



Councillor Jan Grew with CJ, a RAAF working dog named after 'Councillor Jan', with MC Nigel Allsopp at the unveiling of the plaque to commemorate war animals.



Gold Coast Mayor Tom Tate and RAAF Warrant Officer Taylor, representing military police working dogs, lay wreaths.



REMEMBERING THE VOICELESS

Queensland's first war-animal plaque, to recognise the sacrifices and deeds that animals have undertaken on battlefields around the world, was unveiled at a memorial ceremony at the Robina Community Centre and War Memorial on the Gold Coast on Sunday 23 May.

Economic Development and Tourism Committee chair Jan Grew – who had a RAAF working dog named in her honour – dedicated a special plaque to all the animals that have served our nation in times of war and peace.

"Animals have played a very significant role in assisting our defence forces over the years and this memorial service is to show support for the many dogs, horses, mules, donkeys, camels and pigeons that have bravely served Australia," Councillor Grew said.

A number of organisations, with their animals, were represented at the service including dogs from the Army, RAAF and police, as well as the Mudgeeraba Light Horse Troop, Gold Coast Pigeon Club and Queensland Mounted Police.

Camels were also present, along with mules and donkeys, which contributed in their own way to the war effort.

Speakers included representatives from the Explosive Detection Dog section of the RAAF, the Mudgeeraba

Troop of the 14th Light Horse Regiment and the Australian Defence Force Trackers and War Dogs Association.

Councillor Grew said Senior Constable Nigel Allsopp, a current-serving police-dog handler and historian of the Australian Defence Force Trackers and War Dog Association, was a driving force behind the war-animal memorial dedication.

"For years, Senior Constable Allsopp has been a vocal advocate for the establishment of animal memorials. "Now, his dream is finally a reality," she said.

Senior Constable Allsopp said he spent several years petitioning RSL clubs, local government and government bodies to establish animal memorials.

"If not for the support of Councillor Grew and the Mudgeeraba RSL, this ceremony would not have happened," he said.

"This memorial at the Robina Community Centre is the first to honour animals in Queensland and it is my hope that more RSLs will get behind my mission to formally display war-animal plaques."

With the recent announcement that ANZAC history is to be reintroduced into school curricula, Senior Constable Allsopp hopes children will learn that animals played a huge part in the war effort.



Padre John Crosby from 2nd Combat Engineer Regiment blesses the memorial plaque.