

FOR BRAVERY



Supporting those who risk their life to save life, property or the environment



Photo: Attending the ABA 2019 Conference in Canberra: ABA President Andrew Kendall, ABA Chaplain Jim Cosgrove, ABA VIC President Coralee Lever with Sir Peter John Cosgrove, AK, CVO, MC

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job done—together:
David & Jacob Raymond

PATRON

His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC FTSE (Retd)



In preparing my contribution for the December edition of *FOR BRAVERY*, I have reflected on some of the people Linda and I have met in 2021. We had the privilege of meeting many Australians recognised through our Honours and Awards system. We spoke, either via zoom or while on the road as part of our community engagement program, with people making a positive impact on the lives of those around them. We met with families and communities still trying to rebuild their lives after the 2019-20 bushfires. Some of the characteristics common amongst the three groups were kindness, mateship and resilience. Underpinning these characteristics is a determination to do right by your fellow Australians. To be there for them, to support them and to walk with them, particularly in their hour of need. Members of the Australian Bravery Association and readers of *FOR BRAVERY* undertake those actions every day. Despite the challenges of the past two years – drought, flood, fire, a mouse plague, cyclones, and a pandemic – Australians have still managed to prioritise looking after those who need help. As I have said in many of my speeches, I don't need to look at surveys to know how much goodness there is in the Australian community – Linda and I hear about it or see the impacts of it every day.

In looking ahead to the festive season, my mind quickly turns to those Australians who, hopefully in less perilous circumstances compared with the experiences of some readers, will be working – selflessly putting the welfare of others first. I thank our firefighters, lifesavers, Emergency Services personnel, Police Officers, medical professionals and volunteers for their respective contributions. I also thank their families, whose support enables them to pursue their service to community.

Linda and I wish all members of the Australian Bravery Association a safe and happy Christmas, and best wishes for 2022.

Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia
 Government House
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The Australian Bravery Association is proud to have His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC FTSE (Retd), Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, as our Patron. He joins our Vice-Patrons Darrell Tree CV; Victor Boscoe CV; Allan Sparkes CV, OAM; Tim Britten CV; Richard Joyes CV; and Doug Baird OAM, father of Corporal Cameron Baird VC, MG.

NATIONAL PRESIDENT REPORT

Andrew Kendall



Dear ABA members and friends,

This year again proved to be a challenging year due to the restrictions of COVID-19. However, 2021 was still a successful year for the Australian Bravery Association.

In February we were unable to hold our National Conference. Despite this setback, the Service of Remembrance at Government House still went ahead. Our thanks to their Excellencies, General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd) and Mrs Hurley, who participated in the very moving service. The following week we held a Virtual Service of Remembrance for those unable to attend in Canberra. This virtual service included the contributions of their excellencies and footage from the live service. Well done, and thanks to ABA Honorary Chaplain Jim Cosgrove for his outstanding work putting together and conducting both services.

In May, ABA ACT President Peter White and I met with the new CEO of the Royal Australian Mint (RAM), Mr Leigh Gordon AO, CSM, and his staff to discuss the formalisation of an ongoing relationship between the ABA and the RAM. Those discussions continue, but we are confident that they'll be formalised in 2022. Our thanks to the RAM for allowing us to hold the ABA Black Tie Dinner at the RAM for our National Conference in 2022.

Details of the ABA National Conference 2022 have been circulated via email to members. The Conference will be held from 11-13 February 2022, with the highlights including the Black-Tie Dinner at the RAM and the Service of Remembrance at Government House. My thanks to those who are organising the Conference. It is a big task. I would also like to acknowledge both the ACT Chief Minister and the Australian Bravery Foundation, who have provided substantial financial support for the Conference. This has allowed us to host the events at a reduced cost to members. I hope to see as many members as possible attend next year.

We are currently in the process of developing a new ABA Website. This website is part of the process of modernising the public face of the ABA, which included the design of a fresh, modernised ABA logo earlier this year. The website will go live prior to the National Conference convening next year.

