

PRE EVENT CHECK-LIST

- Secure the time & location
- Confirm an MC, speakers to read address, ode etc.
- Confirm memorial area, plaque or dedicated location to lay wreaths
- Prepare event equipment needs (below)
- Prepare marketing & signage (attached)
- Invite local members of parliament, council representatives, school leaders, animal organisation representatives, board, sub-branch (attached)
- Promote event to local community (social media, website, what's on guide, local media publications)
- Order wreaths
- Organise bugler/bag pipes
- Organise photograph/videographer
- Allocate roles to staff (manage VIPs/Guests, Event Staff, Fundraiser)
- Confirm post ceremony catering (if required)

If held off-site

- Secure relevant council permits
- Advise club neighbours

EQUIPMENT LIST

- Chairs for delegates
- Speakers/Microphone/AV/Lectern
- Wreaths or flower arrangements
- Fundraising boxes



SCRIPT

Good Morning, my name [NAME]. I am the [ROLE/TITLE/ORGANISATION]

I'd like to begin by acknowledging the Traditional Owners of the land on which we meet today, the [NAME OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS AND LAND] and pay my respects to Elders past and present.

Welcome to:

- [DELEGATES]

- [DELEGATES]

Thank you to leaders from [SCHOOL NAMES] attending today.

Apologies from [NAMES OF THOSE UNABLE TO ATTEND]

A-WAM-O is a volunteer not-for-profit group, with the aim to recognise the deeds of animals during service and to educate generations to follow the sacrifices they have made.

They have far extended their charter, to not only support animals that serve, but also others who have been victims of conflict.

A-WAM-O have been an integral part of helping us hold this memorial today.



Today, 24th February is the National War Animal Day for War Animals in Australia, 'Purple Poppy Day'. We wear a purple poppy and take the time to think about not only the soldiers who gave their lives in war, but also to spare a thought for the four-legged and winged heroes that have fought and died alongside our troops.

We also recognise the deeds and sacrifices of those currently serving, like our friends who have joined us today. We honour the working horses and dogs that serve on our own shores, not just in military but also in the police & border force services.

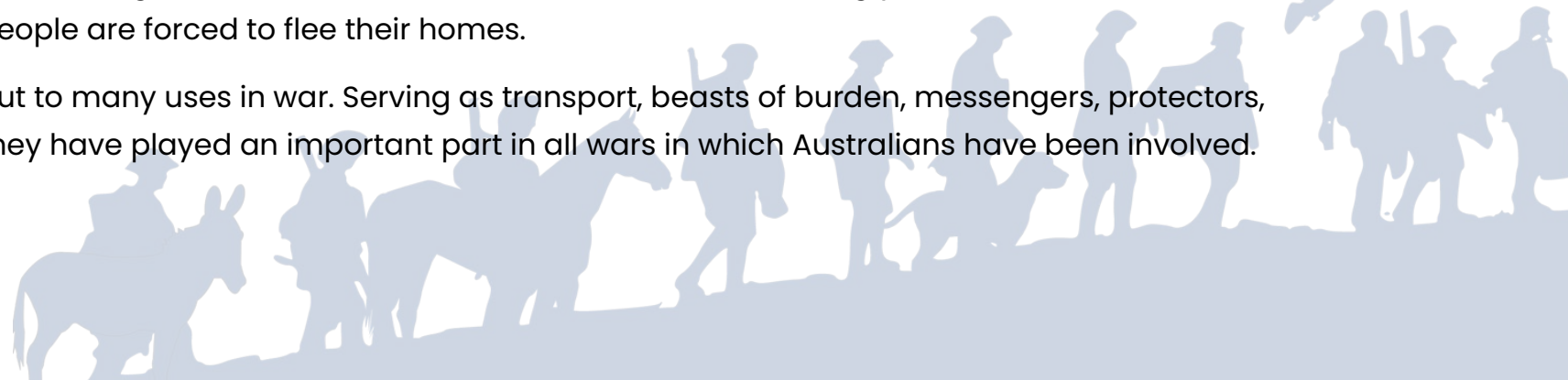
Today also provides the opportunity for us to consider the impact that conflict has had on animals around the world.

It is estimated that more than 8 million animals died in WWI alone: 400,000 horses left our Australian shore - only one was allowed to return home. 20,000 dogs, 200,000 pigeons, camels, mules, donkeys and even insects all played their part in battle.

During the Vietnam War, the use of Agent Orange destroyed the habitats for Elephants, Asian Tigers, Civets, Leopards, and other species causing their extinction in this area. At least 40,000 animals were killed by landmines for the 20 years that followed.

The current war in Ukraine has affected millions of animals. From wildlife to beloved pets, many animals have died and even more remain starving, traumatised, or in dire need of care. Devastatingly, thousands of animals have had to be left behind as people are forced to flee their homes.

Animals have been put to many uses in war. Serving as transport, beasts of burden, messengers, protectors, mascots, and pets. They have played an important part in all wars in which Australians have been involved.





Military Working Dogs are trained for specific jobs, including tracking, explosive detection, patrol, search & rescue, and attack. In the throes of combat, war dogs proved their intelligence, courage, and steadfast loyalty time and time again. Most importantly, they offered comfort and companionship on war's brutal battlefields.

