

Sunshine Coast Ex-Service and Serving Women's Association Inc.

Joining Forces



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Welcome to the 22nd edition of ***Joining Forces***.

The past few months has been very busy for the SCESWA Management Team with numerous functions to attend. However none has been more special than our *2025 Anniversary Luncheon* in June. Our theme was Cruising and everyone dressed the part. 103 ex service women attended and the feedback was excellent. Our thanks and appreciation must go to Deirdre Elliott, Maggie Winduss, Fran Sinclair, and Dot Kunde who make up the Events Team. They worked for months prior to make this such a success. To walk into the room and see the decorations, and number of guests and the excited noise was astounding. Words cannot express my pride as President at the efforts of these wonderful women.

We held a *Christmas in July* bus trip to the Kenilworth Cheese Factory and then onto the Kandanga Hotel for a delightful Christmas luncheon. Joining us was the WRAAC Assn Qld and the WRAAF Assn Qld who mostly arrived by bus. I am so pleased to say that having these two associations join us was a delight. It is so important that all ex service women have the opportunity to meet and enjoy other Association's members and share each others social events where possible. Thanks to both associations for making the huge effort to be a part of our day.

I trust you enjoy this edition of ***Joining Forces***.

With respect.

Larraine Houlihan

Aug 2025—Dec 2025
22nd Edition

Inc Assn IA 59129

ABN 15 390 668 848

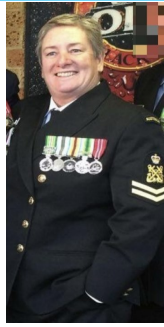
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Editor's Note

This edition highlights a Biography of one of our members, Anne Fisher. Anne has a very interesting and diverse background and has done so much in her life. I am always astounded when reading of our members' lives, both in and away from their service days. Anne is truly one of these. I trust you enjoy her story

Cheers

Larraine



W151850 Petty Officer ANNE FISHER



My name is Anne Fisher. I enlisted in the Royal Australian Navy in July 1993. I was about 26 when I joined. I entered as a Marine Technician, a “Stoker”. I enlisted in the RAN because I really wanted to do something out of the box, challenging and different. I wanted to push the boundaries of chicks doing blokes jobs. I just wanted a new challenge and I really wanted to go to sea. That was my main reason for signing up. That’s why I chose the Navy over the other services. Being in the Navy I had a ship, an air-conditioned bunk with 4 square meals a day and travelled the world which I thought was fabulous.

After recruit school I went immediately into category training school which was the engineering school at *HMAS Cerberus* and stayed there for 12 months. Basically, we did our three-year apprenticeship in one year. We did all the TAFE modules and finished those and then did some specialised gas turbine training. Then we were sent at the end of that year to our first ship.

My first ship was *HMAS Canberra* in December 1994. When I went onboard it was an interesting time because girls had only been posted to that ship for the first time a few months before. The boys were rather confused with ‘what do we say to these girls?’, and ‘what do we say to the girls without getting into trouble?’. There were very stilted conversations over the dinner table with the boys. They got used to us pretty quickly. It was a great supportive crew and I still remember it well and I’m still in contact with some of the blokes I worked with.

When I was posted to *HMAS Canberra* I first worked in the laundry, where I washed and dried and folded overalls. I did that for 6 months. Normally when a stoker comes on board you spend 12 months in the laundry then you go out and do day working in engineering. Day working means going out with someone older and more experienced to fix and maintain machinery. It wasn’t long before I pestered and pestered the Chief Tiff to start watch keeping. As a result, I was now learning new things about the ship, which were called Auxiliary Machinery Operating Certificates (AMOCs). That means I had to go through and do tests on every single bit of machinery on board this ship. I had to name where every single valve on a 410 foot long, 4000 tonne guided missile frigate. I had to know how to move fuels and oils around, and throughout every level of my promotion my learning never stopped. I was a watch keeper from that moment until I stepped off the ships as a Petty Officer Marine Technician in 2002. As a watch keeper you probably got about five hours sleep a night, we were constantly sleep deprived.