May I express my heartfelt thanks to all those members who donated their payment for the Mildura Reunion to either the Benevolent Fund or the General account. Sadly, that event could not go ahead because of COVID, and we sincerely appreciate those members' thoughtfulness and generosity.

My thanks to all members of the National Executive and our Ex-Officio Members. Their work is much appreciated and essential for the ongoing functioning and growth of the ABA.

Finally, to all members of the ABA, your families, and all our friends and supporters, may you each have a wonderful Christmas and Happy 2022.

Andrew Kendall
National President

FOR BRAVERY NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Dr Kay Danes, OAM



Dear ABA members and friends,

Welcome to this edition of the ABA **FOR BRAVERY**—our newsletter is produced by a volunteer editorial team comprised of myself, Melanie Warburton and Andrew Kendall. This publication seeks to offer a connection between the ABA and its members and supporters in addition to our social (Facebook) platforms. As many of you know, several of our regular ABA main events did not proceed this year due to that dreadful combination of COVID and border closures. However, with the State borders reopening and people moving around more freely now, we hope you will enjoy some much-welcomed fellowship. Stay safe over the holiday season, and see you all again in the New Year!

FOR BRAVERY submissions should be commercially neutral and readable to a wide audience.

- Your rescue event (max 1 A4 page with photos),
- Investiture related content
- A bravery-related (real-life) encounter
- Something witty to give us a laugh or an inspirational poem
- Reflections on remembrance, celebration or festive messages
- Honouring someone in the ABA who has inspired you
- Something positive and uplifting to encourage others

Email: ABANewsEditor@gmail.com

Deadlines: Mar, Jul, Nov

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Issue 2: Aug
Issue 3: Dec



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ABA SOCIALS ARE THE PLACE TO BE

Get to know your fellow ABA members, stay updated with ABA news, hear great stories and socially connect.

The **ABA Facebook Page** is our public page where anyone can view the posted content.

<https://www.facebook.com/australianbraveryassociation>

The **ABA Awardees Facebook Group** is a CLOSED GROUP for Australian bravery award recipients and their next of kin. This is not a general interest group.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/AustBraveryAssoc>

NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

Melanie Warburton

Hi All,

We don't have many articles from our members, so I have written a short piece about my dad and what the ABA means to me. I have been asked to do this in the past but have always declined, so maybe it's time.



I joined the ABA in August 2008 and always felt a bit of a fraud because I have never rescued anyone, and I haven't received a Bravery Award. I've always enjoyed the events I attended and felt very humbled to be in the same room with our members. I expressed how I felt to ABA member Alan Cochrane OAM at an ABA reunion in Mildura, and he said, "don't look at it that way; you are honouring your father and keeping his brave acts and memory alive. Alan also said I could help the ABA by taking on a position on the National Executive.

When Hedonna Thurgar approached me to take over as Membership Secretary, I was a bit hesitant. Could I do this important role and do it justice? Hedonna almost ran the ABA single-handed. When she stepped down to become a full-time mum, it took four people to fill her shoes.

Hedonna held my hand and guided me through learning the role. I have held that position for many years now, and of all the positions I have held over the years, this is my favourite. I love being the first contact with recipient's who want to join the ABA, keeping members informed and enjoy chatting with and meeting new members at our events.

Now for the reason I am privileged to be part of this fantastic Association, my dad.

Lieutenant Commander Royston Miller Dawborn DSC.



My dad was a career Navy man who joined the Sea Cadets at age eight. He served in the Merchant Navy and the Royal Australian Navy as an adult.

Dad served on many ships, including HMAS Australia, HMS Encounter, HMS Farndale, HMS Foxhound, HMAS Nestor, HMAS Canberra, HMAS Warramunga, HMAS Assault, HMAS Manoora and HMAS Melville. Dad was on the Canberra when it went down off Savo Island in the battle of Guadalcanal. The surgeon general sent him below decks to get a blanket to cover the dead Captain. This incident is mentioned in the Royal Australian Navy 1939 -1942 by Gill Herman. While below dad retrieved a small, framed hand-drawn sketch of the HMAS Canberra. The sketch has the words "Made for US Navy, to be carried in the Wardroom of USS Canberra".