WWII hero Smoky, became the first war dog to be honoured with Distinguished Service Medal in the USA. The medal is the highest award American animals can receive. Found in an abandoned foxhole in New Guinea, the Yorkshire Terrier spent two years backpacking through the jungle with troops. She slept in their tents and shared their rations. Smoky participated in 12 air-sea rescue and photo reconnaissance missions. She survived 150 air raids on New Guinea and made it through a typhoon on Okinawa. She was credited for saving lives of others by warning the soldiers of incoming fire.

Donkeys were in constant demand to carry supplies to the frontline.

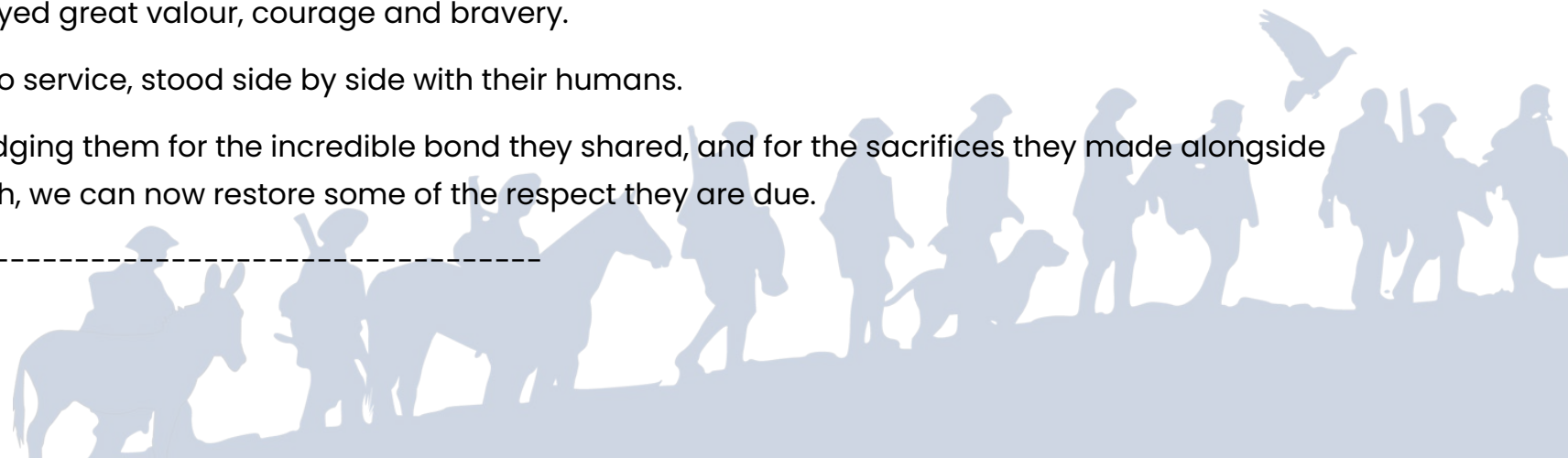
The homing ability and navigational skills of carrier pigeons saw them used during the First and Second World Wars. Some were even awarded medals for gallantry.

On our own shores, many agencies still use animals like to perform duties in our police and border force, such as patrols, special operations, parades & escorts. Our police Dogs are amongst the best trained in the world, crucially important in the detection of drug, firearms/explosives and human remains.

These animals displayed great valour, courage and bravery.

They were drafted into service, stood side by side with their humans.

By all of us acknowledging them for the incredible bond they shared, and for the sacrifices they made alongside those they served with, we can now restore some of the respect they are due.





It is important to bring your attention to the fact that there is currently no Department of Veterans Affairs waiting to support our war dogs when they retire. Because of their age, the families who take on these dogs are unable to take out pet insurance to help with the costs of his veterinary care.

A-WAM-O has a program in place to financially help and support these veteran Australian Military Working Dogs, like Manic. Funds raised by the charity are used to purchase medication, cover veterinary treatments, supply comfort aids and assist with end-of-life expenses. There remains around 20 Military Working Dogs (MWD) that have deployed multiple times to Afghanistan that are either still in service or recently retired. 11 have given the ultimate sacrifice, killed in Afghanistan protecting our troops.

Veteran of the Vietnam War & Cronulla RSL Sub-Branch Senior Vice President Paul Zaat, during his time in service found himself passionately writing poetry, mostly to document the experiences of the brave men of the 8th Infantry Battalion.

He wrote this poem, in honour of the Cronulla local retired military working dog, Manic.

[NAME OF READER] will now read the official A-WAM-O War Animal Poem.

[NAME OF CLUB DELEGATES] will place wreaths on the memorial.

Representatives of other organisations and people with personal tributes are welcome to lay a wreath at the conclusion of the ceremony, whilst [NAME OF BAG PIPER] plays Field of Flowers.

I will now read the War Animal Ode:



24 FEB

WAR ANIMAL DAY

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"To love unconditionally, to serve unquestionably.

To trust beyond endurance.

Bearing no malice, loyal and protective

They work, play, live, share, enrich, fight and die for us and with us, asking little in return.

They are the animals.

Oh that man could live by this creed also".

That concludes our War Animal Day ceremony, a special day when we can recognise all those creatures that gave their lives in service to mankind.

Please consider purchasing a purple poppy or making a donation to the Australian War Animal Memorial Organisation.

Your donation will directly support the lifesaving work they are undertaking to protect animals in Ukraine.

All present are now cordially invited to the [NAME OF CLUB] for refreshments.

