

## Chapter Sixty OUR CENTENARY OF ANZAC PROJECTS

### INTRODUCTION

During the Centenary of Anzac, the Bundaberg & District Ex Servicewomen's Association wanted to honour the sacrifice and service of all women who have served in Australian, Commonwealth and Allied Defence Forces for over 100 years with suitable community focused events. The association can proudly say that it will have provided two wonderful and appropriate events to the community of Bundaberg between 2014 and 2017.

Firstly, in 2014 our association proudly delivered the *Remembering Our War Nurses* events, where we honoured the outstanding contribution and service of nurses in the military forces from the Boer War in South Africa to Afghanistan and current day operations. We held a Centenary of Anzac commemorative service on the 24<sup>th</sup> September during which the Governor of Queensland unveiled our major enhancement projects to the War Nurses Memorial Park. Included was a new Australian Service Nurses Memorial Wall and the *Nurses: Zululand to Afghanistan* permanent storyboards.

Now in 2017, with our project partners, Elements Art, we honour servicewomen who served in roles beyond nursing with *Salute to Servicewomen*. *Salute to Servicewomen* includes two commemorative services, a portrait exhibition of local women veterans, visual displays showcasing the different roles servicewomen have undertaken during and since the Second World War (WW II), and the launch of this book *Mothers, Daughters, Wives - Stories of The Bundaberg & District Ex Servicewomen's Association*.

### REMEMBERING OUR WAR NURSES-2014

Following the Anzac Day service at War Nurses Memorial Park in 2012, where the poor presentation of the memorial park in general, and the lack of recognition of nurses who served after WW II was discussed with association members, I (Jennifer Waldron) realised that all association members wanted 'something to be done' to address what we all saw as major deficiencies at the memorial and so I offered to look into what we could do.

Myself, Leone Wilson and Kay Derome took a tape measure and some paper to the flag station to design a new memorial wall for all Australian service nurses, and thus began an all-consuming journey for myself and my right hand woman, Leone Wilson, as our small wall at the flag station grew into a major enhancement of the whole War Nurses Memorial Park.

The decision to go well beyond just a memorial wall was driven mainly by the response to our initial fundraising efforts in the local Bundaberg community, who told us "please do something about the look of the park too". So Leone and I started dreaming big! Following approval from the Bundaberg Regional Council to build the new wall and a linking path to the War Nurses Memorial Pavilion, we sought, and received, approval for a much larger enhancement project, which was supported by funding from the Queensland Government Anzac Centenary Grants. Over the ensuing 12 months, with wonderful assistance from Carla Colasimone, our landscape designer at Council, we delivered a lasting legacy to the community of Bundaberg and the major elements were completed for the commemorative service and memorial unveiling on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2014.

The following is an extract from our final report to Queensland Government Anzac Centenary Grants program:

Project Name: Centenary of Anzac - Remembering Our War Nurses and War Nurses Memorial Enhancements

Description: Centenary of Anzac Service and enhancements to War Nurses Memorial with:

- a. The construction of the new Australian Service Nurses Memorial wall - completed.
- b. Commemorative gardens incorporating plaques/plants for Bundaberg regions' nurses who paid the supreme sacrifice and a First World War plaque where those nurses not named on the Memorial Pavilion can be acknowledged - completed.
- c. The Anzac Centenary Walk linking the new Australian Service Nurses Memorial Wall to the Memorial Pavilion and commemorative gardens - completed. Walk officially named as Anzac Centenary Memorial Walk.
- d. The Centenary of Anzac Avenue - Remembering Our War Nurses featuring history storyboards and will provide access to the park facilities, and links the history storyboards with the Memorial Pavilion and Anzac Centenary Walk areas, and memorial wall - completed.

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- e. Centenary of Anzac service, a nursing history display and morning tea following the dedication of the new memorial wall on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2014. Laying of Centenary of Red Cross Plaque - completed.

Additional to original application:

- a. Commemorative plaques marking the Centenary of the First World War were presented to the Directors of Nursing from the region's communities, as well as the Mayor of Bundaberg Regional Council and the President of the Bundaberg RSL Sub Branch by the Governor of Queensland during the community morning tea on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2014.
- b. A Centenary of Anzac luncheon was held following the morning tea with Colonel Wendy Taylor (RAANC Rtd) delivering a speech on the history of Australian service nursing, supported by Colonel Bronwyn Wheeler, RAANC and Wing Commander Kathleen Pyne, RAAF who spoke of current military nursing operations and their personal experiences.
- c. A commemorative plaque was installed on the new memorial wall to honour nurses from the Boer War.
- d. A new War Nurses Memorial Park sign was designed and installed.

