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RSL Victoria is a registered charity, member based organisation and is the Victorian Branch of the Returned & Services League of Australia (RSL Australia)

Sunbury is the only RSL within the Hume Municipality

INFORMATION

ISSUE 1

Sunbury RSL Sub-Branch Newsletter

April 2024

ANZAC Day

ANZAC stands for Australian and New Zealand Army Corps. It falls on the 25th of April each year. This day was officially named Anzac Day in 1916.

On the 25th of April 1915, Australian and New Zealand soldiers formed part of the allied expedition that set out to capture the Gallipoli peninsula. These became known as Anzacs and the pride they took in that name continues to this day.

The Anzacs landed on Gallipoli and met fierce resistance from the Ottoman Turkish defenders. Their plan to knock Türkiye out of the war quickly became a stalemate and the campaign dragged on for eight months.

At the end of 1915, the allied forces were evacuated. Both sides suffered heavy casualties and endured great hardships. Over 8,000 Australian soldiers were killed.

The meaning of Anzac Day today includes the remembrance of all Australians killed in military operations.

Commemoration

Commemorative services are held at war memorials at dawn – the time of the original landing in Gallipoli. Later in the day, current and former servicemen and women meet to take part in marches.

CONTENTS

2	Anzac Biscuit Rosemary Remembrance	9	Dinner Photos continued
3	SAPPER 5701 George ALCORN	10	Thank You Health Wellbeing Support
4	Navy News	11	Valé Premier's Spirit of Anzac Prize
5	Army News	12	In Flanders Fields
6	Air Force News	13	Introducing your new Editor
7	Wednesday Afternoons Photos	14	Dementia - Veterans' Information
8	Dinner Photos	15	Calendar

Sunbury RSL Sub-Branch

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THE ANZAC BISCUIT

During World War One, friends and families sent food to the fighting men. Due to the time delays in getting food items to the front lines, they had to send food that would remain edible for long periods of time and retained high nutritional value. The Anzac biscuit met this need.

The biscuit was first known as the Soldiers' Biscuit. The current name, Anzac Biscuit, has as much to do with Australia's desire to recognise the Anzac tradition and the Anzac biscuit as part of the staple diet at Gallipoli.

The Anzac biscuit is one of the few commodities that are able to be legally marketed in Australia using the word 'Anzac', which is protected by Federal Legislation.

Although there are variations, the basic ingredients are:

- rolled oats
- sugar
- plain flour
- coconut
- butter
- golden syrup or treacle
- bi-carbonate of soda
- boiling water

**We forget that
waking up each day
is the first thing we
should be grateful for.**



ROSEMARY FOR REMEMBRANCE

Rosemary is a small perennial shrub of the mint family. This compact evergreen, with clusters of small light blue flowers and leaves that yield a fragrant essential oil used in making perfume and to flavour food, is native to the Mediterranean region.

On ANZAC Day, the wearing of small sprigs of rosemary in the coat lapel, pinned to the breast or held in place by medals is thus synonymous with remembrance and commemoration.



Since ancient times this aromatic herb has been believed to have properties to improve the memory. Perhaps because of this, rosemary became an emblem of both fidelity and remembrance in literature and folklore.

Traditionally, sprigs of rosemary are worn on Anzac Day and sometimes on Remembrance Day, and are usually handed out by Legacy and the RSL.

Rosemary has particular significance for Australians, as it is found growing wild on the Gallipoli peninsula.



SAPPER 5701 GEORGE ALCORN

GISBORNE MEMORIAL



Unit name:

2nd Tunnelling Companies, Reinforcements

His Unit embarked from Melbourne on board HMAT A38 Ulysses on 25 October 1916.

George contracted the Mumps and was admitted to the 47th Dressing Station in the field then transferred to 7th General Hospital on 26 February 1917.

He was taken on strength to 2nd Tunnelling Coy on 2 March 1917.

Fate:

Died of Wounds received in action from gun shot wounds to both legs on 26 March 1917 in the field. Admitted to 45th Field Ambulance.

