

FOR BRAVERY



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



Cover Photo: ABA NSW President James Preston and Georgia Ferguson lay flowers in remembrance of those remarkable Australians who, in an instant, selflessly placed themselves in jeopardy to protect life, property or the environment.

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The Dennis Lever Memorial Award

PATRON

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



I was delighted to receive an invitation from the *Australian Bravery Association* to contribute an article for its March newsletter.

On Sunday, 14 February 2021, Linda and I hosted the Australian Bravery Association's Service of Remembrance in the Bravery Garden at Government House, Canberra.

The Service was an occasion to remember, reflect and honour those Australians, past and present, who selflessly performed acts of bravery and who bore or continue to bare physical and emotional scars or personal hardship.

During the ceremony Linda delivered a reading from Romans Chapter 12 and I provided a 'Reflection'. In preparing my 'Reflection', I wanted to highlight two particular themes from Linda's reading of Romans – gifts and harmony. [From Romans] "We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us ... Live in harmony with one another."

To put a secular view on gifts, one of those gifts is bravery.

We are blessed to live in a society where there are people who are brave. People who put the safety of other people above their own. They deserve our recognition for what they did and for the cost their selfless deed exacted. Only recipients of Bravery Awards know what confronted them in the moment they acted. Many recipients, sadly, carry both physical and emotional scars for years after the event.

Another gift is compassion. It, too, was in Linda's reading from Romans.

Who is there to help the brave – to protect them from demons, to comfort them when they are in pain and to support them as they try to live a normal life?

It is family. It is friends. It is colleagues.

As the past 12 to 18 months has shown, compassion and support can make a world of difference. That is why the work of the Australian Bravery Association is so important. I thank the Association for its strong advocacy of the welfare of recipients of Bravery Awards and their families.

Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia
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Honorary Surgeon:	Assoc. Professor Geoffrey Boyce FRCP (Edin and Glas) FRACP FACP FAAN FAADEP
Honorary Auditor:	Maria White

PATRONS & VICE-PATRONS

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



The following is my report to members at the 2021 Annual General Meeting. I congratulate and thank the elected members of the 2021 National Executive and our Honorary and Ex-officio appointees. I look forward to working with them and all members throughout the coming year.

Dear ABA members and friends,

2020 was a challenging year for all concerned. However, despite the challenges COVID-19 presented, I am pleased to say the ABA has had another successful year. I thank all members for their ongoing support and those who have worked very hard to keep in touch with members and provide members with opportunities to meet.

A key focus of 2020 was developing our Strategic Plan, which focuses on the ABA's long-term growth and management. Thanks to ABA National Secretary, Colonel Michael McMahon BM, ABA ACT President and Public Officer, Peter White ML MBE MCS, and ABA Deputy National President Michael Pearson BM APM, for their leadership in developing the plan. The key aspects of the Strategic Plan are set out below.

VISION: The Australian Bravery Association will provide meaningful support to its membership, be an influencer on bravery matters within Australia and be recognised as a valued not-for-profit charity.

- Focus Area 1: Maximise Support to Australian Bravery Association Members
- Focus Area 2: Increase the Membership of the Australian Bravery Association
- Focus Area 3: Maximise Financial Support to the Australian Bravery Association
- Focus Area 4: Be an Influencer on Bravery Matters

The National Executive is conscious that the original, and most important aim, of the Association is to connect members to support each other. This aim remains the priority for the ABA.

A real highlight of 2020 has been the new ABA Newsletter – *For Bravery*. Thanks to ABA Newsletter Coordinator Dr Kay Danes, OAM, for her enthusiasm and ongoing support. Another key supporter of the ABA has been Rotary. Thanks again to Kay and ABA Qld President, Sally Gregory, for fostering that relationship and growing opportunities for our Brave Youth through, for example:

- The Borderline Youth Camp
- Rotary Action Group – Professional Mental Health Support for Brave Youth

In the age of COVID-19, a key mechanism for keeping in touch with our members has been through regular online Members Meet Ups. My thanks to Sally Gregory for her enthusiasm in this space and to all those who have contributed to those Meet Ups. Similarly, the ABA's Virtual ANZAC Day Service and the Service

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of Remembrance for the 24th Anniversary of Port Arthur and, in particular, in remembrance of Dennis Lever BM were two significant opportunities to meet and remember. Thanks to ABA Honorary Chaplain, Chaplain Jim Cosgrove.

I thank Immediate Past President John Thurgar SC MBE OAM RFD for his efforts to plan what was to be the 2021 National Conference. Unfortunately, this has not come to fruition. However, we were delighted to hold our Service of Remembrance at the Australian Bravery Garden in Canberra. My thanks to Chaplain Jim, Melanie Warburton and Peter White for their outstanding efforts in making this happen. I am also very grateful for the support of Government House and our Patron, The Governor-General. Their Excellencies, The Governor-General and Mrs Hurley, have been exceptional in their support for the ABA.

On Sunday, 20 February 2021, we held our Virtual Service of Remembrance via Zoom for those who could not attend Canberra's actual service. Thanks again to Chaplain Jim for his efforts. It was a very moving ceremony.

