

SOLDIER ON ANZAC APPEAL

Honour veterans of the past and support veterans of today

Private Douglas Grant and Jordan Ivone

Whilst we as a country have learnt from the mistakes made when assisting veterans and their families, the struggles that the veteran community face have not gone away. The struggle to find work after serving in the defence force, for example, is one that impacted veterans 100 years ago, and contemporary veterans today. The following two stories reflect this struggle.



Australian War Memorial
AWM2016.400.1

Private Douglas Grant

Private Douglas Grant, 13th Battalion, was born into a traditional Aboriginal community in the Bullenden Kerr Ranges, Northern Queensland, in the early 1880s. In 1887 his parents and much of his Aboriginal community were killed in what was believed to be a tribal fight. Grant was adopted by a white family. He enlisted in 1916, and with the intervention of his foster father, was accepted for active service overseas. He was wounded and captured by the Germans at Bullecourt in 1917 and remained a prisoner for the duration of the war.

A highly educated man, Grant returned to a society that was ruled by the White Australia Policy, and he struggled to find work during the Depression. He was hospitalised with severe depression at least once, and never found steady work or a wife or family. He did not receive benefits such as the Soldier Settler Scheme and was subjected to racial discrimination because of his heritage. He struggled with alcoholism but continued to be an active member of various soldiers' associations, and was politically active in arguing for rights for Indigenous men and for returned soldiers. He died alone and in obscurity in 1951.



Jordan Ivone

Whilst Jordan was not taken prisoner during his deployment overseas, he did experience issues when trying to find work, even though he had served in the Australian Army for over five years gaining valuable knowledge and skills.

"I had always wanted to join the Army, but I never gave any thought to what happens after. My decision to discharge was sudden, and I was ill-prepared for the challenges of civilian life. I didn't have a job to go to, or even a direction to follow. As a result, I developed severe depression and anxiety. It was only through the support of my partner that I eventually confronted the reality that I was not well, and that I needed help."

Jordan and his partner made the decision to move to Canberra to access support offered by Soldier On. Jordan credits Soldier On with putting him in touch with counselling services and helping him gain meaningful employment in an industry he was interested in.

"I now work as an Associate for PwC, after completing a 12 month Veterans Internship. The internship is designed to assist transitioning veterans establish a new career and build new skills."

Jordan is currently studying a Bachelor of Laws/Bachelor of Politics and International Relations. PwC offers flexible working arrangements, which greatly assist with his study schedule.

"My experiences in the Army gave me some valuable experiences, ones that I'll never forget. I hope to use the skills and experiences I've gained to help other veterans who may be facing similar issues."

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