SPR George Alcorn was buried at Vlamertinghe Military Cemetery, Belgium on the Ypres Poperinghe Road 3¾ miles west of Ypres. Plot VI, Row D, Grave No 13

For his war service on the Western Front, SPR George Alcorn received the British War Medal and the Victory Medal.

Sapper George Alcorn enlisted on 14 July 1916 in Melbourne, Victoria. He was born in Gisborne in 1891, birth registration 13051, therefore was 25 years 3 months on enlistment. George was single.

He was a farmer and his address was Merrigum, Victoria. Merrigum is a town in the Goulburn Valley in the City of Greater Shepparton local government area, 197 kilometres north of Melbourne.

His father, also George Alcorn, lived in New Gisborne with his wife Sarah née Foster. They are both buried in Kyneton Cemetery.

At George's medical, the following were recorded:

Height: 5' 7 ¾" (172 cm)

Weight: 135 lbs (61.25 Kg)

Complexion: Medium

Eyes: blue

Hair: Dark brown

Religion: Presbyterian





Vice Admiral Mark Hammond

Key appointments

Chief of Navy (2022 - present)
 Commander Australian Fleet (2020 - 2022)
 Deputy Chief of Navy (2018 - 2020)

Biography

Vice Admiral Mark Hammond, AO, RAN joined the Royal Australian Navy in 1986 as an Electronics Technician, before commissioning as a Naval Officer in 1988. Graduating from the Australian Defence Force Academy (ADFA) in 1990, Hammond served in frigates before volunteering for submarine service and qualifying in the Oberon class. He is a dual qualified officer, graduating from the RAN Principal Warfare Officers Course, and the Netherlands and USN Submarine Command Courses, and Australia's Senior Submariner.

Hammond served extensively in Collins Class submarines. He also gained international experience in French, British and US nuclear attack submarines and Dutch conventional submarines. His Command of HMAS Farncomb included submarine operations across the Indo-Pacific. Subsequent shore postings included the Assistant Naval Attaché in Washington DC, Submarine Capability and Joint Exercise Staff roles, and 12 months as the Chief of Staff to the Chief of the Defence Force.

On promotion to Commodore, Hammond was appointed Director General Maritime Operations. Hammond then returned to the United States as the Liaison Officer to the Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff. He was awarded the United States Legion of Merit (Officer) for his performance in this role. On return to Australia in 2018 Hammond was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) for exceptional service to the Australian Defence Force in senior command and staff roles.

On promotion to Rear Admiral in 2018, Hammond assumed duties as the Deputy Chief of Navy and, in late 2020, was appointed Commander of the Australian Fleet. In these demanding appointments Hammond first oversaw substantial



workforce growth, and then focused on enhancing the resilience and warfighting capability of Navy's people and Fleet during the COVID19 pandemic.

Vice Admiral Hammond assumed Command as Chief of Navy on 07 July 2022, the first RAN Recruit School and ADFA graduate to do so, and only the second submarine Commanding Officer to be appointed to the role. In 2023 he was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) for distinguished service to the Royal Australian Navy in senior command roles.

Vice Admiral Hammond holds a Bachelor of Science, Masters in Management and Masters in Maritime Studies, and is a graduate of the Harvard Business School Advanced Management Program. Away from the Navy his interests include antique wooden boats, cricket, rugby league (South Sydney Rabbitohs), AFL (Port Adelaide), chess and submarine warfare in World War II.

Source: <https://www.navy.gov.au/about-navy/leaders/chief-navy>

ARMY NEWS



Lieutenant General Simon Stuart AO DSC

Lieutenant General Stuart assumed command of the Australian Army on 02 July 2022.

Enlisting as a soldier in 1987, Lieutenant General Stuart was commissioned into the Royal Australian Infantry Corps in 1990. He has over thirty five years' experience across a range of leadership, operations, training and program management appointments in Australia and overseas.