This year we have refined and rewritten the procedures around selecting the ABA's Brave Youth of the Year. We are also in the process of pursuing sponsorship possibilities to increase the national profile of the award. Thanks to Sally Gregory for her work in this space, and we look forward to the announcement of the 2020 Awardee in the near future.

Our thanks to Chris Harding for his representation of the ABA in the United Kingdom through the Gallantry Medallists League. Chris has tended a message of goodwill from Lieutenant Colonel (Retd) John Balding MBE GM, President of the Gallantry Medallists' League.

My thanks to all National Executive and our Ex-officio members for their dedication and service in 2020. Thanks to Sally Gregory for her enthusiasm to connect with members and allow them to stay connected to all things ABA. I particularly thank Michael McMahon, our National Secretary, for his efficient organisation and administration and for his sound advice and leadership. Similarly, I thank Peter White for stepping in Canberra where needed and for his joyful support and wise counsel throughout the year. To Michael Pearson, thanks for being you. I would also like to thank Melanie Warburton for her return to ABA National Membership Secretary's role. For her dedication to all our members and her outstanding work on the NX, I have the pleasure of awarding her the **Governor General's Patron's Medallion** for service to the ABA. This medallion was kindly provided to the association to honour and thank one of our outstanding members. Melanie is the inaugural awardee.

I am also pleased to award the **Dennis Lever BM Memorial Award** to Dr Kay Danes OAM. The new newsletter and her overall support through the Members Meet Ups and Rotary have been outstanding. Thanks also to ABA Victoria President Coralee Lever for her support of this very important award.

Special thanks to Brenda Cochrane OAM, who steps down today for many years of exceptional service on the National Executive as ABA National Treasurer. Her dedication to the accounts, sound advice and continued support through the tough times, as well as the good times, has been extraordinary.

Stay well, everyone and let's enjoy another year of great friendship and fellowship together!

FOR BRAVERY NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Dr Kay Danes, OAM



Dear ABA members and friends,

The primary purpose of the **FOR BRAVERY** Newsletter is to provide an essential communications bridge for the Australian Bravery Association (ABA) membership and its supporters. This publication is a team effort. Together, Melanie Warburton, Andrew Kendall, and I have made a voluntary commitment to producing a quality newsletter. We hope everyone enjoys all the stories and news items we present in each issue. We continue to have an excellent response from the ABA community to our submission call-outs, which allows us to keep everyone updated on just some of the things happening in the ABA world. We welcome your submissions on the below topics. Articles should be commercially neutral and readable to a wide audience.

- Your rescue event (max 500 words), 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

The **FOR BRAVERY** Newsletter also enables us to engage in important conversations that impact those who may be experiencing anxiety due to their rescue experience. We aim to reduce the stigma associated with mental illness and encourage all our ABA members, especially those who may be struggling, to reach out to someone they trust and share how they feel. It is a well-recognised fact that in earning their awards, our members will have been subjected to enormous physical and or emotional stresses. As a result, they may suffer in varying degrees from some form of psychological trauma. Always shout out if you need a mate! You have a huge family here who are ready to roll up their sleeves or simply lend an ear. The ABA family are here for you, and one of our members, Pamela Davidson BM, is a qualified professional counsellor who has been appointed as the ABA's Honorary Psychologist: ABAPsychologist@gmail.com

The Australian Bravery Association supports ordinary people who have been recognised for doing extraordinary things and promote honours and awards units. We organise and encourage gatherings for all members. Most importantly, behind the scenes, we offer so much support for each other that cannot be measured. The ABA family is where you and your family can feel valued, and we hope you do. We look forward to a time when we can all catch up together.

In the meantime, stay safe and be kind to others and to yourself!

NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

Melanie Warburton



Hello to everyone. I would just like to give a short report on membership.

When I took over in February last year, we had 177 current members, 117 un-financial members and 15 honorary members. I worked extremely hard last year to re-connect with members. As of 31 December 2020, we had 238 current members, 38 un-financial members and 14 honorary members. One of our honorary members passed away in 2020. The number of un-financial members rose by 25 as of 1 January 2021 due to fees expiring on 31 December. That number has already decreased, and I expect it will fall more during the year. Twelve new members joined the ABA in 2020, which given Covid restricting our access to bravery recipients, is not too bad.

There are 9 Life Members and 29 members who hold Life Subscriptions, so we are still under 100. In total, our active membership is 290.

Life Members:

Mr John Thurgar SC MBE OAM RFD,
 Mr Graeme Samuels BM,
 Mrs Hedonna Thurgar,
 Mr Jim Runham SC AFSM OAM JP,
 Mr Victor Boreham OAM,
 Mrs Coralee Lever,
 Mrs Sally Gregory,
 Mr James Preston, and
 Ms Melanie Warburton.

Over 2020, new memberships and renewals raised \$5,950.00. While this is a considerable amount, it will be much lower over the next few years due to 5-year memberships.

I would like to thank the National Executive for their support over the year. I would particularly like to express my gratitude to Brenda. She is stepping down from her position as National Treasurer. Brenda has been the best Treasurer ever and has spent countless hours making sure our accounts are 100% correct, and our processes are squeaky clean.

My thanks also go to Andrew, who has worked tirelessly as National President and has had many wins during 2020 and made huge progress advancing the ABA profile.

