

# London Legacy Newsletter

August 2023



*Torch bearers and Torch Relay organisers at Hyde Park Corner, Friday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2023.  
Photo: Csmith Photography*

# PRESIDENT'S GREETINGS

Dear friends and supporters,

In this bumper edition of the Legacy London newsletter we look back on the European and London legs of the Legacy Centenary Torch Relay 2023 presented by Defence Health.

I am also pleased to announce that our new Patron is His Excellency the Hon Stephen Smith who assumed the role of Australian High Commissioner to the United Kingdom earlier this year. We are very grateful for the support of His Excellency and were deeply honoured for his participation in London events commemorating Legacy's Centenary.

The Torch Relay is a six-month journey that started in Pozieres and will finish in Melbourne. Legacy was born in the trenches of Pozieres during WWI when a digger made a promise to his dying mate to "look after the missus and the kids". In 1923 returning WWI veterans established Legacy to honour this promise and the first club was based in Melbourne.

During the relay, the torch will cover 50,000 km and will be carried by approximately 1500 bearers who have a connection to Legacy or the Australian Defence Force community. The torch will visit all 46 clubs along its journey, including London which is the only Legacy Club outside Australia.

The Torch Relay pays tribute to the memory of those Australians who have given so much, as well as paying homage to the sacrifices made by their families. To put this into context, Legacy currently cares for 40,000 beneficiaries, mainly in Australia but also in the UK. This newsletter contains the stories of Angela Brient and Brianna Anderson and how Legacy has supported their families following the loss of a loved one. The relay is also a chance to acknowledge the more than 3400 legatees who continue to volunteer and care for the families of deceased or injured veterans. We have a small team of legatees here in London and I would like to personally thank them for everything they do.



*Route of the Torch Relay, Source Legacy Australia*



The Torch Relay started on 23<sup>rd</sup> April with a packed programme of events including:

- **Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> April:** Official opening ceremony at Pozieres
- **Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> April:** Anzac Day Services in France and London
- **Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> April:** The Last Post at the Menin Gate Memorial, Ieper Belgium
- **Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> April:** ANZAC Reception at Australia House in London
- **Friday 28<sup>th</sup> April:** Torch Relay in London
- **Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> April:** Legacy Centenary Ball

The torch was lit for the first time in Pozieres and traversed France and Belgium before crossing the channel to London where London Legacy was honoured to be the first Legacy Club to receive the torch. In an incredible last-minute surprise, His Majesty King Charles III watched as the torch was lit in the quadrangle at Buckingham Palace. The King also sent a congratulatory letter to Legacy and this is reproduced on the back page of this newsletter.

After an exciting programme of events in Europe and London, the torch was flown to Australia and landed in Albany before continuing its epic journey across Australia. It was from Albany, on 1<sup>st</sup> November 1914, that 38 troopships left carrying Australia's first contingent of soldiers to fight in WW1.

The Torch Relay and associated events took a phenomenal amount of planning and organising, and I would like to extend a big "thank you" to everyone who has contributed to making the events surrounding the London Leg of the relay truly memorable. The team organising the relay included Perfect Events which is the events company coordinating the Relay as a whole, as well as legatees from Legacy Australia and Legacy London. I would especially like to thank the following Legatees from London Legacy: Lieutenant Colonel Anthony Birch who coordinated logistics around the London Torch Relay, the ball committee headed by Marcus Ray and ably supported by Mark and Lisa Daley, and Sian Loftus and Tanya Briggs who assisted with accommodation arrangements and the reception following the relay. It was great to see how everyone worked together as a team and we should be very proud of being the first leg of the relay and for what we achieved. I would also like to express our appreciation to sponsors Defence Health, BAE Systems, Boeing, Lockheed Martin and Thales for their generous financial and non-financial support.

During October I will be attending the closing ceremony of the Torch Relay at the Shrine of Remembrance in my home town of Melbourne, and I look forward to reporting back to you all in our next newsletter.

*Wishing you and your families all the best.  
Yvonne Smith, President London Legacy*



*HM King Charles III speaking with HE the Hon Stephen Smith, Australian High Commissioner. Behind stand Brigadier Grant Mason and Eric Easterbrook, Chairman of Legacy Australia. Daniel Keighran VC looks on holding the torch.*

*Photo: Csmith Photography*

# EUROPEAN ACTIVITIES

*By Legatee Marcus Ray*

In April, I had the privilege of representing London Legacy in Europe, alongside Legatee Lieutenant Colonel Anthony Birch, as a torch bearer for the commencement of the Legacy Centenary Torch Relay 2023 Presented by Defence Health. I was based in Boston MA at the time, and so I first flew from the States to Paris (with a quick detour to London). Several trains later, I arrived in Amiens in northern France. Although it was nearing midnight and very dark, I walked around the city and passed the magnificent and imposing Amiens Cathedral. John Ruskin was a great admirer of the cathedral and wrote about it extensively; I had read some of his descriptions of it previously, and so it was exciting to see it in person for the first time.

The following day marked the first official event of the Legacy Australia Centenary Torch Relay. Donning my woefully water-unresistant torch bearer kit (evidently made for Australia and not the weather of Europe), I set out to a nearby hotel early in the morning. There I met the Perfect Events team and the Legacy Australia delegation, with whom I would spend most of the following few days. This included Legatee Birch, who had travelled down from London to play a special role in the opening ceremony. From there we drove to the Pozieres Memorial, which lists the names of close to 15,000 British and South African soldiers killed during the German's Spring Offensive. It is an impressive Lutyens memorial, with a beautiful gateway building, immaculately maintained landscaping and long colonnade walkways. The weather was befitting of the solemnity of the occasion; it was a chilly, overcast day, and soon it began to rain. This made it an even more sobering experience as we walked along the rows and rows of graves that make up the memorial.