Lieutenant General Stuart's regimental experience was in the 2nd/4th and 2nd Battalions, Royal Australian Regiment, culminating in command of the 8th/9th Battalion from 2008-10.

He has commanded on operations on five occasions at the company, Joint Task Force, brigade and force levels in East Timor, Afghanistan and Egypt/Israel respectively. His early career included significant training experience, while his staff appointments have largely been in capability development. He has worked in joint, whole of government, international and multi-national environments for most of the past 20 years. Most recently, Lieutenant General Stuart has fulfilled the role of Head of Land Capability in Army Headquarters after a three year deployment in command of the Multinational Force & Observers from 2017-19.

Lieutenant General Stuart is a graduate of the Royal Military College – Duntroon (1990), the United Kingdom's Joint Services Command and Staff College (2003), the United States Army War College (2015) and the Harvard Business School Advanced Management Program (2022). He holds a Bachelor's Degree from the University of New England and Masters' degrees in Project Management (UNSW), Arts - Defence Studies (Kings College, London) and Strategy (US Army War College).

Lieutenant General Stuart's honours and awards include his appointment as Member of the Order of Australia (2011), the Distinguished Service Cross (2014) and advancement to Officer of the Order of



Australia (2020). He has also received a number of foreign awards, including those from the United States, Timor Leste, Columbia, Uruguay, Czech Republic, Japan and Indonesia.

Lieutenant General Stuart and his wife Katy are from Perth, Western Australia. They have two teenage children and a labrador retriever. He is also the patron for the Army Drone Racing Team and a patron for the Army Australian Football League.

Source: <https://www.army.gov.au/about-us/leadership/chief-army>

#NEWS || More #AusArmy troops have been deployed on Operation Kudu as part of Australia's continued support of Ukraine. 7th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment's contingent commander Major Michael Jack said realistic training was key to achieving mission success. "The skills that are being developed by the Armed Forces of Ukraine members range from small arms training with their individual weapons, first aid and care of the combat casualty, and tactics training in rural, urban and trench environments," Major Jack said. "The idea with these scenarios is to replicate as much of the combat situation in Ukraine as possible." Source: <http://spr.ly/6183XecWH>

AIR FORCE

Air Marshal Robert Chipman AO CSC

The Chief of Air Force oversees Air Force activities that raise, train and sustain assigned Air Force capabilities.

Air Marshal Robert Chipman joined the Royal Australian Air Force in 1989 as an Officer Cadet at the Australian Defence Force Academy, graduating from Sydney University with an Honours degree in Aeronautical Engineering in 1992.

He completed the Pilots Course in 1994, F/A-18 Operational Conversion in 1995 and Fighter Combat Instructor Course in 1999. Following various operational and instructor assignments, he commanded No 75 Squadron from 2006-2009 and No 81 Wing from 2013-2014. In 2008, No 75 Squadron was awarded the Duke of Gloucester Cup for the most proficient flying squadron and the Kittyhawk Trophy in 2009 for the most proficient fighter squadron.

Air Marshal Chipman has staff experience in capability development roles within Capability Development Group and Air Force Headquarters. He has completed a tour as Director of the Australian Air and Space Operations Centre within Headquarters Joint Operations Command. In 2015, he was an inaugural Director of Plan Jericho, an Air Force transformation program intended to deliver joint, integrated air and space capability for the Australian Defence Force.

On promotion to Air Vice-Marshal in 2019 Air Marshal Chipman served as Australia's Military Representative to NATO and the European Union. He was the Head of Military Strategic Commitments, responsible for the strategic level management and situational awareness of current and potential Australian Defence Force commitments from January 2021, until his selection as Chief of Air Force and promotion to Air Marshal in July 2022.

Air Marshal Chipman deployed on Operation SLIPPER in 2012 as a Battlecab Director in the United States Air Force 609th Air and Space Operations Centre. He deployed on Operation



OKRA in 2014 as inaugural Commander Air Task Unit 630.1, for which he was awarded a Conspicuous Service Cross in 2015. He was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia in 2019 for his exceptional service to the Australian Defence Force in coalition air operations, air combat capability preparedness, and strategic capability development and sustainment.