Thank you.

OUTGOING TREASURER REPORT

Brenda Cochrane, OAM

I delivered my final Treasurer's report to the recent AGM. After 7 years in the position of Australian Bravery Association National Treasurer, I am stepping down. I feel honoured to have held the position and enjoyed my time maintaining the financial affairs, and enjoyed the pleasure that has resulted from the interaction with members. By stepping down, it is time to give someone else the opportunity to serve this great organisation. I leave knowing that systems and procedures are in place to protect the ABA finances' accountability and transparency. Our reporting and banking system is streamlined, and templates are easy to follow. Justine Holloway has been nominated as your new National Treasurer. I am thrilled to report she has accepted the position. In the next couple of weeks, Alan and I will be heading to Deputy President Mike and Lovey Pearson's place near the Gold Coast for a weekend handover with Justine. Although I am available for help, I am more than confident that Justine will ease into the job quite comfortably. Many thanks to Mike and Lovey for your generosity in hosting this changeover time!



Back to business on the year that was. 2020 was a very different year for us all. Our income and expenditure were significantly impacted in 2020 by the Coronavirus, causing the cancellation of events. However, we can thank Membership Secretary Melanie Warburton for a magnificent effort in contacting all members with outstanding fees. The exercise allowed her to bring members up to date on ABA affairs and generally ask after their wellbeing. Well done, Mel.

The closing balances of our three Westpac Accounts on 31/12/2020 were \$35,152.16.

I am happy to discuss any questions that you may have regarding the ABA finances.

My thanks to ABA President Andrew Kendall for your support and kind comments regarding my tenure. Your hard work and initiatives brought about during the year promoting the ABA are to be commended. Thanks also to all National Executive members striving to contribute to the ABA. It has been a pleasure to work with you all. My special thanks also to Maria White, the ABA honorary auditor, for once again tirelessly checking all our records to ensure our operations are beyond reproach.

Thank you to all our members for your continuing support and friendship to me and my husband, Alan. We have yet to meet some of you, and we look forward to seeing you at the next ABA function. Please make yourself known.

Sincerely

Brenda Cochrane OAM

ABA Immediate Past Treasurer

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY PRESIDENT REPORT

Peter White

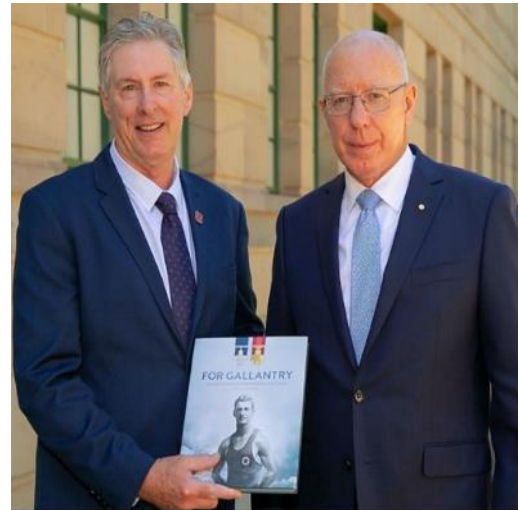
On 26 November 2020, as your ACT Branch President, I had the honour of representing our National President and membership at the formal launch of, *For Gallantry: Australians awarded the George Cross and the Cross of Valour*, at the Australian War Memorial, in Canberra. The book was formally launched by His Excellency, General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC FTSE (Retd), Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia.

This compelling read describes the acts of bravery of all Australian recipients of the *George Cross* and its successor, the *Cross of Valour*. The Imperial award, the *George Cross*, was introduced by King George VI, recognising that acts of bravery and courage do not solely occur during combat. The *George Cross*, the civilian counterpart of the *Victoria Cross*, remained Australia's highest non-combat bravery award until the introduction of the Australian Bravery Decorations as part of the Australian Honours System in February 1975. The Australian *Cross of Valour* replaced the *George Cross* and is awarded for acts of the most conspicuous courage in circumstances of extreme peril.

Mr Matt Anderson, Director of the Australian War Memorial, welcomed the 'COVID-19, number restricted' guests to the formal launch and congratulated staff and author, Mr Craig Blanch, for an excellent publication. Also recognised were two well-known and respected Canberra philanthropists, "I wish to sincerely thank Richard Rolfe AM, vice patron of the Cross of Valour Association of Australia and his wife Deborah Rolfe AM, both generous supporters of the Australian War Memorial. We thank Richard for his financial support, which has enabled this book to be published, and for his ongoing support of our national heroes".

In launching the book, our Governor-General commented, "I was delighted to be invited to launch 'For Gallantry' because my appointment continually invites me to learn more of the human condition and, as clichéd as it might sound, how is it that ordinary people can perform extraordinary acts of bravery. 'For Gallantry' recounts the Australian recipients of the country's premier former and current non-combat awards: the *George Cross* and the *Cross of Valour*. "This is the first time all Australian recipients of these awards have been brought together in a dedicated volume. Along with its military equivalent, the *Victoria Cross*, the *George Cross* and the *Cross of Valour* recognise compelling stories of courage." Importantly for our ABA membership, our Governor-General shared his views on brave Australians, concluding, "Recipients of bravery decorations are selfless, deserve our praise and recognition, and are an inspiration to all". 'For Gallantry' is available for purchase from the Australian War Memorial Shop and bookstores across Australia.