After a brief run-through, the torch bearers (there were five or six of us) made our way to the front alongside the Legacy Australia and Perfect Events teams, some local representatives and a few curious tourists. There were about 30 of us in total. We were soon joined by the VIPs, including Gillian Bird (the Australian Ambassador to France) and Matt Thistlethwaite (the Assistant Minister for Veterans' Affairs). The Mayor of Pozieres, Monsieur Dominique Bierwald, welcomed attendees to the town.

The ceremony began with our very own Legatee Birch slowly marching into the memorial with the lit torch. A series of speeches were then delivered, followed by the Australian and French national anthems.

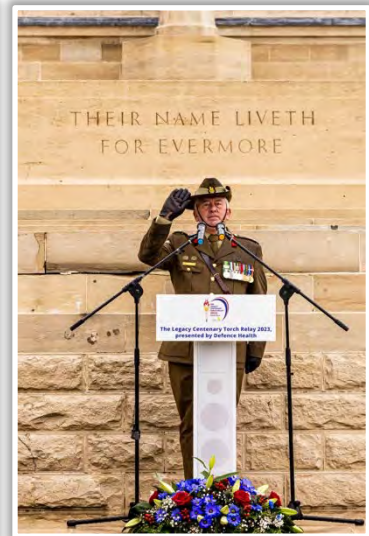
This was the cue for the torch bearers to sidle into position. We formed a human chain with Eric Easterbrook, Chairman of Legacy Australia, passing the torch on to another torch bearer, who turned and passed it onto another and then another until it reached me. I walked the torch the remainder of the way to the memorial's gateway, symbolising the relay's next pitstop in London. This concluded the formal segment of the ceremony. After some mingling and media interviews, we were whisked away to the Pozieres Town Hall where the village had prepared us lunch. I was still a bit jet-lagged, so I napped well into the evening when I returned to my Airbnb a few hours later. I joined the others, including Legatee Birch, for dinner and settled in afterwards for an early night.

No events were scheduled for the next day, and so I decided to spend some time travelling around the Somme. I revisited the Amiens Cathedral to see it in the daylight, and I then took a train to Albert on the recommendation of a friend. The small town boasts the wonderful Musee Somme, which is situated in an underground tunnel and is entirely dedicated to the Battle of the Somme. There were some illuminating accounts of Australia's involvement; these were accompanied by biographies of Diggers – many of them so terribly young – who had given their lives on the Somme. I left the museum with a better understanding of the horrific scale of the conflict and the toll it had taken on so countless innocent people. By the time I arrived back in Amiens it was nearing evening. The next day was ANZAC Day, and I had bought a ticket on a tourist shuttle to take me to the Australian National Memorial at an ungodly hour. I decided to settle in for another early night.





*A wet day at Pozieres. Photo: Csmith Photography*



*Left: Legatee Lieutenant Colonel Anthony Birch entering the Pozieres Memorial with the torch to commence the opening ceremony. Right: Colonel Scott Clingan. Photos: Csmith Photography*



*Top Left: Legatee Eric Easterbrook, Chairman of Legacy Australia. Bottom Left: Legatee Marcus Ray with Legatee Eric Easterbrook and Matt Thistlethwaite, the Assistant Minister for Veterans' Affairs. Right: Legatee Ray walking out of the Pozieres Memorial with the torch. Photos: Csmith Photography*

It was indeed an early wakeup – I do not remember the last time my alarm was set for 1:30am. I drearily got out of bed and trudged over in the rain to the local bus station. The other tourists, mostly Australians, were equally tired; many fell asleep on the bus to the memorial, which is very close to Villers-Bretonneux. But the early start was certainly worth it. I got a seat right up at the front of the memorial and, armed with croissants and coffee, spent several hours in quiet reflection as the commemorative service was carried out. It was certainly the most special, moving ANZAC Day ceremony I have attended. As dawn broke, the light filtered through the overcast sky and created a beautiful effect on the memorial tower. This was our cue to depart. After meeting up with the Legacy Australia team for a short service in the town of Villers-Bretonneux itself, I headed back to the memorial to explore its museum. It was very modern, engaging, and informative, and it is well worth a visit for anyone – Australian or otherwise – travelling in the area. Its chronicling of Australia's involvement in World War I was superb. The museum – along with my other experiences travelling around the Somme – made me really recognise the value of Legacy Australia's work, and how important it is that its mission continues undiminished as long as its services are needed. I then made my way to Corbie where I caught a train to Amiens, spending one final evening walking around the city.