Air Marshal Chipman has completed a Masters in Business Administration and graduated as a fellow of the Defence and Strategic Studies Course in 2016. He is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and Oxford Advanced Management and Leadership Programme. He is also an alumni of the Cranlana Institute and has completed the United Nations Senior Mission Leaders Course.

Air Marshal Chipman is married to Alyce and has four sons, Thomas, Oliver, Darcy and Charlie. He enjoys keeping fit and reading.

Source: <https://www.airforce.gov.au/about-us/leadership/chief-of-air-force>



Wednesday Afternoons @ Sunbury RSL





March Dinner @ Bowling Club





March Dinner @ Bowling Club



One For The Ladies

Was a photo of six men in striped bathing suits from a men's beauty contest in 1919?

No, that's not true: The photograph is actually of several central European men around the year 1910. The photo can be traced back to a German website that sells post-cards.

The caption for it on the site is roughly translated to "nicer through stripes Central Europe around 1910." -9-



A HUGE THANK YOU

As you will all be aware by now, **DEB WILLIAMS** has stepped down as Editor of *Dispatches*. I wonder how many of us realise what a huge job it has been doing it for nine years.

She has done the task faithfully and we will miss her cheeky quips on the images that she has taken of our social events. I can't fill those shoes and we will just have to imagine what Deb might have said on the images and have a chuckle.

Unfortunately, Deb wouldn't let me take her photo and it's a pity because she looked so lovely in the hot pink dress. In lieu of her photo, I've used this image of her new portfolio.



But before you get too sad about her passing the baton, we are not losing her as she is still on the committee and

will be our Assistant Membership Officer working with Phil Morgan.

I know that I speak for all of us in a heartfelt thank you to **DEB** and best wishes in your new role.



HEALTH & WELLBEING SUPPORT

RSL Victoria supports wellbeing by offering veterans and their families programs that reduce social isolation, encourage mateship and provide direct financial assistance to veterans and their families when in need.

VETERAN WELLBEING DOMAINS



With the creation of the Resilient Veterans Strategy, RSL Victoria has formalised our wellbeing model, and is actively evaluating current programs and building new ones to contribute to greater wellbeing for veterans and their families. RSL Victoria has a team of qualified and experienced case navigators ready to support you.

For a confidential chat about your wellbeing or the services that may be available to you, please call our Veteran Central service on 1300 MILVET

VALÉ

Lance Corporal Jack Fitzgibbon

It is with great sadness we announce the passing of Lance Corporal Jack Fitzgibbon from the 2nd Commando Regiment due to injuries sustained during a parachuting incident on 6 March 2024.



Joel Fitzgibbon, Lance Corporal Fitzgibbon's father, expressed the family's profound sorrow, stating, "We are devastated and heartbroken by the loss of our wonderful Jack. Serving in the special forces was Jack's dream job and we take some comfort from the fact that he died serving his nation in a uniform of the ADF," he said. "Jack was a dedicated, highly skilled, and courageous soldier. He was an experienced parachutist.

The Australian Army has temporarily paused all parachute training.

"Our lives will never be the same without Jack, but we will always remain proud of him and his many achievements." Today we mourn the loss of a valued soldier and comrade.

LEST WE FORGET

PREMIER'S SPIRIT OF ANZAC PRIZE

The annual Premier's Spirit of Anzac Prize is now open! This year, Victorian students in years 9 to 12 will have the opportunity to reflect on how Victorians came together to build the Shrine of Remembrance and other community war memorials.