'Courageous behaviour comes in many forms. For Gallantry tells the remarkable true stories of some of Australia's most selfless people. A beautifully illustrated work that keeps you captivated from the first page.' — Dan Keighran VC



'For Gallantry' author, Mr Craig Blanch with Governor-General, His Excellency, General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd).

www.newsouthbooks.com.au/books/gallantry/

QUEENSLAND PRESIDENT REPORT

Sally Gregory

2020 was the year we changed how we chat. Last year the focus of my role as Chief Hugger – I mean Queensland President, expanded as the arrival of COVID put an end to our state and national get-togethers, necessitating a new approach to keeping in touch with our ABA family members. Zoom appeared to be the best way to connect, see each other’s smiling faces, and give us the means to enjoy fellowship from our own homes. This meant that some members needed lessons on using zoom, connecting online, and even how to buy and hook up a webcam. Once the perils of life in a digital world were navigated, we could return to telling our tall stories, jokes and sharing the good times and the bad.

Brave Youth of the Year (BYY) Chair

2020 started with the meaningful experience of inviting our Brave Youth of the Year William Kelly CBC and his family to the honour of a trip to Canberra. There they had the thrill of receiving the BYY award, meeting the Governor-General David Hurley AC DSC FTSE, his lovely wife Mrs Hurley and getting acquainted with some of Australia’s finest rescuers (us).

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

Exclusive ABA Event

Join Us LIVE in our Member's Mingle Facebook Chat Room

Monday 18th Jan 2021
6:30 pm (Qld Time)

Meet Andrew MacDonald
He is a man of many talents. He has his own rock band, podcast, writes songs, has a YouTube channel, is a schoolteacher and an ex-Bunnings manager.

"Everything you always wanted to know about being an ex-Bunnings Manager (with a Star of Courage) but were afraid to ask."

Do you have a Facebook Account? Join the Chatroom
Australian Bravery Awardees Group
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/AustBraveryAssoc/>

If you don't have a Facebook Account you can still join the chatroom, however, you will need an invitation link.

All Enquiries Contact: Sally Gregory - ABACLD@president@gmail.com

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/AustBraveryAssoc/>
www.forbravery.org.au

Thanks to the ABA and the generosity of the Rotary E-Club of Global Trekkers, who donated US\$1000 to cover Billy's travel expenses from Perth, the Kelly family have a memory that will last them a lifetime.



William Kelly pictured with Their Excellencies.

The sub-committee of the BYY award will announce the winner of the 2020 award in the next month when our President has signed off on the invitation to accept the award, which will then be sent to the highest scorer in the BYY award rankings. The winner will be offered the opportunity to travel to Canberra to participate in the 2022 National Conference, in conjunction with the winner of this years' BYY award, which will be announced in December 2021.

The BYY sub-committee consists of myself as chair, Vic Boreham (ex WA President), Andy Mac SC (ex NSW President), Pamela Davidson BM (our Honorary Psychologist), a representative of the Royal Humane Society of Australasia and Co-Australian of the Year 2019, Thai Cave Rescuer Dr Richard Harris SC. The BYY evaluation process requires sub-committee members to rank bravery citations provided by The Office of Honours and Awards, the RHSA and the RHSNSW for

youth rescuers aged 18 or younger at the time of the rescue event. The sub-committee members allocate points to rank the citations: 3 points (bravest), 2 points (next bravest) and 1 point for the 3rd bravest. It never ceases to amaze us how brave some of our young Aussies are and how shocking their rescues must have been for them. Thus, the need to support the brave youth of Australia remains at the heart of the ABA.

Community Engagement:

Thanks to the Rotary E-Club of Global Trekkers, the ABA received \$1000 sponsorship to part-fund the travel expenses of the BYY 2019 Billy Kelly and family, who were thrilled to travel to Canberra to attend the ABA National Conference. They also introduced us to the Rotary Action Group who are interested in providing \$2,000 of professional counselling to every youth bravery recipient in Australia. This is a very generous offer.

This year, the Global Trekkers have generously offered sponsorship of \$750 to fund two ABA youth members – Jade-Elle Brown and Cayla Sweeney to attend the prestigious Borderline Youth Leadership Camp at Lake Moogerah (SEQ). Additional private sponsorship will also enable Ruby Brown to attend the camp. More info at <https://www.borderlinecamp.com/>



International media initiative:

Ben Beed Bravery Podcast. Filmmaker and podcast producer Ben Beed has invited ABA members to share their rescue stories in a podcast titled “The Brave.” Ben has much experience in the movie industry, community development as a social worker and international media with his podcast ‘Missing Panther’, which you can access on this link: [Missing Panther Ben Beed](#). As you can see, Ben treats his participants with dignity and respect. You can access the clip on this link:

<https://vimeo.com/492002896> (Password: Colin)

Would you like to be part of an ABA Special Podcast with producer Ben Beed?

Share your rescue story in a podcast titled “The Brave” which will commence production in March 2021.