The next morning, I travelled via Lille to Ypres in Belgium for the final commemorative event of the relay on mainland Europe. Ypres shares a special connection with Australia. Over 38,000 Australians were killed or wounded across the three battles of Ypres. The stone lions that guarded the famous Menin Gate in the Ypres ramparts now flank the entrance hall at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra. I checked into my hotel and treated myself to some nice Belgian waffles. I then met up again with Legacy Australia and Perfect Events representatives; we walked across town to Menin Gate for the daily Last Post Ceremony. Remarkably, the ceremony has been held in all weathers every evening since 1928, with only brief lapses during the Nazi occupation of Belgium in World War 2. The buglers even received special exemptions to carry out the tradition throughout the pandemic. The ceremony itself only lasted 20 minutes, but it was fantastic to see Legacy Australia well represented; several visiting Legatees participated in the event, carrying the lit torch and laying wreaths. Later that evening we headed to a hotel for some dinner and to reflect on the fantastic European leg of the torch relay. I caught the Eurostar early the following morning from Lille and arrived in London by lunchtime. This marked the end of my trip to mainland Europe. I was tired, overwhelmed, and contemplative of all that I had seen over the previous week. But I was equally excited for the very special few days in London ahead.



*A view of the Cross of Sacrifice at the Australian National Memorial before the ANZAC Day service began. Photo: Csmith Photography*





*Main photo: Legatee Eric Easterbrook holding the torch outside the Australian National Memorial at Villers-Bretonneux Military Cemetery. Other photos are scenes from the ANZAC Day service. Photos: Csmith Photography*



*Legatee Marcus Ray (third from right) with Legacy Australia representatives and the Perfect Events team at Menin Gate. Photo: Csmith Photography*



## ANZAC DAY 2023 – LONDON

Yvonne Smith, President of London Legacy attended the Dawn Service at Wellington Arch at Hyde Park Corner, the Wreath Laying Ceremony at the Cenotaph, and the Service of Commemoration and Thanksgiving at Westminster Abbey. HRH The Duke of Cambridge laid the first wreath at Wellington Arch. HRH The Duke of Gloucester laid the first wreath at the Cenotaph and attended the service at Westminster Abbey. Angela Brient and her family also laid wreaths at the Australian War Memorial at Hyde Park Corner.



*Left: Legatee Yvonne Smith at Australian War Memorial at Hyde Park corner. Top right: Wreaths laid by the Brient family at Australian War Memorial. Bottom right: Wreath laid by Legatee Smith at the Cenotaph.*



*Left: Service at the Cenotaph. Right: Tomb of the Unknown Warrior at Westminster Abbey with wreaths laid by HRH the Duke of Gloucester, as well as the Australian and New Zealand High Commissioners.*



## ANZAC DAY 2023 – HAREFIELD



Legatee Lindsay Birrell, former President of London Legacy, and Jenny Dunn (pictured) represented London Legacy at the ANZAC Day Service at St Mary's Harefield. ANZAC Day has been commemorated at Harefield every year since 1921. During WW1, an Australian couple living in Harefield offered their home to the Australian Military Authorities to be used as a convalescent hospital for ANZACs. The churchyard in St Mary's holds the graves of 112 ANZACs who were treated at that hospital.

## ANZAC DAY RECEPTION AT AUSTRALIA HOUSE

Representatives from Legacy were invited to the annual ANZAC Day Reception held at Australia House on the evening of Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> April. During the reception the Legacy Centenary Plaque was presented by the Chairman of Legacy Australia, Eric Easterbrook, to the Patron of Legacy London, to His Excellency the Hon Stephen Smith, Australian High Commissioner to the United Kingdom.



*Top left: HE the Hon Stephen Smith, Australian High Commissioner, and Brigadier Grant Mason.  
Top Right: Brigadier Mason, HE the Honourable Stephen Smith and Legatee Eric Easterbrook.  
Bottom left: Brigadier Mason with HE the Honourable Stephen Smith and Legatee Easterbrook.  
Bottom right: Legatee Lieutenant Colonel Anthony Birch, Legatee Eric Easterbrook, HE the Hon Stephen Smith and Melbourne Legatee Ken Tsiringotis.*

*Photo Credits: Csmith Photography*



# LONDON TORCH RELAY LAUNCH - BUCKINGHAM PALACE

The Legacy Centenary commemorative torch was lit at Buckingham Palace in the presence of His Majesty King Charles III, marking the official start of the London leg of the Torch Relay. The Patron of London Legacy His Excellency the Honourable Stephen Smith, Australian High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, was also in attendance.

The King received a commemorative torch as a gift and spent time chatting with those present – including Australian Victoria Cross recipient Corporal Daniel Keighran; 101 year-old WWII widow and great-grandmother Mary Nicholson who told the King how valuable Legacy had been to her family; and widow Angela Brient with her four children.

Buckingham Palace was a fitting location for the relay to commence. Mr Eric Easterbrook, Chairman of Legacy Australia observed "We've got a long history associated with the palace; the King's late father was an honorary Legatee of Sydney Legacy and the connection has been there for many, many years". The King also sent a congratulatory letter to Legacy.