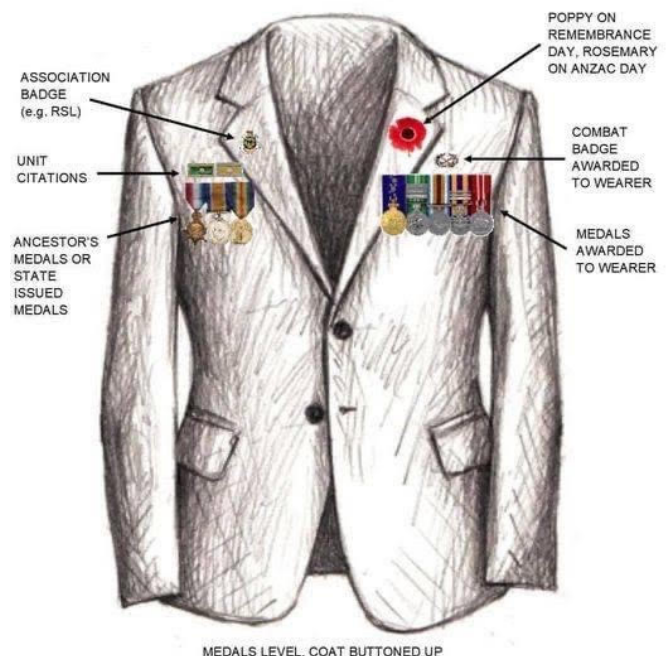
12 prize winners will embark on a fully funded study tour to an international war heritage destination. For teachers, parents and ex-service organisations, we encourage you to promote this incredible opportunity for students to deepen their understanding of the Anzac legacy.

A blue rectangular graphic with a white poppy icon on the left. The text reads: "Premier's Spirit of Anzac Prize", "Explore the Spirit of Anzac and you could be selected to go on a fully funded study tour to a significant war heritage site.", "Applications close 29 April", and the Victorian Government logo.

Applications close Monday 29 April 2024. The Spirit of Anzac Prize is run by the Office for Veterans, part of the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing.

Visit the Premier's Spirit of Anzac Prize website for more details and to submit your application: <https://www.vic.gov.au/soap>

WEARING MEDALS ON COMMEMORATIVE OCCASIONS



IN FLANDERS FIELDS

BY DAVE WHITE | EX-SERVICE MEMBER SUNBURY RSL

This WWI poem helped popularise the red poppy as a symbol of remembrance. In the 19th Century the poppy represented sleep or oblivion.

It remains to this day one of the most memorable war poems ever written. It is a lasting legacy to the battle in Ypres salient in the Spring of 1915.

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.

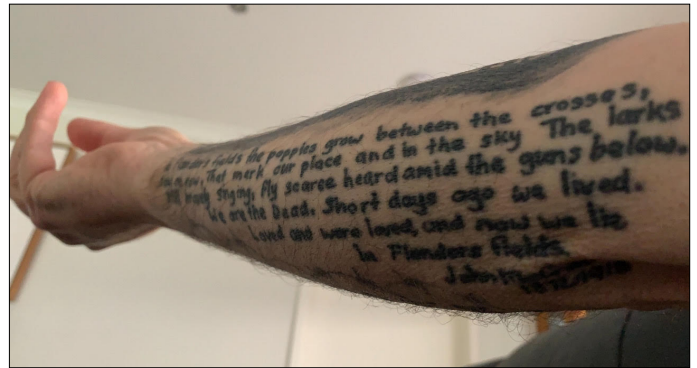
The poem was written by Canadian Medical Officer LT COL John McCrae (McCrae himself was to die of pneumonia with extensive pneumococcus meningitis in January 1918) after the author's friend LT Alexis Helmer was killed in a gun position by an exploding German artillery shell and was buried in a makeshift grave with a simple wooden cross. Wild poppies were already blooming between these crosses. This poem was in response to the situation in which the author found himself. It is believed that the poem was written soon after this event.

Flanders Fields refers to the entire western part of Belgium.

Wild poppies flower where other plants in their direct neighbourhood are dead. Their seeds can lie on the ground for years and only sprout when there are no other competing flowers in the area.

Poppies were not in large numbers at the start of the War but by 1915 letters were being sent home describing 'No Man's Land' as being ablaze with scarlet poppies.