After my dad's death, we donated the sketch to Canberra II to be displayed in the Wardroom, and it is now displayed in the Wardroom of Canberra III.

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My dad's medals tell an impressive story of his service.

- Distinguished Service Cross
- 139-45 Star
- Africa Star
- Pacific Star
- War Medal 1939-45
- Australian Service Medal 1939-45
- Australian Active Service Medal 1945-75 with Clasp 'KOREA'
- Korea Medal
- United Nations Service Medal – Korea
- Australian Service Medal 1945-75 with Clasps 'PNG' 'JAPAN'
- Australian Defence Medal and a
- Mention in Despatches



My dad received the DSC from King George VI, *“For Skilful organisation and for courage and devotion to duty in the operations covering the assault landing of 2/48th Assault Battalion, 9th Australian Division, at Tarakan on 1st May 45, whilst serving in HMA Ships.”* He was Mentioned in Despatches, *“For gallantry, fortitude and skill whilst serving in numerous amphibious assaults in the S.W. Pacific area, including operations in New Guinea, the Philippines and Borneo. These extensive operations covered more than two years of service.”*

My dad was a consummate host, very fond of food and the odd drink. I have some hilarious letters written to his mother while he was Port Directorate, Koepang, in 1946. His mood seemed to have been decided by the quality of the food, amount of whiskey or Port and if enough cigarettes were on hand or expected. I think this may have been where my dad got his love of spicy food.

After Dad retired from the Navy, he worked for the Joint Intelligence Organisation at the Defence Offices, Russell in Canberra. In retirement, Dad planned to split his time between our house in Jindabyne and travelling the world. Unfortunately, he passed away before he could realise those dreams. I am very proud of my dad and proud to be a member of the ABA. I have been fortunate to meet many amazing, medaled people, including VCs, CVs, and many Governor Generals. I have attended moving Services of Remembrance in the Bravery Garden in Canberra, where the Last Post always brings a tear to my eye. I have had lots of laughs and fun times at ABA events. But above all that, what I treasure most is the wonderful friends I have made. I am no wordsmith, as so many of our members who have written amazing books on their experiences are, so I hope I haven't bored you. In conclusion, the friends I have made in the ABA I class as family because that's what the ABA is, a family that will offer support and lend an ear when needed. Remember never hesitate to pick up the phone if you need to talk.

Fond regards
Melanie Warburton

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT**Royal Life Saving Drowning,
a Silent Killer**

I am a 50 year veteran of the Royal Life Saving Society in Queensland. I joined the Ithaca Life Saving Club at Ithaca Baths Paddington in 1971 with my younger brother, Hugh, and sister, Bronwyn. Our older brother, John, had been a member since 1964 and was awarded an AM in 2019 for services to Royal Life Saving.

What is Royal Life Saving?

A common question! Royal Life Saving has been in Australia since the 1890s and continues today in every state and territory. It was agreed in December 1924 that the newly named Surf Life Saving Association would attend to surf beaches and Royal Life Saving to look after all non-surf beaches, lakes, dams, creeks, rivers and pools. Royal Life Saving Society Queensland formed Surf Life Saving Association Queensland in 1930 to keep NSW Surf Life Saving out of Queensland. I believe it is a worthy endeavour to keep the maroon flag flying!

Royal Life Saving Queensland continues teaching school children, youth groups, the armed services and lifeguards, to name a few, the importance of water safety and lifesaving.

