



RSL Maleny Sub Branch Inc.
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3/ 2017



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Click on one of the Links below to go straight to the RSL Maleny website or email.

<http://www.rslmaleny.org.au/>

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Jan, Christine & Helen (WRANS)

EVENTS COMING UP AT RSL MALENY HALL

Trivia Night 12/08/17

"Vets & Baby Boomers"

Sing -A-Long with
 Ray & the Sunshines 30/09/17

Monday Mornings @ Hall

Yoga for Seniors start 8am

Friday Nights - Social Bar & Dining

Bar opens 4ish

Meals from 6pm

1st Thursday of each Month

Club Acoustic 6pm

A very big thank you to Helen Gilmour-Walsh, the coordinator of the RSL Maleny Sub Branch **"Coffee Tent"** fundraiser at the Maleny Show. A task well done for a very successful fundraiser. A huge thanks to all the helpers that volunteered as *Without You*, it would not have happened!



Jen Clarke
 Won 1st Prize **"Beetroot"**



Hilda Penny
 Won 1st Prize **"Cross Stitch"**



"The Hard Workers"

'RSL Maleny Coffee Tent'

After a crisp morning
 A Picture-Perfect day
 at Maleny Show Grounds





A REALITY OF **BLOOD** DONATIONS

THE JOURNEY:

On New Year's Eve 2015, Elki's parents received the news that she had cancer. She received her first blood transfusion in Nambour Hospital later that same day. As the first day of 2016 began, Elki was transferred to the Lady Cilento Children's Hospital. It was here that a name was given to the cancer. It was, and still is, Acute Lymphoblastic Leukaemia. The course of treatment was then revealed. All going well, it would need to be stretched over 2 years and 3 months and thus finish in March 2018. Elki was 3 years of age. Since the diagnosis, she has needed 2 whole blood and 4 platelet transfusions, and 2 Immunoglobulin injections. At different times during her treatment she has required more blood transfusions and blood product injections. At the time of writing, Elki has required at least 9 different people's blood donations. Without them, she would not have survived.

ELKI'S DONORS:

To raise awareness of the importance of blood donations, Elki's parents (**Jevon and Lisa Dean**) helped form a group called **Elki's Donors**. To become a member, all that is required is for a donor to 'sign up' for the team. Purchasing an emblazoned/promotional shirt is optional. As the whole concept is awareness, it can be appreciated that no team donations are specifically earmarked for her sole use. Naturally, the greater the number of blood product donations, the greater the number of lives that are saved. After all, it's about awareness. Jevon and Lisa donate plasma on a fortnightly basis at the Nambour centre. Elki accompanies them and immediately changes into her Fairy Princess costume of a tutu and translucent wings. She then commences the ritual of officially blessing all the donors and staff with fairy dust. A lot of the nurses also dress in similar fashion and it is truly a touching time. I was once asked if I would like to share in the fun of this cross dressing. However, and after my unmistakable and firm response, the question was never raised again!!

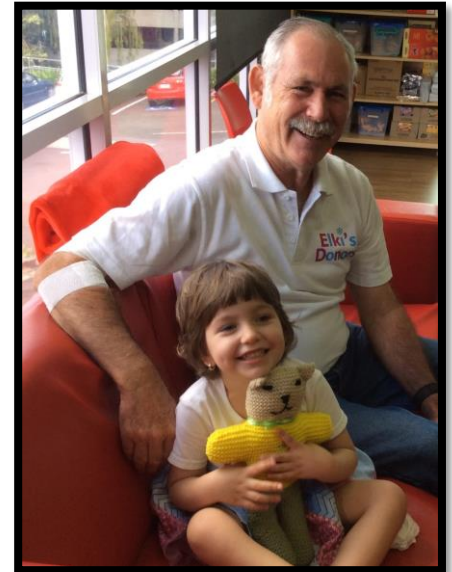
Fancy me in a tutu with wings? Don't think another word Roly!

THE FUTURE:

Every 3 months Elki has a different form of intense chemotherapy. With a low immune system, she rapidly becomes very tired. However, she is an absolute joy and provides a sparkle to everyone's day. Additionally, she provides a face and a name, to all the donors she meets at the Nambour centre. Her presence just makes all of us feel like we really 'are' part of a large but close-knit family. Jevon, mentioned to me recently that Elki's future is looking very bright. We can but wish them every happiness and good wishes for a blessed outcome.