Sadly it was the blood and bones of millions of men, and animals that richly fertilised the soil. The longer



the carnage went on, the more the poppies bloomed.

McCrae's Commanding Officer said that during the 16 days of battle he, McCrae, watched them bury the dead whenever there was a lull. Thus the crosses, row on row, grew into a good sized cemetery. In the mornings they often heard the larks singing.

The poem so moved American Moina Belle Michael, who was working at the YMCA Overseas War Secretaries' headquarters in NY, that three years after it was written, she vowed to always wear a poppy in remembrance of those who had lost their lives. She began campaigning for the flower to be adopted as a national symbol of remembrance. The poem was in a copy of the latest edition of the "Ladies Home Journal" which had been placed on her desk.

In 1921 the British Legion ordered 9 million poppies and sold them on 11 November. In 1921 the forerunner to today's RSL started selling poppies too.

Today people all across the globe wear a poppy on 11 November to remember the Armistice.

A few more points:

- Parts of the poem were used to help sell war bonds and to recruit soldiers
- An excerpt of the poem appeared on a Canadian \$10 note and there was also a postage stamp featuring the poem
- In Belgium a museum is named after the poem, the 'In Flanders Fields' museum
- In the poem he writes of the poppies and how they grow, oddly the lime content of the ground increased due to the shelling and this helped the poppies growth
- McCrae also fought in the Second Boer War

I liked and appreciated the poem enough to have it tattooed on my right inner forearm.

INTRODUCING . . .

SUNBURY RSL SUB-BRANCH MEMBER JUDY LANDAU

Judy Landau served on the Board of an Ex-Service Organisation (ESO) for over 10 years and is a Life Member of that Association. She is currently the new Assistant Secretary and Editor of this publication for Sunbury RSL Sub-Branch.

When serving for four years as Vice President of the above ESO, she was MC for all of the Services and Functions. Her compassionate confidence at the microphone gave a reverent depth to the Services that has been acknowledged and appreciated by both members and guests alike.

One of these services was the annual gathering at the graveside of General Sir John Monash.

“He was such an amazing man; a genius! But for all of his extraordinary achievements, he remained humble to the point of giving strict and clear instructions that when he passed away, his gravestone was NOT to have any rank, title or post-nominal. It was just to say simply ‘John Monash’. This taught me a powerful life-lesson, as it should to us all.”

In 2009 her portfolio was expanded to include the artwork for printed documents and certificates, she was Editor of their magazine and administered the ESO’s website. Judy worked closely with the web developer up to the site’s launch date and she then fully took over the administration of the website.

She was their technical guru and her video productions honouring the memories of the fallen are sensitively done and popular with families of the fallen. Judy regrettably stepped down due to illness.

Judy was also a Shrine of Remembrance volunteer for many years before her health failed.

Part of her past focus was on establishing the Saluting Monash Council (SMC) and how it was presented. Its aim was to have General Sir John Monash GCMG KCB VD posthumously promoted to the rank of Field Marshal by 11 November 2018.

In January 2016, six months before SMC was officially formed, she designed the logo and letterhead, creating the basics for SMC so that it was ready to go once it was launched. The late The Hon Tim Fischer AC was the Chair and Judy was Deputy Chair. She also worked closely with The Patron, Professor Roland Perry OAM. Unfortunately, the application was unsuccessful.

Her many colleagues say that Judy is a cheerful and willing worker who gets the job done to high standards, often before asked to do it.

Judy served in 3 WRAAC COY and 3 DIV INT.

She is a member of the

- WRAAC Association
- Australian Intelligence Corps Association
- Australian Intelligence Association and
- the former Australian Reserve Forces Day Council (Vic)
- Friend of the Shrine of Remembrance - Life Member

She has a daughter, a very funny son-in-law who calls her “Drags” short for Dragon and six grandchildren, including triplets, now 21 years old.