After a year on *HMAS Canberra*, I was posted to *HMAS Sydney* in 1996 for the next 2 years doing more of the same watchkeeping duties. It was during this time I was sent to learn to be a “Fridge” at RMIT in Melbourne. This was another first for me as there had never been a female sent to do a Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Course before. Even the TAFE teachers struggled to understand they had a female in the class.

In 1998 after being promoted to Leading Seaman, I decided to volunteer as one of the first female Submariners so was posted to *HMAS Stirling* for Submarine suitability. I loved WA and the base there. It was a very beautiful area to live and work in. After 12 months and still no start to my underwater career I returned to surface ships on *HMAS Darwin*. In 1999 we were sent to East Timor to assist in the evacuation of Australians and to help stabilise the country. This was the first War Zone for me. I was sent ashore to set up Refrigeration systems for the Army and to clean up the infrastructure that was destroyed in the conflict.



Left: Anne on deck with the Naval Flag



Right: Console Operator

In 2000 my parents' health was failing so I was posted back East to *HMAS Newcastle*. It was an exciting time as the Olympics was in Sydney and we all had leave to attend matches. However, the Solomon Islands had different plans and we were sent there for 2 months to stabilise their warring factions and so missed the Olympics. The Captain was a good sport and would sail out to download the latest footage from the games so we could watch it onboard.



Photo of Anne in Dubai with a rubbish bin.
Naval humour

When the Twin Towers fell down in 2002 *HMAS Newcastle* was sent to the Arabian Gulf. We left Australia in February 2003 and it was at this time I was told I would be promoted to Petty Officer. The boys that worked with me were chuffed saying 'there were no female Petty Officer Marine Technicians in the Navy'. I got promoted and was the first one. Here I was at the eight-year mark of my service, a Petty Officer. Again, in minimum time.

I posted off *HMAS Newcastle* in 2003 and went to the Sailors Leadership and Management School at *HMAS Kuttabul*. This was the first real shore posting I'd had. I loved being an instructor and it was here I found my true calling as a teacher/trainer.

In 2004 I discharged from The RAN to pursue a teaching career. The highlight of my naval career was to become the first female Petty Officer Marine Technician in the history of the Royal Australian Navy.

The best memories I have from being in the Navy is definitely the camaraderie and the friendships you make. They are long lasting, and they are still with me today. My last job, just before I retired in 2021, I was working in a trade school teaching engineering and construction to young people.

The Navy made me, as a person. And that's the best part. It made me, it became part of my life and soul. I can never let it go; it's always in me.

Below: Anne today living her best life.



Bribie Island Ex-Service Women's Monthly Luncheon

The Luncheon for the Bribie Island Ex-Service Women is held on the 4th Monday of the month at the Bribie Island RSL, 99 Toorbul Street, Bribie Island. Contact Anita Cooper on 0402 246 408 for any further info. All welcome.



Glasshouse Country Women United by Defence - Monthly luncheon

We have a new permanent new home for our lunches at Camp SMEAC Inc, 2315 Steve Irwin Way, Landsborough, turn off opposite the Go Kart Track.

Camp SMEAC is run by Veterans helping Veterans.

Usually held on the 2nd Wednesday each month at 11.00am.

Contact Fran Sinclair on 0416 013 987 for all information . All welcome.



Sunshine Coast Ex-Service and Serving Women's Association

Annual Luncheon June 2025





**SCESWA Christmas in July Bus Trip to Kenilworth and Kandanga
with WRAAC Assn Qld and WRAAF Assn Qld**

3 July 2025



Hervey Bay Ex-Servicewomen's Social Club

41st Birthday

Pres: Julie Chapple 0407766545
Sec: Leonie Mercer 0414828385
Treas: Joanne Williams 0417353481

P.O Box 3042
Hervey Bay Qld 4655
judulie@gmail.com



Lets Get.....