*The King greeting HE the Hon Stephen Smith, Australian High Commissioner; torch bearers, beneficiaries, Legatees and other participants in the Quadrangle at Buckingham Palace.*

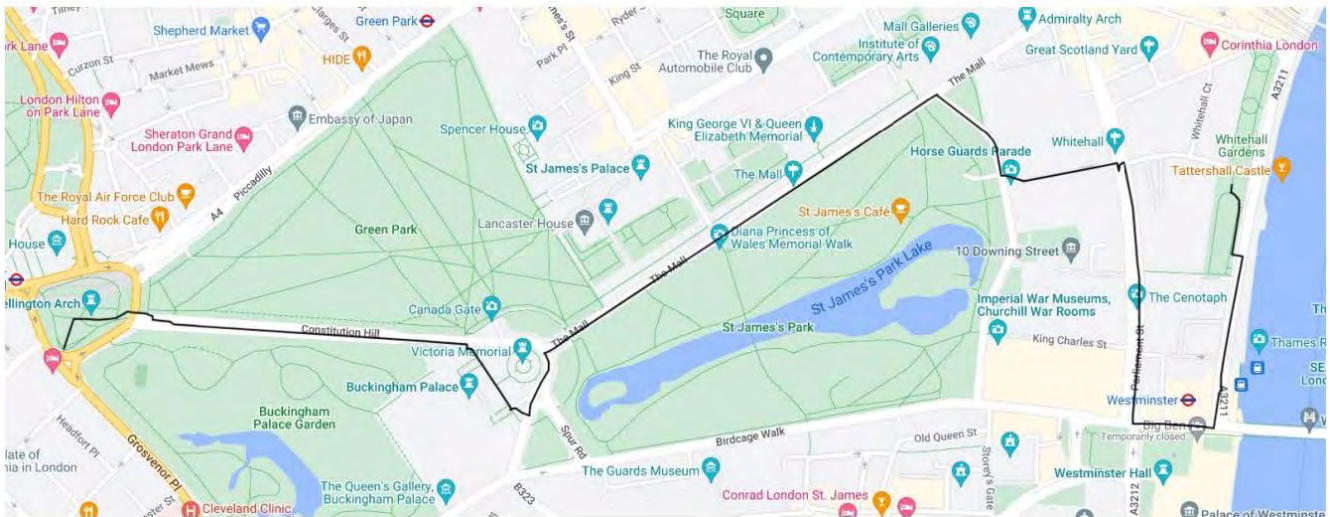
*Photos: Csmith Photography*



# LONDON TORCH RELAY AND CEREMONY

Following the launch of the Torch Relay at Buckingham Palace, the torch began its journey through the streets of London held proudly aloft by torch bearers and flanked by representatives from each of the Royal Australian Navy, the Australian Regular Army and the Royal Australian Air Force.

The relay began at the General Charles Gordon Statue in the Victoria Embankment Gardens and travelled through the streets of London on the way to the Australian War Memorial at Hyde Park Corner, with the torch weaving its way past iconic London landmarks.



The Met Police cordoned off roads so that the Torch Relay could proceed unchallenged, the Mall was decked with flags, a band accompanied the torch from Horse Guards and the streets were lined with crowds who were starting to gather in advance of the Coronation - all contributing to an electrifying atmosphere as the torch passed.

'Torch kisses' (where the flame is passed from the torch to the next) were held at the Iraq and Afghanistan Memorial, Big Ben, the Cenotaph, Horse Guards, the Mall, Buckingham Palace, and Constitution Hill before the torch was carried by the Brient family through Wellington Arch at Hyde Park Corner where it was met at the Australian War Memorial by Eric Easterbrook, Chairman of Legacy Australia, and Legatee Lieutenant Colonel Anthony Birch.

Torch bearers included Legatees, beneficiaries and their families, and representatives of the companies generously sponsoring the Torch Relay: Defence Health, Thales, BAE Systems, Boeing and Lockheed Martin.



*Eric Easterbrook, Chairman of Legacy Australia, cuts the ribbon and officially declares the London Relay open. Looking on is the first torch bearer, Brianna Anderson.  
Photo: Csmith Photography*



## TORCH BEARERS



*Left to right, starting top left: Brianna Anderson, Celia Trevor, Nik Smith representing Lockheed Martin, the representative from BAE Systems, Linda and Megan Kaye, Issac Wrighter, Legatee Paul Wrighter and family, Legatees Paul Wrighter and Captain Calum Hutcheson.*

*Photos: Csmith Photography*



## TORCH BEARERS (Continued)



*Left to right, starting top left: the band approaching Buckingham Palace, Mick Richens representing Boeing holding torch aloft, Mick Richens in front of Buckingham Palace, Daniel Keighran VC representing Thales, Joanne Kadlecik CEO Defence Health, Brient family on Constitution Hill and in front of Wellington Arch, Brient family deliver the torch to Legatees Eric Easterbrook and Lieutenant Colonel Anthony Birch.*

*Photos: Csmith Photography*



## THE TORCH IN LONDON



*Photos: Csmith Photography*



## THE TORCH IN LONDON (Continued)



*Photos: Csmith Photography*



# TORCH RELAY MEMORIAL CEREMONY

The London leg of the Torch Relay concluded with a Memorial Ceremony at the Australian War Memorial at Hyde Park Corner, followed by a drinks reception. VIPs in attendance included: Brigadier Grant Mason representing our Patron the Australian High Commissioner; Her Excellency the Honourable Dr Jeanette Young AC PSM, Governor of Queensland, and her husband, Professor Graeme Nimmo (who are both patrons of the Legacy Club of Brisbane); and the then Lord Mayor of Westminster, Hamza Taouzzale.

The torch was received at the Australian War Memorial by Legatee Eric Easterbrook, Chairman of Legacy Australia, along with Legatee Lieutenant Colonel Anthony Birch who was also the excellent emcee for the afternoon. We were blessed with a warm, sunny afternoon and guests at the Memorial Ceremony listened to speeches by the Lord Mayor; the President of London Legacy; and the CEO of major sponsor Defence Health Jo Kadlecik. The Legacy Ode was read by London Legacy Club Secretary, Legatee Marcus Ray, and the Ode was recited by Brigadier Grant Mason, followed by a minute's silence. The Ceremony concluded with the National Anthems of the United Kingdom and Australia.