I returned to beach patrolling after my wife passed in 2017, and I am now with the Ithaca-Caloundra City Life Saving Club at Bulcock Beach Caloundra. This is where my brother, Hugh, and I (then aged 15 and 16, respectively) performed a rescue in 1974 of two girls aged 10 and 11, on boogie boards, who were being swept out in a very fast-moving current and screaming for help. Hugh and I swam out over the Caloundra Bar in cyclonic conditions and some 1.7km south before reaching the girls. We were awarded the Bravery Medal in 2019 for this rescue.

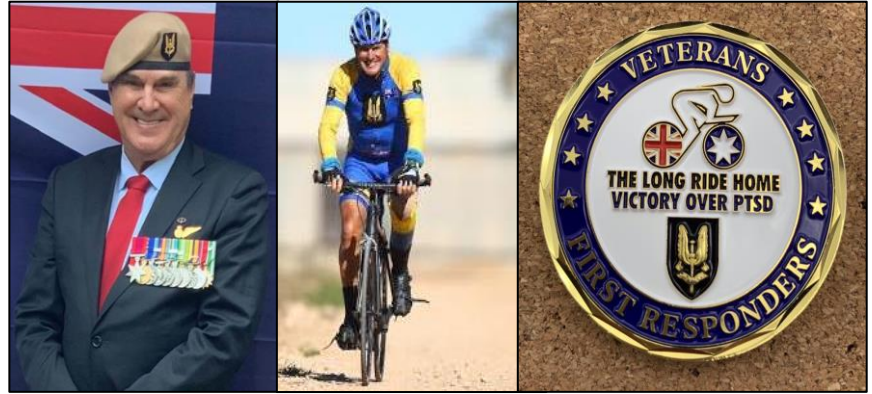
On the 24th of April 2021, I attended the Ecumenical Service at the Australian Surf Life Saving Championships as a Royal Life Saving Society representative. I arrived at Bulcock Beach well before my usual Saturday afternoon shift. The small patrol team were preparing the boat (IRB-Inshore Rescue Boat) to attend to some swimmers trying to get back to the mainland from Bribie Island. While talking to the last member left on the patrol deck, I heard a scream and looked out to see a body floating in the water, face down, outside the flag area. The 14-year boy was in waist-deep water and probably had been diving in the fast-moving current when the current pushed him into the sandbar, where he hit his head. His mother and father saw him floating lifeless in the water and raised the alarm. I sprinted to the other end of the beach and to the water's edge where the boy's father had dragged his body ashore. I performed CPR. The boy recovered but with a broken neck and a long road to recovery ahead of him. This incident was my third time performing CPR but the first time anyone recovered. Though we try, life-savers can't save everyone. Each season at Bulcock Beach, we have several non-fatal drownings, rescues, stonefish stings and spinal injuries. The message in this story is always to stay alert and stay close to others when in the water. And remember to please swim between the flags—drowning is a silent killer!



James R McClelland BM
Clayfield, Qld

VETERAN INSPIRES

Laurence Charles ‘Truck’ SAMS SC, OAM, received the Commendation for Brave Conduct award in August 2021 for his actions during an assault at a shopping centre in Perth, Western Australia, on 7 April 2019. In the afternoon, Mr Laurence Sams was at Garden City Shopping Centre in Booragoon when he noticed a



suspected shoplifter about to assault a shop assistant. Mr Sams yelled at the offender, who pushed the shop assistant and raised his arms to hit the woman. Mr Sams, who has a prosthetic limb, got to his feet and moved towards the pair yelling at the offender to stop. The offender then turned his attention to Mr Sams and began to assault him. Mr Sams slipped on the tiled floor during the scuffle, and the offender kicked him numerous times. Mr Sams grabbed the offender's leg, however, the man managed to flee the scene. He was later located and arrested by police.

This Veteran truly inspires—Truck did his first skydive, an army static line jump, in 1968 before deploying to Vietnam. He served as 2IC at Air Wing SAS, responsible for the Regiment’s parachute training. He received a Star of Courage in 2001 for protecting his parachute student when the main and reserve chutes failed to open on a tandem skydiving jump in 1995. That incident cost Truck his left leg below the knee and a badly damaged right ankle. Truck received an Order of Australia medal in 2019 for epic cycling rides: such as the Hanoi to Sydney 10,000 km ride to raise awareness for veterans and first responders who have Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, a condition Truck was also diagnosed with from combat service with the Australian Special Air Service Regiment (South Vietnam 1970/71).