Groovy



Friday 17TH OCTOBER

"Casual"

Friday night get together

RSL on the Veranda

5.30pm for 6.00pm Start

Cost : Own Expense

Saturday 18th OCTOBER

"Get Your Groove On"

Saturday Luncheon

RSL in Hervey House

11.30am for 12.00pm Start

Cost: \$45

(1 drink voucher pp included)

Sunday 19th OCTOBER

Indicate interest

Numbers needed.

Cafe 63

Breakfast @ 8.00am

Cost: Own Expense

This year we want you to wear.....

Dust of the Bell Bottoms and throw on the Love Beads!

Partners are most welcome. We can't wait to see you there.

The Courtesy Bus is available for transport to the RSL Club
for the Friday night function and Saturday Luncheon.

Phone: 1300 775 287 to book.



Cheques made out to:

Hervey Bay Ex-Servicewomen's Social Club

Branch Name: _____

Enclosed Cheque for \$ _____

Direct Deposit Details:

BSB 645 646

ACCOUNT 107946858

NAME: Hervey Bay Ex-

Servicewomen's Social Club

(If using direct debit please
advise the treasurer at
judulie@gmail.com)

Friday Night- Own Expense

Saturday Luncheon- \$ 45pp (1 drink voucher pp incl.)

Sunday Breakfast- Own Expense

Dietary requirements: _____

Information for our members wishing to attend this great function. There are two ways of paying. If you wish to pay directly to the Hervey Bay Ex Service Women's Social Club the information is on the Flyer. Please note the RSVP is 3 September 2025. For those choosing to pay via the Sunshine Coast Ex Service and Serving Women's Assn Inc, the account payment details are on page 17. In both cases please reference your name and that the monies are for the Hervey Bay function. The RSVP for our monies is the 28th September 2025 to allow for transfer to Hervey Bay.

Bundaberg District Women Veterans 58th Birthday Luncheon

21 July 2025

Theme - *Gypsies, Tramps and Thieves*





Meeting & Coffee and Chat Dates



7 August 2025—OGM Kawana Waters Surf Club 10.00am for 10.30am start



4 September 2025—Coffee and Chat—Maroochydore RSL Coffee Venue 10.00am



2 Oct 2025—OGM Maroochydore RSL Sub Branch HUB 10.00am for 10.30am start



6 Nov 2025—Coffee and Chat—Wreath Laying with Picnic in the Park—Cotton Tree 10.00am



4 Dec 2025—OGM and Christmas Lunch Kawana Waters Surf Club 10.00am for 10.30am



8 Jan 2026—Coffee and Chat—Maroochydore RSL Coffee Venue 10.00am

SCESWA Management Committee Meeting Dates



17 July 2025



21 August 2025



18 September 2025



16 October 2025



20 Nov 2025



BIRTHDAYS

July—Kathryn Bulluss, Dizzy Dowsett, Fran Sinclair, Anita Cooper, Janice Goodreid, Val Machin

August—Catherine Whyte, Lorraine Banks, Jennifer Shevak, Lynne Zillman Jones, Anne Fisher, Irene De Vere, Joyce Colclough, Lyn Inglis

September—Deirdre Elliott, Kim Keats, Lorraine Stone, Lorrae Johnson, Jennifer Promnitz, Dot Kunde, Jan McLaren, Tracy Casteleijn

October—Patricia Blaik, Carol Phillips, Joie Scheinpflug, Sam Morgan, Brenda Treasure, Marion Collins

November—Terri-Ann Howard, Liz Grimes, Trudy Thomas, Barbara Clyde, Carolyn Paul

December—Helen Gilmore-Walsh, MJ Hayes, Gloria Hollingworth, Libby Penny, Bev Milner, Sally Pabst Reeves



INTRODUCING NEW MEMBERS

Barbara Clyde, Deb Bratt,
Lynette Inglis, Janice Goodreid,
Gay Liddington, Maureen Gunn,
Susan Shepherd



POPPY SERVICE



Remember to notify your local RSL Sub Branch if you would like to have a Poppy Service or alternatively ensure you advise your family of your wishes.

