

Speech by Mayor Logan Howlett
Korean War Memorial Service 2026
Monday, 27 July 2026
City of Cockburn RSL Sub-Branch

Distinguished guests, veterans, serving members of the Australian Defence Force, ladies and gentlemen.

When we gather at places like this, it is often the scale of history that we reflect on.

The dates, the battles, the outcomes.

But today, I'd like us to pause... and think about the people behind that history.

Because the story of the Korean War is, at its heart, a story about ordinary people.

Young Australians who were living everyday lives – working, studying, building their futures – and then suddenly found themselves called to serve in a war far from home.

They did not see themselves as extraordinary.

They were sons and daughters, friends and neighbours.

People much like those here today.

And yet, in answering that call, they became part of something far greater than themselves.

This year marks 73 years since the signing of the armistice on 27 July 1953.

For many Australians, it has been described as “The Forgotten War”.

But for those who served, for their families, and for communities like ours, it has never been forgotten.

Because memory does not live only in history books.

It lives in experiences and in people.

It is carried forward through the work of organisations like the RSL.

And it lives in places like this – here in Hamilton Hill – where, year after year, we come together as a community to remember.

What we honour today is not only what our service men and women did, but who they were.

Ordinary people, placed in extraordinary circumstances, who chose courage, service, and sacrifice.

That is the legacy we honour today.

And it is also the responsibility we share.

A responsibility to ensure that their stories are not lost.

That future generations understand the sacrifices that have shaped the freedoms we enjoy.

To the veterans with us this morning: we thank you for your service, your resilience, and your example.

To your families: we acknowledge your strength and the role you have played in supporting that service.

And to those who did not return, we honour not only their sacrifice, but the lives they might have lived, and the lasting impact of their absence.

As we stand together today, let us remember:

Lest we forget.