

Geoff Brock MP
Minister for Veterans Affairs

Thursday 19 October 2023

South Australia commemorates inaugural War Widows Day

War Widows Day will be commemorated for the first time today in South Australia to recognise the resilience and enduring sacrifice of Australian war widows.

This important day of observance is an opportunity for the South Australian community to pay tribute to the strength, courage, and unwavering commitment of those who have lost a spouse or partner through service for the Australian Defence Force.

The day of commemoration was officially declared by the Malinauskas Labor Government in March this year, following strong advocacy from the Australian War Widows (SA) Inc.

The Australian War Widows Inc. (previously the War Widows' Guild of Australia) has a long history of supporting the families of the fallen. It was established in 1945 by Mrs Jessie Vasey, whose birthday has been chosen as the commemoration date. In recognition of the occasion, Parliament House will be lit up in royal blue tonight – the official colour of Australian War Widows Inc.

War Widows Day will be formally recognised in South Australia on 19 October each year.

Quotes attributable to Geoff Brock

Today we come together for the first time to formally honour the families of the fallen. Establishing a dedicated day to recognise and honour our war widows and widowers is a simple yet significant gesture to acknowledge all who have been touched and bereaved by the death of a spouse resulting from Defence service.

We also recognise the tireless work of Australian War Widows (SA) Inc as they continue to support the wellbeing of Defence families affected by a loss across the state.

On behalf of all South Australians, I thank the war widows and widowers in our community for their service and acknowledge the unthinkable sacrifices they have made.

Quotes attributable to Diane Carr, President, Australian War Widows (SA) Inc

Today is a day of remembrance, reflection and appreciation for the sacrifices made by these courageous people.

It also honours our Founder, Mrs Jessie Vasey, who led the way to ensure war widows were adequately supported by Government.

Our community is united by our shared experiences, and this day is a reminder to us all to remember what we are capable of and how strong and resilient we are despite the challenges we have faced.