Life or death moment

Extract by Kelly Brennan for Australian Skydiver Magazine.

In 1995, at Aratula (Queensland), Truck survived a shocking tandem accident on his 5645th skydive. [No, that is not a typo.] His main malfunctioned, and then only one riser released, leading to a main/reserve entanglement. Laurie wrapped himself around his passenger, a youth of about 19, and bore the brunt of the impact. Both of Laurie’s legs were badly damaged, and his lower left leg was later amputated. “I smashed my right leg as well,” he says. “They were going to amputate my right leg as well.” The passenger walked away, unhurt. He later joined the police force and kept in touch with Laurie for a few years.

“The tandem master displayed exceptional coolness and courage in the way he addressed a situation which could easily have been a double fatality,” wrote skydiver Colin Holt in the Rambling On magazine. Truck received a Star of Courage for this incident, and the APF granted him Honorary Life Membership. He adapted to life with a prosthetic lower left leg, but his right leg was too badly hurt to handle high impact and his jumping days were over. “That’s the sad thing about it, otherwise I’d get up there and shoot accuracy with my right foot,” he laughs. “It’s worse than my leg that’s been cut off,” he explains. “I’ve only gotta step on a grain of rice while I’m walking around barefoot, and you’ll know all about it!”

ACHIEVEMENTS & HIGHLIGHTS

11 times Australian Champion
 Australian Accuracy Record – 18 consecutive dead centres
 6 WPC teams for Australia
 Bronze medal, WPC
 Czechoslovakia, 1982
 Teams – Red Berets, Golden Knights, US Navy Seals
 Seoul Olympic Skydiving Exhibition Team

MEDALS / HONOURS

Star of Courage
 Order of Australia Medal
 Commendation for Brave Conduct
 Australian Sporting Medal
 APF Honorary Life Membership
 Honorary Golden Knight
 Int. Skydiving Hall of Fame – Path of Excellence Award

(www.thelongridehome.com.au)



Ruby Brown, Dr Kay Danes OAM, Jade-Elle Brown & Cayla Sweeney

ABA BRAVE YOUTH BENEFIT FROM BORDERLINE CAMP

Earlier this year, the ABA partnered with the Rotary E-Club of Global Trekkers to sponsor three ABA Brave Youth—Jade-Elle Brown, Ruby Brown and Cayla Sweeney on the 2021 Borderline Camp held at Camp Laurence, Lake Moogerah Qld. Organised by Qld Finalist Young Australian of the Year 2022, Cody Schaffer, the camp provides a week-long experience for young people aged 15-18 to challenge themselves, step into the unknown, prepare for life after teenagehood & get on top of their mental health.

The program is completely free for young people because of sponsors like the Global Trekkers (www.rotaryglobaltrekkers.org). It costs only \$490 per person to attend this life-changing event.

“I was excited to initiate the connection between the ABA, the Global Trekkers and the Borderline Camp. The benefits gained from these organisational synergies are abundantly evident in the incredible opportunities accorded to these brave youth,” said Dr Kay Danes, OAM.

Borderline has only one agenda; to change how we see Youth Mental Health in Australia. The charity creates incredible experiences to better teenagers mental health & educate others on how to assist someone struggling. Awareness is terrific, but action is even better. The 2022 Borderline Youth Camp is accepting nominations (www.borderlinecamp.com).

FATHER & SON GET THE JOB DONE—TOGETHER.

Sergeant David Raymond and his son Mr Jacob Raymond are commended for brave conduct for their actions at a building fire at Mermaid Beach in Queensland on the 28th of December 2018.

