



# NEWSLETTER

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### **Ethel Muller (nee Dawson)**

**Life Member** Ethel Muller has given sterling help and assistance to the Altona Laverton Historical Society but she has also served Australia on active duty.

Ethel joined the Australian Army Nursing Service in 1942 and served at Heidelberg Military Hospital, the 1st Australian Orthopedic Unit in Victoria and Queensland and served at the 2/9 Army General Hospital on **Morotai Island** in the South West Pacific during World War 2, and was discharged at Heidelberg Military Hospital in 1946.

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## Australian Army Nursing Service



Between 1939 - 1945 a total of 3477 joined the Service with 71 members losing their lives ( 23 battle casualties and 18 died as a result of accident or illness).

A silver version of the Australia "Rising Sun" badge was worn

137 decorations were awarded including two George Medals.

In March 1943 The Australian Army Nursing Service formerly an auxiliary service, was incorporated as part of the Australian Military Forces.



### Morotai

Morotai Island is one of Indonesia's most northernmost Islands and has an area of some 1800 square kilometres.

The Empire of Japan invaded Morotai early in 1942 as part of its Dutch East Indies campaign, US Forces and Allies counter attacked launching the battle of Morotai in 1944 - Japanese forces held out until 1945. In July 1944 General Douglas MacArthur selected Morotai as the location for air bases and naval facilities needed to support the liberation of Mindanao.

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## On Active Service



Pictured left is a photograph of the Tent Ward in the 2/9 Army General Hospital on Morotai Island.

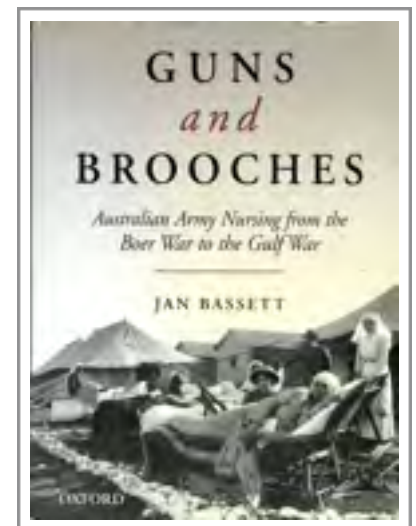
Patients suffered from diseases such as dysentery and scrub typhus as well as battle wounds.

### Other General Information

The book “Guns and Brooches” by Jan Barrett - Oxford University Press Melbourne 1997, includes details including, “The nurses lives were very restricted on Morotai, they were only allowed out of the hospital area in groups of at least seven with seven armed escorts because of the presence of the Japanese.

and - “The 2/9 AGH moved to Morotai between mid and early June 1945 before this it had worked with the 102nd AGH at Tamworth in NSW.”

By early July 1945 the hospital had some 770 patients.





## Society News

### Information for all Members *The 2013 Annual General Meeting*

The Annual General Meeting was held on the 16th July 2013 at The Homestead and the committee of management for the 2013 - 2014 year is shown below.

#### Committee 2013 - 2014

**President:** Peter Weaver

**Vice President:** Carol Winfield

**Secretary:** Sharon Walsh

**Treasurer:** Annette Stephens

#### *Committee Members*

Kim Walsh

Owen Hyde

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**Upcoming open days for August to  
December 2013 that will offer Devonshire Tea in  
the Historic Homestead**



Altona Homestead

128 Queen Street [on Logan Reserve]

Enquiries 0447 840 895

Enjoy Devonshire Tea in the Historic Homestead, either  
in the courtyard or within the Homestead

*[inside seating is limited].*

**Afternoon Tea dates for 2013**

*Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> August 11am to 4pm*

*Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> September 11am to 4pm*

*Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> October 11am to 4pm*

*Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> November 11am to 4pm*

*Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> December 11am to 4pm*

*Have a browse through our gift shop – Tea Cosies are our specialty*



[aihs.com.au](http://aihs.com.au)



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# Special Event

**The August 4th - Sunday open day will include the appearance of young local Altona resident Nikita Azzopardi who will give vocal and musical performances between 12 and 3 p.m on that day.**

**A good response is anticipated and all members and guests are encouraged to visit and enjoy this day on site.**

**Publicity details from the Williamstown Star give more details regarding this talented performer**

## Nikita's dream is on song

 [williamstown.starcommunity.com.au](http://williamstown.starcommunity.com.au)

Nikita Azzopardi has high hopes for her music career. 102078 Picture: JOE MASTROIANNI

[Purchase this photo from Star Photos: 102078](#)

By NICOLE VALICEK

A YOUNG musician has big dreams to perform at Rod Laver Arena – and with her checklist intact she's well on the way. Altona's Nikita Azzopardi, 16 with the talents of vocals; piano and song-writing is hopeful her goals will become reality. Nikita started pursuing her dreams four years ago when she enrolled at The Dream Academy Dance and Music Studio in Williamstown. She said music made her happy and was a way to escape from the stresses that come with being a teenager, quickly discovering she had talent. "I'm usually a shy person at the start and then when I get on stage I'm a different person, it's my comfort zone," she said. During these school holidays Nikita was invited to play piano and sing her original songs in a 45-minute acoustic set at the Williamstown Library. Nikita has also entered and had successes at many vocal competitions including the recent Willy's Got Talent Quest where she placed first. She is currently being backed up and developed as an artist under the experienced eyes of the Leigh Brothers, who have left their mark in the Australian music industry and are trying to help Nikita do the same. She said her greatest achievements have come through working with her music teachers at the academy. "They've helped me with confidence issues, writing songs, music, and I've achieved a lot from them the way they mentored me." Like any ambitious musician Nikita has a check list that includes releasing an album later this year and performing at The Rod Laver Arena. "I'm going to try and aim for that."