The association also installed three new picnic settings at War Nurses Memorial Park which are being well used by visitors each day and arranged for author Susanna de Vries to present an Authors Talk about WW I nurses, at the Bundaberg Regional Library on the evening of 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2014.

The total cost of the enhancement project at War Nurses Memorial Park was around \$80,000 with \$30,000 contributed by the association from 18 months of our fundraising efforts which included special commemorative tea towels, special label wine fundraiser and the generosity of members and the Bundaberg community.

We have funds set aside for new plaques for nurses who served in WW II, as many names are not listed in the Memorial Pavilion, as well as Vietnam and any recent conflicts. These projects will be undertaken in the next few years.

*Remembering Our War Nurses* is shown in pictures in the following pages. A selection of photos covering the enhancement, rededication and commemorative service on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2014 are displayed within Chapter Fifty Two covering association's history between 2008-2016



Above Left : Remembering Our War Nurses Logo was designed by ex-servicewomen Sue Garlick and Sue Frawley of Quattro Solutions. Concept by Jenny Waldron.

Above Right: Remembering Our War Nurses Enhancement Project commemorative plaque, with the special logo proudly displayed.

The logo also features on the new park sign

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Above: July 2014 . Enhancement project commences



Above: Stage 1 completed just in time for dedication service on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2014



Above : Official Guests from left Jack Dempsey MP (right), Rear Admiral Ken Doolan AO, Governor of Qld, Colonel Bronwyn Wheeler.



Left: Australian Service Nurses Memorial Wall unveiled



Above Left: Mayor Mal Forman opens the Peace Garden

Above Right: Opening Address by President Jenny Waldron, with MC Janet Rasmussen taking a well earned drink (water only of course!)



Left: Some of the crowd seeking shelter from the rain after 6 weeks of drought

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Above Left: Catafalque Party supplied by D Coy 9 RQR



Above Right: Wing Commander Kathleen Pyne recites the Ode with Reverend Jan Rossow to her right who dedicated the new memorial wall



Above from Left: The 1949 War Nurses Memorial, Last Post Bugler Neil McCabe, Lament Piper Adam Johnston

Below from Left: Association members with the Governor of Queensland, from left back row: Leone Wilson, The Governor, Lynly Wilkinson as WWI nurse. Sitting from left: Ray Hinkler, Val Pomfrett, Alice McArthur

Below Right: More crowd sheltering, with Tom McLucas under his black umbrella



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Above: Enjoying the display from left: Val Pomfrett, Colonel Bronwyn Wheeler, Ray Hinkler



Above: Commemorative plaques were presented to the regional health centres by the Governor of Queensland



Historical display on Australian Nurses was featured at morning tea and the Centenary of Anzac Luncheon.



Below: Service nurses Group Captain Geoff Robinson, NSC and Wing Commander Kathleen Pyne at the Luncheon



Above: Enjoying conversation at the Centenary of Anzac Luncheon before delivering the official address is Colonel Wendy Taylor (rtd) second from left. From left are Colonel Bronwyn Wheeler (RAANC), Wendy Taylor, Rear Admiral Ken Doonlan AO RAN National President of the RSL & Australian War Memorial Chairman, Carolyn Kennedy (RAAFNS Vietnam/Malaysia)



Above from Left: Jenny Millers, Lorna Gibbs, Delwyn Crowley

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Above: Ken O'Dowd MP, Federal Member for Flynn officially unveiled the *Zululand to Afghanistan: History of Australian Service Nurses* storyboards on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2015. President Jenny Waldron compiled the storyboards  
*Photo: News Mail Bundaberg*



Above: Gwen and Ken Fort of the Korean Veterans Group inspect the storyboards at the official opening



Above: Storyboards in the Peace Garden are adjacent to the 1949 War Nurses Pavilion and are accessed by the newly installed pathway officially named Anzac Centenary Memorial Avenue. The War Nurses Memorial wrought iron signage from the original park gate has been attached as a link to the park's past

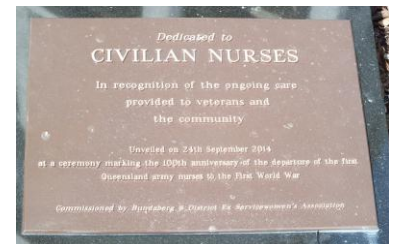
Below: Association members boiled billies on camp stoves and provided a picnic morning tea following the official opening of the storyboards



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Above: The double sided storyboards from the Base Hospital side of park. The last storyboard in the series gives visitors the history of War Memorial Park from 1949 to 2015 and was written with assistance from Leone Wilson



Above: Some of the many new plaques and signs installed as part of the enhancement project.

Below: Three new picnic table settings were also funded from our enhancement project