THE GIFT:

During one of my plasma donations this year, it became an absolute pleasure to present Elki with a handmade '**Trauma Teddy**'. A lovely lady (Eileen) in Mapleton makes them for the Nambour Hospital and lovingly donated this special one for a special fairy princess. The photo below shows a fair bit of happiness from both of us. By the way Eileen has made a total of **1,234** teddies, so far!



Ken, Elki and 'Teddy'

As mentioned in the 2/2017 newsletter, the donation of blood is a 'game changer'. It affects real people, in real life-saving situations.

Rarely do donors have the pleasure and honour of meeting a beneficiary. Regardless, the gift of blood continues to help those in need.

If, for whatever reason, you can't give then I simply ask you to encourage a friend or relative who can. After all, there are lots of Elkis and similar people out there

Who knows, one day you may need it yourself? Especially mine, as it's additionally enriched with VB!!!!

by Ken Smith



Alison ARMSTRONG OAM



Here is a glimpse of the War Service and over 60 years of exemplary Community Service of Alison Armstrong. Service Background: Formation of WOMENS ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVAL SERVICE (WRANS).

Mrs Florence McKenzie became the first woman electrical engineer in Australia in 1922 and the first female member of the Wireless Institute of Australia. With war looming in 1939, "Mrs Mac.", as she became known, formed and directed the Women's Emergency Signalling Corps. (WESC). By 1941 the Navy was suffering a severe shortage of shore base personnel. "Mrs. Mac." had approached the Minister for the Navy suggesting that women should be allowed to join the RAN as wireless telegraphists. After several knock backs the Naval Board finally agreed. On the 25th April 1941, the first 14 WESC members and "Mrs. Mac" set off for HMAS HARMAN, Canberra, the Naval W/T Station to become the first members of the WRANS.

Alison FRANCIS joined the WRANS in 1942. Alison had been trained by "Mrs Mac's" as a wireless telegraphist. On entering the WRANS, she was among a group of women selected to join a section of the RAN which had been formed known as the "Y" Unit. The Command Headquarters for the "Y" Unit was at HMAS LONSDALE in Melbourne

(Monterey and Moorabbin) in conjunction with the United States Navy. The RAN established "Y" units in Canberra, Melbourne, Brisbane and Townsville. The majority of "Y" Unit staff were WRANS. The women were required to do additional training in Morse code as the Japanese phonetic script (*katakana*) required almost twice the number of symbols of the Roman alphabet. They were trained in how to intercept signals sent by the Japanese Command and their ships and submarines in the Pacific region. What made this work more exacting was that the Japanese changed their codes every month to keep the Allies guessing.

Alison completed her training at HMAS HARMAN, Canberra, and was posted to the "Y" Station at HMAS MAGNETIC Townsville. It was situated on Castle Hill, behind the Catholic Cathedral, quite separate to the main Naval Station on the Strand. Access to the station was heavily restricted. It was here that Alison worked, throughout the war in the Pacific, with her fellow "Y" Unit WRANS (8). They worked on ship to shore signals and on teleprinters promptly sending what they had received to Melbourne HQ. The "Y" watch keepers kept an ear out for emergency frequency for ships in distress. They knew Allied ships would only break radio silence and send a message if they were in dire trouble and were badly damaged or sinking. In this situation, the reception was often poor and two WRANS would sit together and do their best to take down the message and notify the D/F to locate the ship's position at sea. The WRANS could not but be aware of the rapid progression south of the Japanese and of the land and Naval battles that finally stopped their invasion further south. Their work was invaluable to the COIC Pacific Fleet.