*Top Left: Legatees Easterbrook and Birch wait for the Brient family to deliver the torch. Top right: Legatees Easterbrook and Birch light the lantern. Bottom left: Commander Adam Sharp, RAN and Michelle Sharp. Bottom Right: Legatee Yvonne Smith, Lord Mayor's guest, Lord Mayor Hamza Taouzzle, Legatee Easterbrook, the Governor of Queensland and Professor Graeme Nimmo.*

*Photos: Csmith Photography*





*Top: Guests at the Torch Ceremony. Middle Left: The Last Post. Middle Right: Lieutenant Colonel Anthony Birch and Brigadier Grant Mason. Bottom Left: Imogen Spendlove who sang the National Anthems. Bottom Right: Members of the ADF.*

*Photos: Csmith Photography*



## TORCH RECEPTION

At the drinks reception following the Torch Relay Memorial Ceremony, guests were serenaded as they entered with music performed by Rodders Lockwood on the grand piano. The reception was emcee'd by Legatee Marcus Ray and there were more speeches, including one by Brianna Anderson, whose recount of how Legacy helped her family when she lost her father at an early age evoked a very emotional response from attendees. The Torch was officially presented by Eric Easterbrook, Chairman of Legacy Australia, to the Legacy Club of London and the Governor of Queensland was presented with a box of collectable Legacy pins before guests settled in to enjoy a selection of canapes and drinks. It was then back home to enjoy a good nights' rest before the ball on the following evening.



*Top: Guests at the reception. Clockwise from middle left: Legatee Easterbrook, Legatee Smith and Brigadier Mason with the Torch presented to London Legacy, Legatee Easterbrook addressing the reception; Legatee Marcus Ray emcee'ing; Members of the ADF; the Governor of Queensland with Legatee Eric Easterbrook; Jenny Dunn with Legatee Lindsey Birrell.*

*Photos: Csmith Photography*



# LEGACY CENTENARY BALL

*By Legatee Marcus Ray*



*The table settings and ballroom at the Lansdowne Club. Photos: Csmith Photography*

The Legacy Centenary Ball was the grand finale of the Torch Relay's brief stopover in London. 142 guests gathered in the beautiful ballroom at the Lansdowne Club in Mayfair to commemorate the centenary of Legacy Australia and celebrate our special community.

Among the guests were London Legacy Legatees and beneficiaries; friends of the charity; members of the visiting Legacy Australia delegation; various sponsors of the European leg of the relay; and a large contingent of Australians in London – or those with some other connection to Down Under – eager to support a worthy cause.

We were also very honoured to be joined by several special guests. Her Excellency the Honourable Dr Jeannette Young AC PSM, Governor of Queensland, delivered a toast to the King while the Honourable Dr. Brendan Nelson AO gave a moving oration in which he articulated the force for good this charity can accomplish. Also in attendance were Andrew Rosindell MP and Brigadier Grant Mason, representing our Patron the Australian High Commissioner. Legatee Calum Hutchinson did a splendid job serving as the Master of Ceremonies.



*Top left to right: Legatee Marcus Ray, Legatee Captain Calum Hutchesson with Lauren Botje, Legatees Lisa and Mark Daley. Bottom left to right: Christine Blair, Tanya Briggs, Megan and Linda Kay. Photos: Csmith photography*



## LEGACY CENTENARY BALL (Continued)



*Left: Standing for the loyal toast which was proposed by the Governor of Queensland. Right: The Brient Family bidding in the silent auction. Photos: Csmith Photography*

The evening was a roaring success. It began with a cocktail reception; guests lined up to pose with a relay torch and were treated to the brilliant musical talent of Rodders Lockwood, a friend of London Legacy. Dinner soon followed. Guests listened to several speeches – including one from our President, Yvonne Smith – as entrees, mains, and desserts were served. The meals were a fitting culinary tribute to the ties London Legacy shares with both the UK and Australia; there was River Tweed hot smoked salmon to start the evening, Australian Wagyu beef that followed, and peach melba for dessert.

Just before dessert, Angela Brient delivered a very special, stirring speech, discussing her own experiences with Legacy Australia and the ways in which the charity has assisted her and her family. Her story is found elsewhere in this newsletter. Many tears were shed as Angela highlighted the importance of the charity's mission and its enduring legacy found in the lives of the countless people it has supported.

The speeches by Angela and Dr. Nelson helped boost the silent auctions we had arranged for the guests. Items included a commemorative relay torch, Legacy bears and other memorabilia, a copy of Dr. Nelson's autobiography, a tour of parliament gifted by Andrew Rosindell MP, and several boxes of wines, among others. These items were well received. Together with a 'guess the number of pins in the jar' contest, fundraising activities on the night ended with several thousand pounds collected for the charity. These funds will be of great use to London Legacy as we seek to continue our mission undiminished.

Once dinner had concluded, tables were cleared and the party began. The Original Rabbit Foot Spasm Band, who have entertained us at previous London Legacy balls, put on a fantastic show. They performed a mix of jazz hits – a blend of contemporary and older songs, and some of their own – which enticed attendees onto the lively dance floor.

Before we knew it, it was midnight and remaining guests shuffled out of the Lansdowne Club. After many months of planning, we are content that the event went well and that people enjoyed themselves. Most of all, we are excited to have reconnected with our London Legacy family and the wider Australian community. See you at the next ball!