Email Ben at bennybeed@hotmail.com

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

www.forbravery.org.au

I thank you for the opportunity of representing the Queensland members in this finest of “Money Can’t Buy” experiences – being part of the distinguished ABA family – those who stepped up when others didn’t, couldn’t or wouldn’t. We did, and that’s why we’re a bit spesh 😊

Yours Truly – Sally Gregory – Chief Hugger/ Queensland President

**SPECIAL
ABA
FEATURE**

SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE 14 FEBRUARY 2021

FOR BRAVERY ED

The Service of Remembrance meant a lot this year. It was the first time the ABA had been able to get together since last February; it was the first time Sing Australia had sung in public since Covid hit, there was such a great vibe in the air, and the weather was perfect. Their Excellencies were as always generous hosts and were involved in the Service, her Excellency Mrs Hurley gave a bible reading, and His Excellency, General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC FTSE (Retd), spoke on his reflections over the last year, which was very inspiring.

In 1999, after attending a memorial service at Gallipoli, the Governor-General, Sir William Deane, thought nothing recognised that important aspect of our national life. At about the same time, Mr John Thurgar talked to the Official Secretary about creating a memorial to recognise the then-upcoming 25th anniversary on 14 February 2000 of the introduction in 1975 of Australia's own honours system our own bravery decorations, both military and civilian. The idea developed and took hold that a Garden would provide a focus at Government House Yarralumla both for courage and sacrifice in war and also for civilian bravery. John Easthope and Associates were asked to provide some designs.

The Garden was under construction on the 14th of February 2000 when a ceremony was held at Government House to mark the 25th anniversary of the wholly Australian system of Bravery Decorations. The two Jarrah seats in the Garden were presented to Government House at that time by the Australian Bravery Association. The roses planted in the garden are the Cheshire Rose, developed in SA for the Ryder-Cheshire Association. Cheshire was a hero in war and peace. (Group Captain, Lord Cheshire of Woodhall, VC OM DSO and two bars DFC. The brilliant red colour is reflective of 'sacrifice'. The ABA has held a Service of Remembrance in the Bravery Garden every year except in 2018, when the National Conference was held in Melbourne. I was able to meet new ABA member David Savage and can I say what a great bloke he is. David was a member of the Australian Federal Police serving with UNAMET in the Maliana region of East Timor in 1999; David received a Group Bravery Citation at his investiture in September 2001. Perhaps in a future issue of our FOR BRAVERY Newsletter, David may give us his story.



Melanie Warburton with David Savage.

Even though numbers were down due to the risk of borders closing, we, in true ABA style, managed to have a few dinners over the weekend and a farewell lunch at Poppy's at the War Memorial. Thank you to all who attended.

Melanie Warburton - ABA National Membership Secretary.



Above: AFP Flag Party Damian Greenwood, Jess Jeffery, Greg Corin, David Savage, Martin Hess.



Above: Their Excellencies, General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd) and Mrs Hurley.



Above: Peter & Catherine White with Martin Hess.



Above: Jim Preston.



Above: Goch Kot.



Above: Brian & Pam Harland.



Above: Goch Kot, Paul Gatenby and Jamie Ferguson.



Above: Sean and James Martin.



Above: Supt. Mick Travers, Sgt. Martin Hess and Insp. Dean Elliott.

Photos by Kasra Yousefi – www.kasra.com.au

THE CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

CHAPLAIN JIM COSGROVE

There's 100 years since Anzac, since the war to end all wars
 Yet Australia's sons and daughters still respond to freedom's cause
 In those hundred years of fighting, there's a lot that's still the same
 And the good old Aussie Digger still brings honour to his name.

We behold the Aussie Spirit in this proud Centenary
 And the birthplace of a Nation - "Anzac Cove - Gallipoli"
 Where a Lone Pine tells the story of those men who paid the price
 And is testament to Glory found in acts of Sacrifice

For it's not the prize of victory that marks our celebration
 But the '*Spirit*' of Gallipoli that so describes our nation
 It's the character of Mateship; it's the courage that they showed
 And the selflessness that saw them fall with faces to the foe

They were young and full of life when they responded to the call
 They were looking for adventure, and they knew no fear at all
 When confronted by the torments that for all who war awaits
 They endured the hell and horror through commitment to their mates

They endured great deprivation, hunger, hardship, thirst and pain
 Beside their mates, with gritted teeth, they'd joke and not complain
 They would clamber over trenches with machine guns spewing death
 They knew their Mates would watch their back until their dying breath

At battles on the Western Front, the blizzards of Korea
 The mud of the Kokoda Track, the Last Charge at Beersheba
 The Tunnel rats of Vietnam, Malaya, Timor Leste
 Tobruk, Iraq, Afghanistan - Our diggers gave their best

Let us recall our Diggers' traits of which we all take pride
 The Larrikin, the Optimist, the ones who always tried
 The willingness to lend a hand and greet life with a smile
 The willingness to sacrifice their lives in times of trial

Across the years, these Anzac voices call to you and me
 Do not forget the sacrifice of mates who set you free
 Of those young souls whom age won't weary nor the years condemn
 By living Anzac Spirit lives - We will remember them

So when we hear the bugle play, its solemn haunting strain
 When Last Post bids us to recall young, vital lives again
 In silence may our hearts reflect on Anzac's hundred years
 On those who sacrificed their lives and those who shed their tears

Then as the bugle rouses us from silent reverie
 As themes of life and freedom dawn anew for you and me
 Australians all let us rejoice - For we are young and free
 The Spirit of the Anzacs starts its second century. ©Jim Cosgrove, 2014.



