

## The healing of song—The Soldier's Wife

**Deb Suckling<sup>1</sup>, Roz Pappalardo<sup>1</sup>, Jackie Marshall<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Soldier's Wife Project

In years gone past, songs were the form of documenting our stories—telling the stories of those who had gone before, our histories, our tragedy's and our hopes. And music accompanied, being the one thing that could transverse those feelings that could sometimes not be voiced.

This is at the very heart of The Soldier's Wife.

The past 30 months has seen a small group of Queensland songwriters go on a truly remarkable songwriting journey—to tell the stories of women whose partners have served in conflict over the past 60 years. To tell the stories of Soldiers Wives and their families and of their personal sacrifice.

The songwriters have talked to almost 100 women—aged from 25 to 104 years old. From varying backgrounds and conflicts, from remote and regional areas to inner cities, their personal journeys all have similar themes of love, of loss, of existence and most of all of resilience.

The artists use their voices and their muse to hold legacy to these stories and to share them on stage—these are not just stories of incredible women—they are stories of our history and of the new generation.

Links: [www.soldierswife.com.au](http://www.soldierswife.com.au)

### Presenters

Roz Pappalardo is known throughout Australia for her prolific music and songwriting career, most notably with independent champagne folk act, [women in docs](#), and her solo work as a strong roots musician. She has recorded approximately 10 albums, winning various songwriting, self-management and music business awards for her efforts. She heads up iconic music venue Tanks Arts Centre in Cairns, Tropical North Queensland, where she programs high profile national and international music acts. Roz works tirelessly in her community, giving voice to the voiceless and telling stories of the many who don't have the opportunity to do so. Working on the Soldiers Wife project has been more than a blessing for Roz—it's been necessary and she's proud to stand beside her songwriting family to tell such important stories

Renowned for her gutsy yet tender vocal style, Jackie Marshall has released two critically acclaimed albums, *Fight 'n' Flight* and *Ladies' Luck*, the former shortlisted for the Australian Music Prize. Initially trained in jazz at the Queensland Conservatorium, Jackie has written music for children's puppet theatre in Slovenia, was once crowned The Peppercorn Queen at much-fabled Nymagee Outback Country Music Festival, and has played just about every gig worth mentioning in the country but can't remember a single one of them. Or at least not much. She works on a lot of projects and takes a keen and compassionate interest in the theoretical and philosophical side of her practical and therapeutic music endeavours in the community. Jackie thrives on working with her friends and hopefully inspires them to embrace and develop and cherish their unique creative identity. She also loves to write.

Deb Suckling has been an artist and artworker for almost two decades. She released a number of albums before forming her record label Sugarrush Music with partner Craig Spann. Over the past

10 years, Deb has become highly passionate about community music projects, specifically in regional communities and using songs to tell the stories of our country. “ When I started songwriting, it was like a revelation for me. All the sadness I had in my life up until then had an outlet. I see songwriting and music as having enormous health benefits to the wider community and with the help of songwriters— everyone can turn their story in a song.”