*The Hon. Dr Brendan Nelson AO and Mick Richens, both from Boeing.  
Photo: Csmith Photography*





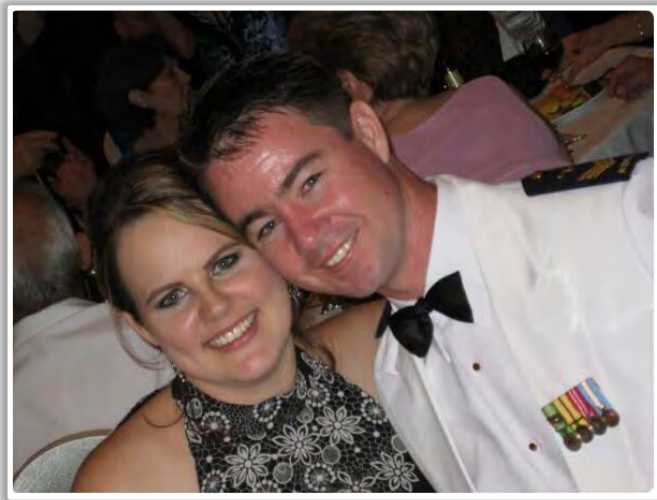
*Top Left: Legatee Tanya Briggs with Melbourne Legatee Ken Tsiringotis. Top Right: Angela Brient and Legatee Tanya Briggs with our pianist for the evening Rodders Lockwood. Middle Left: A London Legacy table. Middle Right: Legatee Mark Daley with Megan and Linda Kaye. Bottom Left: Gloria Wilkinson, Legatee Paul Wrighter and Christine Blair. Bottom Right: Legatee Captain Calum Hutcheson, our emcee.*



# ANGELA BRIENT'S LEGACY STORY

How do you tell your children – four precious children under the age of 11 – that their Dad has died? That he has taken his life because he could no longer cope with the physical and mental torment that had become his reality? That was the impossible question Angela Brient asked herself in the wake of the shocking passing of her beloved husband, Terry: a proud RAAF Sergeant who devoted 22 years of his life in service to his country.

## Terry was Angela's first love.



Angela describes Terry as "...an absolutely devoted father" and "the most even-tempered man around". He was someone who loved a laugh, and who would welcome people into his circle with open arms. "That was Terry", Angela says with pride. "No one had a bad word to say about him."

They met when Angela had just finished Year 12 and was preparing to move to New Zealand to study medicine at University. Terry, then a Leading Aircraftman, was a Communications Electronics Technician with the RAAF 1CCS Squadron, based at Richmond in Sydney.

After a 12-month long-distance relationship, Angela moved to Sydney to take up university studies in Advanced Biology. Just two weeks later, Terry left Australia for his first deployment to East Timor which was a frightening and uncertain time for Angela.

An Operational Deployment would interrupt the couple again only months after they married in Perth in 2004, when Terry was deployed to the Middle East Area of Operations. Angela would later discover that she had been two weeks' pregnant

with their first child when she tearfully farewelled her husband on that deployment.

**The couple's first born, Mirai, would be joined over the next four years by Nic, Conner and Annabelle.**

Like so many Defence Force families, Angela, Terry and their children moved often. From Perth, it was on to Canberra, then Sydney, Malaysia, Darwin and finally Adelaide. It was from Adelaide that Terry left on his third and final deployment on Australia Day 2016.

Tragically, while on his third deployment, Terry suffered a severe injury to his neck and spine. Angela struggles to talk about what followed. "The Terry who came back in June 2016 was a different person to the Terry who left," is as best as she can explain it. "He was quite incapacitated due to his injury. He could walk – with difficulty – but was in constant pain. He couldn't even hug the kids because it hurt. It was just so demoralising for him."

It was not just the spinal injury that was causing Terry so much grief. "Other things were definitely getting harder," Angela recalls. "Things he had witnessed on that last deployment – those memories triggered depression. I would say he was in torment."

**On 31 July 2017, this courageous member of the Australian Defence Force took his life.**

Angela describes this time as "Devastating - At the time I was in a real fog: just managing to put one foot in front of the other".

Angela was desperately worried about the children and how they were coping. Desperately worried about finances. "Those first five or six months were just a blur," she says with brutal honesty. "I mean, I know what happened, but I don't remember how I felt. I lost 16 kilos in two or three months..."

It was only a matter of weeks after the family lost Terry that Angela was first put in touch with Legacy. Through those most challenging months and beyond, Angela's Legatee, Steve, was by the family's side: ensuring that Legacy could help ease the burden wherever possible, and help Angela claim her rightful entitlements. Through Steve, Legacy could offer constant family support, and



help the children on their road to healing through Legacy Youth Camps. Angela describes Steve as 'a Godsend'. "I honestly don't know what I would have done without Legacy during that time."

### **A new life in Scotland – in Angela's words**

When I first agreed to let Legacy share my story it was because I was blown away by the support they offered me, particularly in those first few months. They handled all the DVA paperwork, they facilitated the updating of my will, they organised psychology appointments for myself and the children, they invited my children to family day events and the annual children's camp. I was so overwhelmed with the tragedy and change in my life that I was suddenly faced with; having someone come in and take some of those responsibilities off my plate was a blessing I never expected to need.

