Hundreds brave chilly dawn in Alice Springs

It's a day of remembrance for the mates we left behind

SYDNEY KINSMAN

Australia's most highly decorated unit of World War II.

"It was a beautiful dawn service," he said. "We've never missed a service in Alice Springs in 68 years.

At the other end of the age range, Labor candidate Dale Wakefield took her five-year-old son Jimmy to the dawn service for the first time.

"It's a good way to have conversations with kids," Ms Wakefield said.

"We just laid some flowers for Jimmy's great-great-grandfather, his great-grandfather and an Unknown Soldier."

Back at the RSL the excitement ramped up as Doug Draeger fired his restored 1941 gun for the first of three sessions held throughout the day.

Mr Wakefield hoped such extra-special touches would help put the club back on the map.

"It's one of the best situations and locations for an RSL. It's absolutely magnificent," Mr Wakefield said.

Mental toll recognised

THE too-often forgotten mental toll of conflict was front and centre at Anzac Day commemorations in Canberra.

As well as paying tribute to those who died in our bloodiest battles 103 years after the Gallipoli landings, leaders including the Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull yesterday urged Australians not to forget about servicemen and women battling conditions like Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Victoria Cross recipient Ben Roberts-Smith said he would spend the day thinking about servicemen and women who were "doing it a bit hard".

"While Afghanistan isn't part of the mainstream media at the moment, these people will live with that the rest of their lives," he said.

Remembering Long Tan

AFLNT high performance manager Wally Gallo commemorated Anzac Day at the site of the famous Vietnam battle Long Tan yesterday.

Gallo was joined by former Sydney Swans player Brad Seymour and representatives from the Vietnam Swans to lay wreaths at the Long Tan Cross.

"I was assisting AFL-Asia with their coaches holding coaching courses in Vietnam and Singapore," he said. "The Singapore Sharks have 290 Auskick kids aged between five and 14. The Long Tan visit was part of the trip. I laid a wreath on behalf of the AFL."

Gallo said there was a traditional Anzac Day clash and the Vietnam Swans played against the Jakarta Bintangs in Vung Tau.