WE WILL
 REMEMBER THEM

LIGHT UP THE
 DAWN

Based on the tremendous community response to this initiative, the RSL will again help Australians to come together in 2021, in their driveways, on their balconies, or in their living rooms at 6am to commemorate Australia's deeply held ANZAC traditions. RSL will produce a shortened personal service and participation kits for use across the community – please check back with this page closer to the day to download your service.

<https://lightupthedawn.com.au/>

LEST WE FORGET

IN THE SPOTLIGHT



COLIN MARTIN BROWN, of Latham, ACT, in going to the rescue of a boy from drowning in Ginninderra Creek on 7 February 1988.

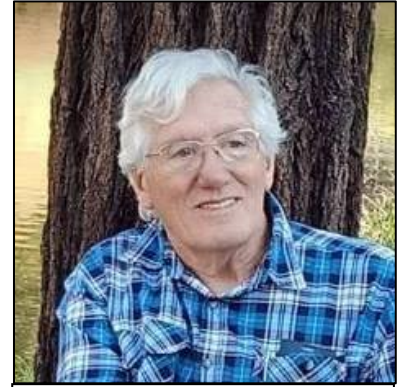
At about 9.30 am two boys who had been riding their bikes stopped at a causeway over a creek to wash their bikes and themselves when one fell into the flooded creek. The depth of water over the causeway was about 15 cm and the current was rushing at 1.3 m per second. Under the causeway were several tunnels of about 50 cms diameter through which the creek was flowing. One boy fell into the creek upstream of the causeway. His friend turned to see the boy under water with his right arm stretched out of the water. The friend grasped the boy's hand and screaming, tried to pull him out. The screams attracted Mr Raber who was nearby and came to grasp the boy's arm but the current pulled them apart and the boy disappeared. Mr Brown then arrived and entered the creek twice while Mr Raber held his arm, to try to feel for the boy. Mr Brown then let his legs into one of the tunnels but had to be pulled out as the surge of water was too strong. The boy's body was found several hours later 20m downstream. It was resolved that COLIN MARTIN BROWN be awarded the BRONZE MEDAL for Bravery.

A true story...When I was a young lad, I had a reaction to a military father and consequently became a bit of a ratbag, frequently getting into minor trouble with the law. I appeared before (Canberra's) Judge Dobson on my last charge and he said to me "Brown, if you ever appear before me again, you'll be going to jail".

Many years later, I was called to attend the inquest for the drowning of the child I had attempted to rescue. As a result of my attempt, I was recommended for a bravery award - by none-other than Judge Dobson. I doubt he remembered me as the budding young criminal I used to be, but I sure remembered him and it was with some trepidation that I again appeared before him! I was quite relieved to get out of the inquest in one piece and took a deep breath that he didn't uphold his earlier threat. Colin Brown

REFLECTIONS FROM BILL LOWTHER, SC

It has been a concern of mine that so many wonderful acts of bravery go unrecognised. I believe the reason for this is because some people who witness or become aware of acts of bravery don't know how to nominate a person or persons involved in acts of bravery. Authorities properly regard such information as private. There is a conundrum here. But I would encourage you to think about someone in the community who has put their own life at risk to save the life of someone else, property or the environment. The following is an example of an article I read that prompted me to submit a bravery nomination.



Bill Lowther, SC

29 March 2016

My wife Donna and I and my 2 sons were walking along the beach (O'Sullivan's beach) near the breakwater/boat ramp. My wife heard someone yelling help about 100m offshore. At first, I thought it might have been kids fooling around, but then I could see 2 people struggling out around the rocky reef area. I thought about it then went in knowing that I'm not a good swimmer or that I have a big fear of the ocean. But I went anyway. I was knee-deep for 20 meters then had to swim.

Meanwhile, my wife had told my sons to get some people to help as there were 50 to 70 people watching from the breakwater, but no one would. When I reached the woman (Ros Stiles), she was absolutely exhausted. She grabbed me and took me underwater. Once I got her to calm down and float on her back, I tried to swim into the shore. But the rip was too strong, so I tried to surf her and myself in. I got her over halfway to shore when I could stand and walk her the rest of the way. Another man came over at that time and put her on a boogie board and helped her in while I went back to get her partner Kevin. He had drifted a bit further out by this time. As I was swimming, the waves pushed me into some rocks. I felt a nasty scrape to my leg. When I reached Kevin, I did the same as I had done with Ros and surfed us both into shore. I then laid him on the beach with Ros. I put them both in the recovery position as they were pretty well spent.

My wife had called the Ambo's, and we waited until they arrived. It turns out they were saving their grandson from a rip and got themselves stuck in it. Ros told me later that she had another 30 sec before she would've drowned. She was that exhausted. I spent many sleepless nights after that day. I have never been in the ocean since. That was probably the only time in 20 yrs that I have been swimming.

