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# THE OBSERVATION POST

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**National Malaya & Borneo Veterans Association Australia Inc**  
South Australia & Northern Territory Branch

National Patron: General the Honourable Sir Peter Cosgrove AK AC(Mil) CVO MC (ret'd)  
SA/NT Branch Patron: Her Excellency the Honourable Frances Adamson AC, Governor of South Australia



## REMEMBRANCE DAY

This is Remembrance . . . this is the Honour Guard provided by No 604 Squadron AAFC, for a Remembrance Day service conducted by Endeavour College in Mawson Lakes on Friday 10 November, with Cadet Under Officer Jesse Isaac, the Catafalque Party Commander and School Captain (image courtesy of Endeavour College).

Our State President Paul Rosenzweig OAM JP, and Branch member Lawrence Ng, supported the Cadets in their role as officers in the Australian Air Force Cadets.

On the same day, 604 Squadron also supported the Remembrance Day assembly and commemoration at Modbury High School, as it has done for several years now. Cadet Warrant Officer Sukhmani Kaur was the Catafalque Party Commander.





## REMEMBRANCE DAY ADDRESS Modbury High School

### Squadron Leader (AAFC) Dennis Medlow No 604 Squadron, AAFC

Thank you for the opportunity to share with you some personal insights on this day.

I will admit, in past years I had found attending commemorations for Remembrance Day a bit confusing.

This is because I did not have anyone in my family – at least in recent times – that had served in the military. We were fortunate not to have lost any family member in conflict, so I was unsure what the remembrance part of the day was about.

It seemed that I had nothing to remember.

But on reflection this is probably not how I should have approached this day.

The first Remembrance Day – then called ‘Armistice Day’ – was held at Buckingham Palace in London to mark the end of hostilities in the first World War, the end of which was certainly worth commemorating as it left somewhere between 9 and 13 million people dead.

I suspect that the people at those first remembrance days had very real and raw memories of the previous four years of brutal warfare. Their lived experiences would no doubt have been vivid. Today however, no one is alive that experienced that horrendous period. The memories – the remembrance – of that conflict, is no longer personal.

Yet many nations continue the observation of Remembrance Day. Ceremonies like this one are being repeated over the next few days in France, the UK, New Zealand, Belgium, Canada and many other countries.

This is because this event retains its importance to people around the world, as well as here in Australia.

It exists now to honour those that serve in all conflicts, and provides us an opportunity to remember not only the people, but their purpose and the results of their sacrifices.

Since that original commemoration, Australians have been called to conflict many times as we have heard earlier this morning.

From the Second World War – where our nation was under direct threat and attack, to various conflicts in Asia – Korea, Malaya-Borneo, Vietnam, the Middle East.

And on to peacekeeping missions in Africa, the South Pacific and most recently in East Timor.

Many of these deployments resulted in some of our citizens leaving Australia – and never returning alive. The grim statistics are that over one hundred and three thousand names are recorded in the Australian War Memorial roll of honour. And for each of these, many more have been injured, often resulting in permanent impact to their lives.

I'm sure a great many of our citizens that had to endure these events – both personally and indirectly – had wished that they had not occurred in their time.



*Dr Dennis Medlow is a senior engineer who has been working to deliver Defence projects for over 35 years. In the AAFC, he is the national Head of Operations for Gliding and an aerospace instructor for 604 Squadron.*

We should also consider that for every one of those wounded or fallen, the impact goes far beyond the individual – there is almost always a mother or a father, a caregiver, a brother or sister, a partner or a child – that is also affected – and those people carried that burden for the term of their lives as well.

So this day provides us with a way to reflect upon the enormous human cost of the many conflicts that have occurred since that original armistice was signed in France 105 years ago.

To be clear, we are not here to glorify conflict, it is a failing of humankind that it is still unfortunately occurring far too often. Rather we are here to reflect on the sacrifice of those that have been forced to endure it, to participate in it, and for far too many, to lose their life in it.

In the end I reminded myself that I do in fact have personal connections to remember on this occasion. In recent years at our Squadron, we have had to farewell both a Cadet and a staff member who had lost their lives in tragic circumstances. That is my personal remembrance.

So, this morning, reflect on the impact of all these Australians – we might not know them or be able to remember them directly – but as a nation we acknowledge their contributions and we should think about what might have been if they had not been there. And most of all ensure that we can remember the lessons we have been taught from the past to make sure we avoid repeating the same mistakes in the future.

Thank you

Lest We Forget