In the late afternoon, off duty policeman, Sergeant Raymond, his son, Mr Raymond and other family members were travelling near Mermaid Beach when they saw a large plume of grey smoke coming from the roof of a three-story unit block. They immediately stopped, and Sergeant Raymond and Mr Raymond went to investigate. They noticed gas bottles on the balcony of a top floor unit and a large dog on the balcony of a first-floor unit. Bystanders were unable to confirm if any of the units were occupied.



Sergeant Raymond and Mr Raymond attempted to gain entry to the block, but a locked entry barred their way. They quickly made a makeshift ladder, scaled a wall, and climbed onto the balcony of the first-floor unit where the large dog was located. Both men entered the unit to search for occupants. Not finding anyone, Mr Raymond took the large dog to safety. Sergeant Raymond went to the smoke-filled unit on the third floor. His son then re-joined him, and both men entered and searched the unit. Once they established no occupants were in the burning building, both men returned downstairs.

For their actions, Sergeant David Raymond and Mr Jacob Raymond are commended for brave conduct.

VALE

June Marie HEALY OAM - June 1934 – August 2020

June joined the ABA as an Ordinary Member (next of kin) as her husband was awarded the Medal for Gallantry (MG). Formerly of Canberra, June passed peacefully on Sunday. Her youngest child was by her side and under the outstanding care of the staff at Vasey RSL Care, Brighton East. Wife of Col John Boyd Healy (Dec.1994) and mother of Daele Healy and Katie Healy. June created a life of adventures and accomplishments at home and overseas. Former RSL National Secretary and National President of ACOTA, War Widows Guild and WRAAC Association. RAANC 1954-1960 and WRAAC 1960-



1965. West Australian Newspapers 1951-1960. She was a supporter and beneficiary of the excellent work of Legacy. June was honoured to read the Ode at the Australian War Memorial ANZAC Day dawn service and the 95th anniversary of the landings in 2010. She led over 30 commemorative tours. Some with her husband as a military historian, taking veterans and families to Borneo, Gallipoli and Beersheba where she gave the 75th anniversary address in 1992. She always sent her children postcards.

In 1990 June was awarded an OAM for service to veterans. She went to London to visit the Queen to receive it. A gifted communicator and lobbyist for veterans, war widows and the aged, June was an enthusiastic participant in Australian Parliamentary committees and member of the Prime Ministerial Advisory Council on Ex-Service Matters. Her involvement in community organisations was extensive. June also served on the boards of RSL clubs and was the 66th life member of the National Press Club, and she didn't even drink. After so many postings as an Army wife, she enjoyed over three decades settled in the Campbell neighbourhood of Canberra. The photo above is the last ABA event June attended. She is with Melanie, who looks like she is crying, "I spent a great weekend with June in Mildura, and she had me in stitches, regaling me with amazing stories of what she had done in her life." June was brilliant, charming, glamorous, feisty, and fun, such a wonderful woman.

Len Williams passed 17 July 2021



Len was awarded a Bravery Medal. His citation reads:

On 10th January 1983, Mr Williams was the guard on a train travelling to Newcastle when he saw a small child on the track ahead. Mr Williams ordered an emergency stop. As the train commenced to slow, Mr Williams jumped from the train and ran ahead to the child, who by this time was standing on the line to Sydney, which Mr Williams knew, an express train was due any moment. As he reached the child, Mr Williams saw the express train approaching. He grabbed the child, jumped clear of the track, with the rush of air from the passing train knocking him off balance and down the embankment. Mr Williams then returned to his own train and handed the child to awaiting police at a nearby railway station. Mr Williams displayed considerable bravery in such circumstances and undoubtedly saved the child's life.

Len featured in the December 2020 issue of *For Bravery*. His was a life well-lived!

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The Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia

Vice-Patrons:

Darrell Tree CV; Victor Boscoe CV; Allan Sparkes CV, OAM;
Tim Britten CV; Richard Joyes CV; and Doug Baird OAM, father of
Corporal Cameron Baird VC, MG



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