in the sky
The larks still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.*

*We are the dead, short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow.
Loved, and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders' fields.*

*Take up our quarrel with the foe,
To you from failing hands we throw
The Torch: be yours to hold it high!
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders' fields.*

The verses were apparently sent anonymously to the English magazine, *Punch*, which published them under the title, *In Flanders' Fields*. Colonel McCrae died while on active duty in May 1918.

The poppy soon became widely accepted throughout the allied nations as the flower of remembrance to be worn on Armistice Day.

National commemorative service: 25th anniversary of Australian service in Afghanistan 2001-2021

DVA News 13 July 2026

On Sunday 11 October 2026, the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) will deliver a national commemorative service at the Australian War Memorial to commemorate and honour all Australians who served in Afghanistan, the families who supported them and coalition allies they served alongside.

From 2001, more than 35,000 Australians served in Afghanistan and the Middle East Area of Operations (MEAO) in relation to Afghanistan. In response to the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States, Australian forces contributed to a multinational attempt to bring security to Afghanistan, stabilise the wider region, and defeat terrorist activity.

For more than two decades, Australians have also contributed reconstruction efforts focused on creating safe conditions for democratic governance, mentoring and training, and humanitarian aid.

We remember the Australians who lost their lives during or as a result of their service and acknowledge the physical and mental impacts that service has had on many of our veterans and their families.

On 11 October, we invite veterans, families of veterans and community members to come together and attend the national commemorative service in Canberra. The service will be broadcast live on ABC iView for those unable to attend in person.

Whether you're attending the national service in Canberra, watching at home, or taking part in local community commemorative activities, we encourage you to reflect on the service and sacrifices of Afghanistan veterans in a way that is personal to you.

A unique way you can share in the commemorative spirit is through a personal reflection to our Wall of Remembrance. The 'Wall' is an evolving, community-led tribute where all Australians can share a contemplation or memory of a loved one connected to the ADF. As the 25th anniversary of Australian service in Afghanistan approaches, we invite you to share a tribute.

For more information about the national commemorative service, including accessibility and transport options, and to register your attendance (for free), please visit www.dva.gov.au/Afghanistan-anniversary.



Sub-Branch Senior Vice President John K. Curdie OAM celebrated attaining his 90th Birthday on Saturday 12 September 2026. The Curdie clan, pictured here, and friends joined in the celebration.

John has made a significant contribution to the sub-Branch and it is a pleasure to recognise this milestone in his life.

The Epping War Widows continued their 'RSL Lunch Crawl' by visiting yet another RSL Club for lunch and to check out their military museum. In July we visited Hornsby RSL. The War Widows were joined by two Family of Veteran's members.

Epping War Widows welcome any Family of Veterans to attend our monthly meetings and morning tea; which are held on the first Monday of the month at 10.30 am in the board room at the Epping Club.



I Am the Medic

Andy Brayshaw

He lay face down upon the board, his uniform cut back to thread;
boots still on, his T-shirt torn, the dust of war beneath his head

I placed one hand upon his shoulder and spoke the only truth I knew:
“Hold on, mate — this will hurt, but I have got to see you through.”

The wound was wide, the pain was raw, the gauze went in, the screaming came;
“Oh God, stop, Doc!” he cried aloud, and still I worked against his pain.

I gritted teeth and held my place, for mercy sometimes wears a blade;
To save a life, to seal a wound, a cruel and sacred debt is paid.

“I can’t stop, mate, I’ve got to do this, “I said above the battle’s breath;
For every second burned forever, held between the hands of death.

Ten seconds, twenty, maybe less, yet years may gather in their flame;
Some moments never leave the mind, some voices call you back by name.

But worst of all is not the blood, nor wounds no tourniquet can bind;
It is the choice the medic makes, the sorting of the left behind.

A single look can tell the truth the tongue must never let them hear;
“Am I going to be all right, Doc?” they ask through blood and dust and fear.

You force a smile. You bend the truth. “It’s not as bad as it may seem.”
You give them comfort for the road, then carry home the broken dream.

It haunts you later, when it’s quiet, when no one sees your armour fall;
The demons rise in lonely hours, and every face returns to call.

You treat the friend, the foe, the child, the ones who cursed you moments past;
you offer care without a border, because compassion must outlast.

The medic’s road is hard and heavy, a burden few will ever see;
Yet when the cry for help is sounded, they know that I will cross the field.

Before God, before their mothers, through fire, fear, and thunder’s roar:
I am the Medic — call my name, and I will come, forevermore.