Facebook — Combined Ex Service and Serving Women Australia

The *Combined Ex-Service and Serving Women Australia* is a very informative site on Facebook for ex-servicewomen and is independently administered by ex-service women. Ex service women from all over Australia have registered and make frequent posts providing interesting information, military photos and fun ditties.

To join, simply answer two questions relating to your service, and once the Administrator approves your request you will have unlimited access to other Combined Ex-Service Women Australia's members posts, photos and importantly all events that are coming up for numerous Associations throughout Australia.

Whilst this Facebook site is **not part of our Association**, the committee ensures that all events relating to the SCESWA are recorded on this site.

CURRENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE FOR 2024—25

Executive

President: Lorraine Houlihan, Phone: 0408 126 710, Email: president.sceswa@gmail.com

Vice President: Deirdre Elliott, Phone: 0408 222 592, Email: deirdre_colin@bigpond.com

Secretary: Jan Thorne, Phone: 0410 448 433, Email: thornejl@hotmail.com

Asst Secretary: Chris Birch, Phone 0403 905 023, Email: christinebirch52@gmail.com

Treasurer: Judi Taylor, Phone: 0430 597 836, Email: judimtaylor@gmail.com

Committee members

Health & Well-Being: Jan Thorne, Phone: 0410 448 433, Email: thornejl@hotmail.com

Events Co-ordinator: Deirdre Elliott, Phone: 0408 222 592, Email: deirdre_colin@bigpond.com

Membership Officer: Chris Birch, Phone 0403 905 023, Email: christinebirch52@gmail.com

Grants & Merchandise: Fran Sinclair, Phone: 0416 013 987, Email: fran@kandfspace.com

General Committee Members

Maggie Winduss
Dot Kunde

Newsletter

Editor: Lorraine Houlihan, Phone: 0408 126 710, Email: l.houlihan1@bigpond.com

Postal Address: Sunshine Coast Ex-Service and Serving Women's Assn Inc., PO Box 654, BUDDINA, Q 4575

Email: thornejl@hotmail.com

Members: Please note the email address for our Association.



BANKING DETAILS:

Name of the Account:

Sunshine Coast Ex-Service and
Serving Women's Association Inc.

Institution:

Auswide Bank

BSB: 645 646

Account Number: 102736405

Cheque made payable to:

Sunshine Coast Ex-Service and Serving
Women's Association Inc.

Forward to:

The Treasurer

PO Box 654, BUDDINA Q 4575

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP SUBS: \$15.00 per year

*Membership payments are Due **31 December** each year*

If you wish to pay by Internet Banking,
Remember to include payee reference: Please quote your
initial and Surname/Subs: e.g. JSmith/subs
Payments will be accepted at the Meeting or Coffee n
Catchup

CHANGE OF ADDRESS DETAILS

We are having a few Birthday cards and letters returned "NOT AT THIS ADDRESS". If you have moved address or changed your email or phone number, please notify our Membership Officer, Chris Birch on 0403 905 023. This will allow your Association to continue to provide you with updated information throughout the year.

SCESWA MEMORABILIA

SCESWA has three different types of Badges available to our members. We have Magnetic or Pin name badges. Please see Jan Thorne to arrange. Cost: Pin \$14.50, Magnetic \$16.00

Cloth badges are available from our Merchandise table. Cost is \$6.50

We also now have SCESWA Baseball Caps, \$22.00. Car Stickers, \$5.00. Note Books, Bags and Coffee Mugs

They may be purchased at all meetings and C n C and luncheon events. Fran will be happy to serve you.

New pieces of Merchandising to come.

DEADLINE FOR NEXT NEWSLETTER

Deadline for the next newsletter is **20 November 2025**

Every effort will be made to use all contributions, but it may not be in the next issue.

Please send all articles, clear photos and letters to the Editor at the association address or email Lorraine at l.houlihan1@bigpond.com. We look forward to members' input.

Disclaimer: All contributions are welcome. All care will be taken with material but no responsibility is assumed or accepted by the publisher or the SCESWA Inc.

