



REMEMBERING OUR WAR NURSES

THE BOER WAR

Fast Facts

- ↪ The Boer War began in South Africa in 1899 and lasted for almost three years.
- ↪ Around 16,000 Australian soldiers were sent to assist the forces of the British empire.
- ↪ The New South Wales Army Nursing Service Reserve, formed in 1899, was the first Australian military nursing organisation.
- ↪ Around 60 nurses from various Australian colonies served in this war. Some were paid by the government; others were privately sponsored or paid their own way.
- ↪ Sister Fanny Hines from Victoria died in South Africa. She was the first Australian military nurse to die during overseas service.
- ↪ By the end of the war, the six Australian colonies had federated to become one nation, the Commonwealth of Australia.





Great War Nurses

"I have never regretted that I took the notion into my head to take on nursing, for it has opened up opportunities that I would never have had."

SISTER JEANIE TOMLINS

More than 1,200 Australian nurses volunteered for active service during the First World War. While working, these women in various roles, nursing, also provided opportunities for independence and travel, sometimes with the hope of being married.

"A WOMAN OF UNDERSTANDING": QUEENSLANDER - MATRON GRACE WILSON

"Convoy arrived, about 400 - no equipment whatever - just laid the men on the ground and gave them a drink ... they are shattered and [we] have nothing to give them - no comfort whatever. All we can do is feed them and dress their wounds."

MATRON GRACE WILSON

Matron Grace Wilson arrived on Lemnos in early August, just days after the sinking of the British Cruiser, due to a Turkish mine.

TO AFGHANISTAN



Second World War Nurses

"Where there are men fighting, there are always nurses."

SISTER FLORENCE SYER



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NURSES IN CAPTIVITY

"We knew we were living on a knife edge... we were starving and we were sick... if the Japs didn't kill us, disease probably would."

SISTER WILMA GRAM

When the Japanese captured Tobruk, New Britain, in January 1943, six ANZAC nurses were taken prisoner. After an 'escape' to a remote hospital at Wewak, they were moved to Japan, where they remained in various camps all after the war's end.

A month later, as Japanese soldiers advanced towards Singapore, the Australian women in the region were ordered to evacuate. Twenty-two nurses embarked with hundreds of patients and civilians aboard the transport ship and the War Ship. They finally made it back to Australia, having suffered heavy bombardments on the way.

Not as fortunate were the 57 nurses evacuated, along with many civilian women and children, on the SS Yusef Safadi. Twelve lost their lives when the ship was sunk, and 21 of the survivors were confined on Bangka Island, the remaining 44 by sea became prisoners of war. The captured nurses hoped their own compassionate actions, applauded by their own fellow soldiers, would protect them. It did not. For the next three and a half years, they were kept in prisoner-of-war camps. Eight died in captivity.



VIETNAM: IN THE AIR AND ON THE GROUND

"You were sending home week after week, planes full of young, mutilated people. Most people see amputated limbs as nice rounded finished off stumps. We didn't get that. We had the ragged ends"

LIUTENANT FAT LEWIS

RWANDA, 1995

"After Kibeho we operated non-stop for 48 hours, and they just kept coming through the door."

CAPTAIN LEWIS MACLEOD

On 22 April 1995, soldiers engaged in the Kibeho Internally Displaced Persons Camp, and Rwandan Patriotic Army soldiers entered the camp. The camp was surrounded by a barbed wire fence, and the camp was surrounded by a barbed wire fence. The camp was surrounded by a barbed wire fence. The camp was surrounded by a barbed wire fence.

BANDA ACEH, 2005

"You have to be prepared for anything, and be as fit and healthy as possible before you go"

COMMANDER TERENCE SLADER, RAN

On Boxing Day 2004, a series of attacks were carried along the coast of several provinces in Aceh. Within days hundreds of military units arrived to provide aid and medical care to the thousands of injured and homeless people.

PACIFIC PARTNERSHIPS, 2006, 2008, 2010

"It was an opportunity to do something different with my nursing"


LIUTENANT MEG FRUOTNIET

A member in the navy since 1987, Sharon was Lieutenant Frugotni's first assignment in the Pacific. She participated in three short-term multinational operations providing humanitarian aid to communities in the Pacific. Around 2006, Sharon Frugotni worked as part of a medical team in Banda Aceh in 2005 and East Timor in 2006. Her third deployment, one year later, was aboard USNS Comfort, which sailed to New Orleans and East Texas.



AFGHANISTAN, 2008

"I struggle with the knowledge that I can't deliver my team to their families in the condition I received them."

SQUADRON LEADER SHARON COOPER

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But for the winning post—we are there. A couple of plaques to be installed in about 3 weeks, without ceremony but with a good sigh of relief.



Colonel Bronwyn Wheeler referring to our new storyboards, had this to say:
'The tour from Zululand to Afghanistan is a wonderful portrayal of nurses and what we have done. We are one of the most under publicised professions esp in the military when you consider we have been involved in every conflict and what we do no one ever sees. At the end of the day it is not about our own achievements but the saving our soldiers and that is what matters the most.
Bronwyn concluded with best wishes and signed off:
*I remember Bundaberg with fondness.
Warmest regards*





REMEMBERING OUR WAR NURSES

The launch of the storyboards was a huge success thanks to numerous contributions.



Thanks to:

Jenny—for the idea and putting together the stories and photos;

Tara, In House Designs—for artwork considerations 'beyond the call' (pictured with Jenny on page 4);



We also appreciate the attendance of Ken O'Dowd MP and two staff from Gladstone, Ashley and David; Seven News, Win News, News-Mail; Paul Tramacchi Bundaberg RSL President and Linda Fuller QNU Regional Organizer.



Even the weather cooperated.

*Are we there yet?
Almost!*



Queensland & Federal (Flynn electorate) governments—for funding;

Bundaberg Regional Council—for support and encouragement; and we will not forget that Mayor Mal Forman put back a meeting to be with us; nor that 4 Councillors also took the time to attend the launch;

Our own members—for assisting with the project, attending the launch, working (including hubby's), circulating among our guests and supplying a tasty array of treats;



And Bunnings who donated the gazebo, chairs and tables for ANZAC Day that were put to good use.





REMEMBERING OUR WAR NURSES

The sign is in place,



So too are the storyboards.....and landscaping and memorials



I think we are really there; just a couple of plaques recording the event of 24 September 2014, naming the Peace Garden and listing our sponsors and they are on the way.