As the "Y" Unit had sworn an oath of secrecy many lived their lives without telling their families what they did during their war service. Others only spoke after their work became declassified, almost 50 years after the end of the War. Alison returned to Townsville in August 1995 for the 50th Anniversary of the Victory in The Pacific 1945-1995 Celebrations. She has the Certificate presented to her: "*Alison Laura Armstrong who returned to Townsville as an Honoured Veteran to participate in the 50th Anniversary of Victory in the Pacific 1945-1995.*"

Alison married Stewart Elliot Armstrong, an RAAF Pilot, at the end of the war, in 1945. Stewart went to Japan with the British Commonwealth Occupational Forces (RAAF - BCAIR Air Contingent). Alison left the WRANS and went to Sydney and worked in her uncle's solicitors' office. On Stewart's return, they settled on a property at Cooyar near Toowoomba and raised a family of 4.

This is where Alison became involved in community work with the CWA and RSL as Secretary and Treasurer. Then the National Party. Alison also joined the Toastmistress Organisation to improve her public speaking and quickly became President and then an Executive Member of the organisation. Alison studied Accountancy by correspondence while raising her family. It took her 7 years to become a Qualified Public Accountant and Auditor. She began work with an Accounting Firm in Dalby & would travel country roads on her own to visit clients. Eventually Alison went on to commence her own Accountancy Practice.

Alison's husband Stewart died in 1980 and she subsequently



devoted herself to what had become her very large accountancy practice. She “retired” to Brisbane some 20 years ago but it is only in recent years that Alison has finally retired from more than 60 years of dedicated community service.

Alison’s Service to the Community has been recognised as follows:

In 2007, she received the Order of Australia Medal (OAM) for Services to the Community particularly through organisations supporting War Widows, Veterans and their Families.

In 2003 on her retirement as State President of the War Widows Guild she was awarded a Certificate of Appreciation in grateful recognition of loyal and dedicated service. As well as State President, she had been the Honorary Auditor for the War Widows Guild.

On 1 January 2001 Alison was granted a Centenary Medal for Service to Queensland Veterans War Widows.

In 2003, she received Award for 25 years of Distinguished Service as a Justice of the Peace (Qual) for the State of Queensland.

In 2004 Alison received a Certificate of Appreciation for Services as Director of the RSL (Qld) War Veterans Homes Ltd.

In 2006, she received the Premier’s Award for Queensland Seniors for Volunteering in Local Communities.

Alison was on the Executive Committee of the National Council of Women Queensland and was their Treasurer. Treasurer of the Council of Ex-Servicewomen. Treasurer of Navy Women (WRANS-RAN) Qld. Honorary Auditor of Naval Association of Australia. Alison worked as a volunteer for the Qld Cancer Fund where she would meet country people arriving by plane or train in Brisbane for cancer treatment and drive them to their appointments.

Alison has held key positions within the Senior National Party as a Member/President of the Women’s Electoral Lobby, President of Cunningham Branch, Divisional President of the South West Region. She is a Life Member of the Young

Nationals and was their Honorary Auditor.

by Jan English



Alison with her family on ANZAC Day 2017

Adalberto (Albert) De Giovanni

*It is with sadness that we announce the passing of RSL Member **Albert De Giovanni** on Thursday 22 June 2017. Albert, a World War 11 Veteran, served with the "Partisan Fiamme Verdi Alpine Trup" in northern Italy.*

A Celebration of Life Requiem Mass was held at the Catholic Church on Tuesday 27 June 2017.

Helen Gilmour-Walsh as the RSL Representative carried out her duties with empathy and professionalism.

After Albert’s burial at Witta, family and friends gathered at the RSL Memorial Hall.



Action of recognition of an old tirano alpino (man)

(An article from Tirano & dintorni)

News has come that the tirano (man) Adalberto De Giovanni, born 1924, resident of Maleny Queensland, has been honoured with the conferment of a medal and admission to the Returned League of War Australians for military service.

Albert, who in the time of German occupation was distinguished in the partisan resistance, was voluntary enlistee in the voluntary body of the Alpine Liberty Division of Valtellina and participated in the liberation of Tirano.

In Australia, the returned of war formed the ‘Returned and Services League of Australia’ and Albert will have the honour of being able to march during commemoration services of the fallen in the two world wars, with the pride of conferment of the medal and of his inevitable alpino hat.

Then (there is now) a little of the Valtellinese air in this long distant continent called Australia, a new country for many of our fellow citizens.

In the photo, the regional president of the Maleny League is seen whilst presenting the commemorative medal to Adalberto De Giovanni.