But the support didn't stop there. As time went on I no longer needed the immediate administrative assistance, and I grew confident in my new role as a widow and solo parent. But even though my needs changed, the support didn't stop, it adapted with me. My children received educational grants, I was offered opportunities to engage with other widows who could relate to my circumstance, we attended family events and when I relocated thousands of kilometres, Legacy provided assistance and support where they were able.

So of course, when the opportunity came for me to move to Scotland to study for a PhD, I was keen to share the news with my Legatees Steve and Angie (although Steve was my official Legatee, his wife

Angie was also a Legatee for Legacy, so I always felt like I got two for the price of one). And wouldn't you know it? But they told me that Legacy had a London branch that looked after Beneficiaries in the UK. It was indeed good news.

I emailed then President of Legacy London, Simon Kleinig, and was immediately welcomed with enthusiasm and support. I was told my new Legatee would be Sian Loftus and that if I needed anything, from white goods to a place to stay if I needed it, it could be arranged. I just had to let them know.

On arrival, the welcome has been just as warm. I have travelled to London twice now to meet and share experiences with other widows and Legatees. Our new President Yvonne Smith also came to Scotland to visit and we spent two days exploring and getting to know each other.

Financially, Legacy London also does what it can. My PhD research, *The risk of suicide following a severe injury* (chosen specifically because of my husband's experience), is completely self-funded. However, with four children to arrange and the rising cost of living, Legacy London has recognised this and offered support towards educational expenses for myself and the children, as well as contributions towards household bills.

This ongoing dedication, support and camaraderie is the reason I continue to volunteer my time and my story whenever Legacy asks. I would not be where I am today without their support.



*Angela and family at home in Scotland and waiting to leave from the hotel for the Torch Relay*



## BRIANNA ANDERSON'S LEGACY STORY



*Telling my story at the Torch Relay Reception.  
Photo: Csmith Photography*

My name is Brianna Anderson and this is my Legacy Story. Before I was born my Dad, Richard Anderson, served in the Australian Army for over 21 years which included 4.5 years with the SAS Regiment. I believe that joining the SAS was his dream as he always wanted to be the 'ultimate soldier'. Dad was someone who was committed to helping others, so after his time in the Army he joined the Queensland Police Service in Brisbane while remaining in the Army Reserves at Enoggera until he was medically discharged.

When I was in grade one, Dad was devastatingly diagnosed with early onset dementia due to a military related concussion. A couple of months after Dad was diagnosed, we moved to Bundaberg for family support. The first time Legacy came into our lives was when they helped my sister Rachael and I with our schooling. We were so young, I was in Grade 6 and Dad was already in a nursing home due to his ongoing decline.

Unfortunately, Dad's speech was affected very early on and this made things really hard for my family. Mum has a video of me when I was just 10 years old, helping Dad to remember my name and then trying to get him to say it back to me. He could only remember four of his six children's names, and mine was not one of them.

After completing my year twelve studies in 2013, I chose to defer my university studies and give myself some precious time with my Dad. I was with my beautiful Dad as he took his last breath. I was only 17 years old.

Losing Dad was the hardest thing that has ever happened in my life. He was young and in his prime and he had everything taken from him. He

was such an energetic and fun, loving man. It upsets me to know that I will not have my Dad there to walk me down the aisle on my wedding day and he will not be there to meet his future grandchildren.

As you can imagine, it was so hard growing up with a parent having dementia. Some of the memories I have of my Dad include helping mum clean up the house after Dad had accidentally left the taps on again and flooded a few rooms, me feeding him his lunch in a recliner chair at the nursing home trying to make sure he didn't choke on his food, and helping him walk around the nursing home to keep his mobility in check for as long as possible. That is how I spent my weekends in high school, not going outside and kicking a footy with my Dad or going on adventures with my Dad like my school friends did. My school formal photos with my Dad consist of me sitting next to him in his nursing home bed trying anything and everything to keep him awake long enough to catch a photo with his eyes open – let alone a smile.

When I was helping to care for my Dad, Legacy was there to help care for me. I am very thankful for being sent on yearly Legacy Youth Camps because it gave me an awesome holiday with other kids in similar circumstances, and I have forged lifelong friendships from these camps. The camps meant we could connect on a different level to our other friends and could support each other when and where necessary. We had all either lost a parent or had a parent living with a serious injury or illness – Legacy was there supporting each of us.

I commenced university, the year after Dad passed away - Legacy financially supported me and are still doing so today as I am studying a dual degree of a Bachelor of Nursing and a Bachelor of Paramedic Science.

In 2015, I became a Legacy Brisbane Youth Leader, and I have attended leadership retreats and development sessions to make me the best leader and role model I can be. In this role I have also been able to attend multiple youth camps and be a mentor for the younger Legacy kids. Some of the stories they have told me are so heartbreaking and overwhelming, but I am glad I can be there for them as I have been through the heartbreak and hard times that they are experiencing. I am there to be the shoulder they can cry on (most of the time I end up crying too), to pick them up when they're



feeling down, to help them celebrate the good things in life, but most importantly to have fun with them while they have a break from their home lives.

On ANZAC Day 2017, I was selected to be the first Brisbane Legacy Youth Ambassador, an award named after General Sir Stanley Savige, a famous Australian commander in both World Wars, who was heavily involved in the establishment of the Legacy movement in 1923. This is definitely one of my greatest achievements in life so far and I know that Dad would be so proud to see me serve as Ambassador for an organization that helped our family both during his decline and since he passed.

