

W I D O W S ' N E W S

Queensland War Widows are Zooming!



The social isolation and loneliness that have resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic have led Australian War Widows Queensland (AWWQ) to 'think outside the box' for a way to connect its members.

Zoom video conferencing has become extremely popular for workplaces,

friends and families to stay connected and has certainly been embraced during these difficult times.

Although AWWQ was keen to use this technology, the challenge was that many members had limited computer skills or experience. Many also lacked confidence, and thought

that Zoom was not within their capabilities.

The AWWQ Zoom School proved them wrong.

AWWQ members who had a computer, tablet or smart phone and an email address were invited to enrol at 'Zoom School'.

Individual lessons conducted via phone, which were tailored to the skill level and technology available to each member, proved a wonderful success. All students were successfully able to use Zoom.

Lessons were conducted with patience, respect and encouragement. The number of lessons required varied with each individual and was decided by them. Pictorial tutorials for computers, tablets and smart phones were also created to further assist members.

AWWQ is now using Zoom on a regular basis to connect members from all over Queensland. Sub-branch committees have been able to share ideas and support each other. The 'Zoom Ladies' after-noon tea connects members for a regular chat over a cuppa.

Apart from helping with social isolation and enhancing communication, 'Zoom School' has instilled confidence in these women who have been able to have a go at this type of technology in a safe and supportive environment.

Coming soon: Facebook School.

Please contact Australian War Widows Queensland on 07 3846 7706 or email admin@warwidowsqld.org.au for further information.

Uni students do 'tele-placements'

War Widows NSW is supporting Western Sydney University's 2020 Counselling and Psychotherapy postgraduate students by offering them placements.

While the seven students are delighted to have the opportunity for a workplace placement during COVID-19, the partnership offers opportunities for both parties.

For example, the students are learning about a sub-group of older people who challenge their assumptions about gender and ageing.

The students tell us that they are privileged to hear tremendous stories that exemplify both the strength and courage of a War Widow.

In a non COVID-19 situation, students would typically engage with a client face-to-face but now they have to contact their clients by phone.

Among the new skills the students are learning is communication with older people. They are also hearing more about the context of becoming a War Widow.

E S O N E W S

tpifed.org.au

Australian Federation of Totally & Permanently Incapacitated Ex-Servicemen & Women

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Disabled in our Service – United in our Cause

Support our veterans' families – Become a Legatee

Legacy marked one of the most important events on its calendar – Legacy Week – from 30 August to 5 September.

But this year, the normal commemorative events and fundraising activities by Legacy's 45 clubs were put on hold because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Instead, activities largely focused on the virtual – with clubs posting to social media, promoting online fundraising activities, and holding events with their community via Zoom.

Legacy's volunteers, Legatees, are the organisation's backbone and provide localised support for military families doing it tough during times of isolation.

RAAF Warrant Officer Scott Biddell is a serving Legatee who says he always wanted to volunteer, quickly realising that Legacy would be the right fit – and the perfect extension to his Australian Defence Force service.

WOFF Biddell learned being a Legatee can involve a range of activities, from assisting with enrolment in Legacy and entitlement applications, organising fundraising initiatives, to helping with minor repairs to widows' homes.

Investing a little time into something meaningful and worthwhile is something that WOFF Biddell recommends for people who might be interested in volunteering for Legacy.

'It requires compassion, understanding and a willingness to put service before

self, and in whatever capacity, they make a worthy contribution to one of the longest-standing, most trusted and respected charities in the country,' he said.

Meeting likeminded people with interests in Defence and volunteering helped Group Captain David Glasson realise that Legacy was a great match.

GPCAPT Glasson says often the smallest things can provide the best support.

'A phone call or card on their birthday or at Christmas can mean so very much – sometimes these chats can bring up a welfare issue or area of concern that may require some more assistance,' he said.

To someone who might consider volunteering for Legacy, GPCAPT Glasson says it was one of the best things he has taken on.

'It is really such a small amount of effort for a huge reward and a sense of accomplishment. Legacy is a very supporting organisation and it is accommodating to how much time you have to give.'

Despite COVID-19, clubs are still looking for volunteers who can provide assistance remotely and support those in their care. If you are interested in becoming a Legatee you can find out more at www.legacy.com.au/Legatees and fill out an application form or call 1800 LEGACY (1800 534 229).