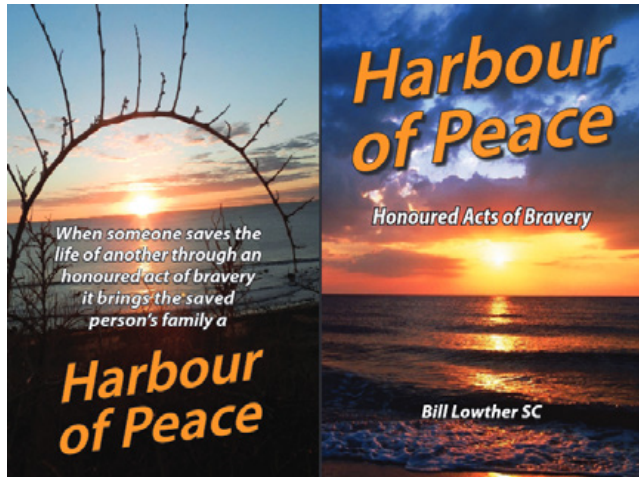
Russell Dick.

When I read this story in the newspaper, I began searching for Russell Dick. I contacted our local police, but they couldn't release his details due to the Privacy Act. So I grabbed an old white pages and rang every Dick in the book. By the time I got to the second last one, a woman answered. It was his mother. We chatted, and afterwards, I sent in a nomination for bravery, but to my surprise, it was declined. Undeterred, I took it to the Council of Noarlunga and Christies Beach. Russell Dick was awarded a trophy and recognition from the South Australian government for his act of bravery. Sometimes nominations don't get accepted, but I always think it's worthwhile to at least make that effort!

I am producing a small booklet called **Harbours of Peace** to show people from all walks of life that when
Continued next page...

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a person rescues and saves the life of another person from danger or injury, then a harbour of peace is brought to the family of the person who was rescued. Anyone who knows of a person who has saved a life, property or environment should create awareness of that brave action. Those deeds should be brought to the attention of the ABA, the Honours and Awards, or the Australian Humane Society. I have included their contact details in this booklet.



This little volume has two principal purposes:

- 1. Encourage awareness and proper recognition of acts of bravery.**
- 2. To provide appropriate support for those involved in acts of bravery.**

It is well recognised that people involved in acts of bravery often later need a ‘harbour of peace’ –

somewhere to seek shelter - to deal with the trauma of the event. This is equally so for professionals, such as members of the defence forces, paramedics and doctors, as well as ‘ordinary’ civilians. All, to some extent, are mentally and emotionally challenged, especially if a rescue attempt is unsuccessful. Families are affected too. I hope this booklet is useful and removes some of the mystery out of the Australian Bravery Awards nomination process. I hope that it encourages people to be aware of acts of bravery so the person or persons concerned can be properly considered for an award.

“Harbours of Peace” can be download from my website: www.stepbeyondcourage.com.au

About the author: Bill Lowther is a recipient of the Star of Courage. He well knows the value of a harbour of peace. Bill’s own life is peppered with brave acts. None pre-meditated, all spontaneous. Any one of a dozen could have been worthy of recognition for bravery. Some of these acts are included in this booklet in order to demonstrate how acts of bravery are most often instinctive – someone needs urgent help – whereas courage can be more contemplative and considered. It must be acknowledged, too, that acts of bravery do not always have successful outcomes. Often the bravery itself lies in the attempt. Such an attempt can still be worthy of recognition.

HOW TO NOMINATE SOMEONE FOR A BRAVERY AWARD

The Australian Honours System is administered independently of the Australian Bravery Association through the **Australian Honours and Awards Secretariat** located at Government House in Canberra. The Secretariat also serves the **Australian Bravery Decorations Council** which considers nominations and make recommendations for awards to the Governor-General. Whilst the Australian Bravery Association plays no role in the determination of awards, it provides information and guidance to members and interested parties on nomination for and acceptance of bravery awards at both state and federal level.

To nominate someone for an Australian Bravery Award go to: <https://www.gg.gov.au/australian-honours-and-awards/nominate-someone-award> .

For more information about the Australian Bravery Decorations Council go to: <https://www.gg.gov.au/australian-honours-and-awardsaustralian-bravery-decorations/council-australian-bravery-decorations> .

In 1996, 35 people lost their lives to a lone gunman in the Port Arthur massacre. Among those, Dennis Lever was tragically killed while protecting his wife, Coralee. Two years later, Dennis was awarded a Bravery Medal posthumously. In the midst of her grief, Coralee found the courage to lift herself out of tragedy and into a life dedicated to helping others. The Dennis Lever BM Memorial Award is an initiative that Coralee created several years after she joined the ABA in 2000 to honour the memory of her husband.



Frank De Lacy with Sunraysia Men’s Shed Inc President Alan Cameron. Picture: Louise Donges. Sunraysia Daily 2017.



Coralee Lever with Alan & Brenda Cochrane (2011)

The actual trophy is crafted from a Mildura Mallee stump. Local resident Frank De Lacy began crafting the trophies for the Australian Bravery Association in 2007. Still, after sustaining a shoulder injury, he handed over the project to the Men’s Shed Sunraysia Inc, who have since maintained the tradition. The award is for ‘*Outstanding Service to the Australian Bravery Association.*’ Each year a new name is added to that trophy. It was with great pleasure that ABA National President, Andrew Kendall, awarded the Dennis Lever BM Memorial Award to Dr Kay Danes OAM for her outstanding service to the ABA throughout 2020.

