Darwin Military Museum’s Tom Lewis has travelled to Alice Springs for a historical presentation

Central war role

A MILITARY historian will detail Alice Springs’ rise to become one of the “greatest military centres” in Australia at the town’s RSL this weekend. Author and former naval officer Tom Lewis will present a speech about the impact World War II had on the Red Centre.

Dr Lewis said the town was mainly used as a transit centre, but was also set up with trenches and air raid shelters. “Those defences were set up because who knows how far the Japanese could come,” he said. “Sounds a bit odd. You are thinking ‘jeeze, Alice Springs, would they get that far?’ But nobody knew.”

Many Territorians fled down south to seek refuge after the Bombing of Darwin on February 19, 1942. New research shows Alice Springs was more central to these evacuations than first thought, Dr Lewis says.

Five big ship evacuations left Darwin, but it became too dangerous to send ships around “full of unarmed passengers”, which was when the trains took over.

The event is called Reflections of World War II in Central Australia and will be delivered at the RSL on Friday afternoon.

School, Salvos benefit from gifts

WOODROFFE Primary School was among a number of beneficiaries of support from the local branch of a national business.

The Good Guys Darwin has provided support in the form of appliances to a local family, the NT U13 boys hockey team, Woodroffe Primary School, Ark Aid and The Salvation Army Palmerston Corps.

The Salvation Army Palmerston Corps received a number of breakfast essentials packs to help the centre accommodate those people with nowhere else to go.

Ark Aid was helped with an appliance donation that will allow the not-for-profit organisation to store much needed food supplies for its rescued wildlife.