Formally, when Judy used to have spare time, she enjoyed gardening, walking, playing piano and other instruments and reading science papers and reports.

These days, Judy is happily retired therefore has a lot more time on her hands. She utilises this availability by volunteering for the Sunbury RSL Sub-Branch and enjoying the social interaction with its members.

It appeals to Judy’s sense of humour that this introduction is on page 13 and she has taken over as Editor on 1 April.

If you have any content for the newsletters, please email:

info.sunbury.rsl@gmail.com



DEMENTIA

VERTERANS' INFORMATION

It has been suggested that people over 50 years of age are more fearful of developing dementia than they are of cancer. Today, there are more than 332,000 Australians living with dementia but as the population ages this figure is expected to soar. Symptoms can include memory loss and difficulties with thinking, problem-solving and language. As an increasing number of people are diagnosed with dementia more people are seeing the profound impact that it can have on both the individual as well as the wider family.

With no cure in sight in the immediate future, here are five simple steps you should follow to maximise your brain health. All the steps have been researched and proven through scientific evidence on their positive effects toward preventive action for Alzheimer's.

STEP ONE: LOOK AFTER YOUR HEART

All these elements of heart health have been shown to decrease the risk of dementia.

Maintain healthy levels of cholesterol, blood sugar, blood pressure.

Eat healthy foods like fish, with plenty of omega fatty acids.

Exercise - Keep your weight in check.

Quit smoking.

STEP TWO: BE PHYSICALLY ACTIVE

Physical activity does amazing things for brain health by increasing blood flow to the brain and increase brain volume.

Moving, getting out and about.

Get 30 to 45 minutes of physical activity once a day.

Don't stay in the home, walk around your block and neighbourhood.

STEP THREE: MENTALLY CHALLENGE YOUR BRAIN

Being mentally active can help produce brain plasticity, which is the brain's ability to change physically, functionally and chemically. This doesn't mean doing Sudoku or a crossword puzzle everyday but you must challenge your brain, fire up the neurons and generate new blood cells.

Learn a language.

Take up a new hobby or interest.

Learn to play a new instrument.

Go to adult education classes.

Learn how to paint.

STEP FOUR: HAVE A HEALTHY DIET

Evidence suggests that a healthy diet leads to a healthier brain.



Eat a lot of veggies.

Eat a lot of fruits.

Avoid saturated fats.

Eat oily fish and get omega-3s in your system.

Take things from all food groups and maintain a balanced diet.

Eat healthy fats.

Have less take-away and know what's in your food.

STEP FIVE: BE SOCIALLY ACTIVE

Being socially active has shown to have positive results on reducing the risk of dementia.

Go out with friends.

Socialise on the weekend or go out and have a walk after work with friends or families.

Play a social sport such as bowls or tennis.

Combining mental alertness, healthy eating habits and social activities will greatly assist in maintaining better brain health. The possibility of losing the very essence of what makes you the individual that you are is a frightening prospect but fear can mean people don't get a diagnosis and can often miss the opportunity to access treatments (which are only effective for people in the earlier stages of the condition) and the time to make important decisions about their future.

If you are concerned about dementia, speak to your GP and get in touch with the Alzheimer's

Association, as there are lots of ways they can help.



APRIL 2024 | SUNBURY RSL Sub-Branch

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Public Holiday	2	3 From 1300hrs Afternoons @ Club Rooms	4	5	6
7 	8 1830hrs Committee 1930hrs General Meetings	9	10 From 1300hrs Afternoons @ Club Rooms	11	12	13
14	15	16 1800-1830hrs Monthly Dinner Club Sunbury Nola 0417 296 411	17 From 1300hrs Afternoons @ Club Rooms	18	19	20
21	22	23	24 From 1300hrs Afternoons @ Club Rooms	25 ANZAC DAY 0600hrs Service 1015hrs March 1030hrs Service	26 No Monthly Lunch in April	27
28	29	30				

Thanks to Josh Bull MP for printing the newsletters and Commemorative Programs