PAST RECIPIENTS			
2000	Jim Runham SC OAM JP	2011	Royce Thompson
2001	Len Williams BM	2011	Alan Cochrane OAM & Brenda Cochrane OAM
2002	Allan Sparkes CV OAM	2012	Phil Spence BM
2003	Jim Preston	2013	Melanie Warburton
2004	Sally Gregory	2014	Minter Ellison Lawyers
2005	Jon Stanhope MLA	2015	Andrew Kendall & Brian Harland
2006	Ken Shewan BM	2016	Chaplain Jim Cosgrove
2007	John Thurgar SC MBE OAM RFD & Hedonna Thurgar	2017	Melanie Warburton
2008	Coralee Lever & Adam Wilson BM	2018	Tony Hall OBE
2009	Adam Wilson BM	2019	James Preston and Peter White ML MBE MCS
2010	James Long BM	2020	Dr Kay Danes OAM

In the small town community of Red Cliffs, Victoria, Coralee shares her journey to the Australian Bravery Association (ABA), a group she now calls her family.

Coralee shares her story at this link.

<https://vimeo.com/35128833>



Coralee, James Preston & Peter White (2019)

DESIGNING VALOUR, COURAGE, BRAVERY

Holly Anderson – Royal Australian Mint

Design is integral in order to convey meaning. With the creation of the Australian Bravery Decorations in 1975, the then-new Australian Honours System had the challenging task to create medals that would inspire recognition of a deliberate choice, to go from a place of safety to danger, or remain in a perilous position to provide help. While the Royal Australian Mint was happy and honoured to manufacture these iconic medals, Controller Joslin was the first to admit “we would probably not wish to contribute directly to the design as this would probably best be done by others”. Instead, Stuart Devlin, an artist from Geelong, regarded as one of the world’s best silver-and-goldsmiths and the designer of Australia’s decimal coins, was commissioned by Sir John Kerr to design all the original awards.

The Cross of Valour was designed as a simple gold cross containing two other cross forms to suggest the theme of a cross of crosses. It carries the shield and crest of the Australian coat of arms with the inscription “For Valour”. The two reds of the ribbon are symbolic of the colour of venous and arterial blood.

The Star of Courage hosts the shield and crest of the Australian coat of arms, at the centre of a silver seven-pointed Federation star representing the six states, with the final point representing the territories of Australia. It carries the inscription “For Courage” with a ribbon narrower than that of the Cross of Valour but comprised of the same two reds in transposed positions.

The Bravery Medal is a circular bronze medal surmounted with the shield and crest of the Australian coat of arms on a wattle blossom and carrying the inscription “For Bravery”. The ribbon uses the two reds of the Cross of Valour and the Star of Courage but in alternating narrow vertical stripes. All three medals are ensigned with the Crown of Saint Edward, the centrepiece of the Crown Jewels of the United Kingdom. Named after Saint Edward the Confessor, it has been traditionally used to crown English and British monarchs at their coronations since the 13th century. The Commendation for Brave Conduct is a sprig of mimosa mounted on a blood-red backing ribbon.

Like with the designing of coins, Stuart Devlin painstakingly carved plaster moulds of the above medal designs, which were in turn used to create araldite resins and wooden replicas for the Mint to use in the manufacture of the medal dies. These araldite and wooden replicas remain in the National Coin Collection today.

Royal Australian Mint
Denison Street Deakin
ACT, 2600

www.ramint.gov.au



ABA MEMBER'S MINGLE CHAT ROOM

Get to know your fellow ABA members, stay updated with ABA news, hear great stories and have some laughs.

AEDT 7:30pm Last Monday of Each Month

NSW: 7:30pm - QLD: 6:30pm - NT: 6:00pm - SA:7:00pm - VIC: 7.30pm - WA: 4:30pm

Join the Chatroom: Australian Bravery Awardees Group

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

Enquiries Contact: Sally Gregory - ABAQLDPresident@gmail.com



Search for **@australianbraveryassociation** on Facebook or in Messenger, or visit our **Australian Bravery Awardees** page, which is a closed group for private and discreet discussion <https://www.facebook.com/groups/AustBraveryAssoc/>

AUSTRALIAN BRAVERY ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

- Your rescue event (max 500 words), 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

Email: ABANewsEditor@gmail.com

- Issue 1: Mar
- Issue 2: June
- Issue 3: Sep
- Issue 4: Dec



Deadlines: 24 February, 24 May, 24 Aug, 24 Nov

Disclaimer: Every effort is made to provide accurate and complete information in the ABA's FOR BRAVERY newsletters. However, the ABA and Editorial staff make no claims, promises or guarantees about the accuracy, completeness, or adequacy of the contents of its newsletters and expressly disclaim liability for errors and omissions of any material contained therein. We reserve the right to edit content submitted. Some of the images in this newsletter may be subject to copyright. Please contact us if you wish to reproduce any of the images contained herein.

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