In July 2016, I was chosen as one of the 75 Legacy Youth Australia wide to attend a Pozieres 100 Year Anniversary Study Tour of France and Belgium. On this trip, I was able to visit the resting places of my relatives and pay my respects to the numerous brave soldiers who had sacrificed their lives, soldiers just like my Dad.

In September 2017, I completed the Kokoda Trail as part of a 75th Anniversary Trek with 22 Legacy Youth and 17 ADF Personnel. It was an absolutely incredible trip and another once in a lifetime experience that Legacy has given me. I am so thankful that I was chosen to go to Papua New Guinea to complete the gruelling trek. Not only was the trek physically challenging, but it was also emotionally and mentally challenging. We trekked on Father's Day, and Dad was never far from my mind during the trek, as just thinking about the fact that he did stuff like this for a living made me feel closer to him and his military service. All of these experiences have helped me understand the sacrifices that soldiers - like my Dad - have made for us.

In November 2017, Legacy gave me and 4 other Youth Leaders the opportunity to jump out of the back of a C-17A Globemaster, along with 180 skydivers from all over Australia, as part of an effort to raise much needed funds for Legacy. This was absolutely amazing. One of Dad's favourite things to do when he was in the SAS was parachuting, and I can now see why he loved jumping out of 'perfectly good aeroplanes'.

In December 2018, Legacy sponsored me to climb aboard a Young Endeavour Youth Voyage. Learning how to sail from Navy personnel, climbing the mast and trying to shower while the ship was on a 30-degree angle was amazing. In January 2019, I was selected as a volunteer youth leader on the Legacy Perth Summer Camp, which goes

for 10 days and is run by SAS men and women! It makes my heart happy, to know that I am giving back to Legacy and supporting the Legacy children of today.

On ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day each year, I proudly wear my Dad's medals, in memory of him - in memory of the staunch military man that he was, and would still be if he didn't get that horrible, debilitating and life ending condition.

I would like to thank you for taking time to read my Legacy Story and hope it gives you a greater understanding of what Legacy is and what Legacy does for families like my own, and why we need and deeply appreciate your ongoing support.



*Wearing Dad's medals at the Cenotaph, ANZAC Day 2023*



## OUR STAY AT THE VICTORY SERVICES CLUB

Out of town Legatees and beneficiaries stayed at the Victory Services Club for the Torch Relay events, and several guests joined us for dinner on the evenings of 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> April. It was a wonderful opportunity to spend time getting to know one another and the photos show how much fun we had.

At a dinner on the first evening, Legatee Yvonne Smith made two presentations: one was a certificate of appreciation given to Legatee Mark Daley for his service as a past President of London Legacy. Cathlyn Davidson recently stood down as a Legatee and a small gift was given to her in recognition of her many years of dedicated service. On the second evening, we celebrated the birthday of Linda Kaye.



*Top Left: The Briant Family and Legatee Captain Calum Hutcheson waiting to leave for the start of the Relay. Top Right: Legatees Mark Daley and Yvonne Smith. Bottom Left: Cathlyn Davidson. Bottom Middle: Legatee Mark Daley, Christine Blair and Legatees Tanya Briggs, Lisa Daley and Linday Birrell on their way to the Palace. Bottom Right: Megan and Linda Kaye on their way to the Centenary Ball.*



# CARRY ON A PROUD TRADITION: BECOME A LEGATEE

London Legacy is looking for new Legatees to help support the families of those who have sacrificed so much for Australia. This is a wonderful opportunity for those seeking to make a meaningful contribution to the lives of others.

Legatees – which is what we call our volunteers – are mature members of society with practical life skills and a strong sense of community spirit and service.

We will assign you to one or more Legacy beneficiaries, who is usually a widow or family of a veteran, so that you can provide them with support and companionship. We endeavor to ensure that none of our beneficiaries suffer socially or financially from the loss of life or health of their loved one.

Each beneficiary's circumstances differ. But you, as a Legatee, will be called on to check-in on your beneficiary regularly, to listen to them, and to assess what level of support is required.

Volunteering for London Legacy is not a time-intensive commitment. Legatees give as much, or as little, of their time as is practical and possible. Even an hour a week can help.

There are other ways you can help out our club, too. We are also looking for volunteers to help us with our quarterly newsletter, to manage our social media presence, or to assist with governance.

If you are interested, please visit the Legacy Australia website ([legacy.org.au](http://legacy.org.au)) and email [yvonne.smith@londonlegacy.org](mailto:yvonne.smith@londonlegacy.org).



*Some of the London Legacy legatees.  
Photos: Csmith Photography except for top and bottom left*





## BUCKINGHAM PALACE

I am delighted to be able to congratulate Legacy Australia on its centenary anniversary this year. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank, and pay tribute to, the staff, partners, supporters and particularly the 'Legatees' who work so hard to support Australian veterans and their families. I know that many Legatees are veterans themselves, but all are committed to upholding Legacy's proud traditions and Spirit of Service and Care for future generations.

I would also like to pay tribute to Legacy's beneficiaries. Their sacrifice, whether through personal service or the loss of the life or health of a loved one, will never be forgotten.

My wife joins me in sending you our warmest good wishes for a memorable and enjoyable programme of commemorative events and every possible success to those participating in the Centenary Torch Relay to mark this most special anniversary.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Charles R.', with a long, horizontal flourish underneath.