

Musos urged to join Anzac driveway service

Cheryl GoodenoughNational

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Music teacher Alastair Tomkins is urging other musicians to mark Anzac Day by playing the Last Post.

The moving sounds of the Last Post echo from driveways across Australia at dawn on Anzac Day, connecting people forced to keep their distance because of the coronavirus.

That's the vision of Queensland music teacher Alastair Tomkins, who was inspired by the grassroots campaign for people to commemorate Anzac Day at dawn from their driveways.

With traditional services and marches cancelled because of the COVID-19 ... dawn on Anzac Day, connecting people forced to keep their distance because of the coronavirus.

That's the vision of Queensland music teacher Alastair Tomkins, who was inspired by the grassroots campaign for people to commemorate Anzac Day at dawn from their driveways.

With traditional services and marches cancelled because of the COVID-19 pandemic, RSL leaders are encouraging people to honour servicemen and women at 6am on April 25 by standing beside their letterboxes or on balconies.

Mr Tomkins sees it as an opportunity for brass players – students, teachers and professionals alike – to take Anzac Day to the community.

"Yes, we have been asked to isolate and social distance, but we can still be united on Anzac Day by music and show our respect in a traditional way," he says.

The Music for Mateship initiative calls for musos to play the Last Post, observe a minute's silence and then play Rouse, or Reveille.

Mr Tomkins has called out to brass teachers working from home and their students learning at home, professional musicians whose gigs have been cancelled, and musos in small country towns who usually take part in the local dawn service and march.

"I am hoping that at 6am on Anzac Day we'll hear the Last Post echoing from driveways in neighbourhoods across Australia," Mr Tomkins tells AAP.

"I hope it will be a great comfort, especially to elderly people, many who have not missed an Anzac Day service since the 1950s."

Mr Tomkins will play the trumpet from his driveway at Greenslopes, south of Brisbane, while dozens of students from Sheldon College, where he is performance manager, are eager to do the same outside their homes.

As word of the idea spreads, teachers from as far afield as New Zealand and the United Kingdom, together with legendary jazz musician James Morrison, have expressed their support.

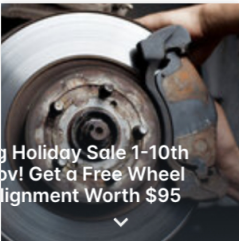
Mr Tomkins has launched a Facebook page as well as musicformateship.org where he asks anyone interested to download music sheets, start practising and notify their neighbourhood via a letterbox drop.

"With a bit of practice, trumpet students in year six or seven should be able to play the pieces," he says.

Australian Associated Press

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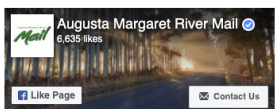


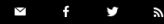
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