



War Veterans Village [Narrabeen] RSL sub-Branch

Through an active membership we keep the ANZAC spirit alive and growing

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PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

What a great pleasure it was to have our first Monthly General Meeting for 2021. Thank you to all who attended. While not everyone can attend our meetings, it was pleasing to see how many presented their apologies. A healthy sign for us. It was also good that we were able to share over a very nice morning tea -thanks to Lyn Hillard.

As we move further into this year there will be many important decisions for us to make. Secretary John will inform you of the incorporation process which we will need to consider. While we are waiting further information from State Branch, there is a briefing paper available from the Office which will give you an indication of what may come. There will be options for us, each ensuring we are able to continue to meet the *Aims & Objects of The League* here. I encourage you to obtain a copy of the document if you have not already done so.

In accordance with the required process, we will have placed before the next meeting a "Notice of Motion" to nominate Doug Smyth for the award of Life Membership. We are required to give you one month's notice so the motion will be placed before the April Monthly General Meeting in time to have it processed and presented to the May meeting of the State Branch Committee. Doug has served two sub-Branches with distinction and it will be our honour to nominate him for this award.

As reported last month, it was with regret that we received the resignation of John Hillard as our treasurer. We are pleased to advise that at the February Monthly general Meeting, Arthur Skene was elected as our new Treasurer.

Additionally, Denise and Horst Kuessner have also accepted the responsibility of fund-raising coordinators. We thank and congratulate each member for accepting these roles.

See you for breakfast in March!

Lest We Forget
Bob Durbin
President

Address Label

READ YOUR EDITION AND ENJOY



Our next General Meeting will be held in the Montgomery Theatre on Thursday 11th March.

This is a breakfast meeting scheduled at 8.30am for 9.00am and will include our AGM. Meeting proceedings will be short, so we can enjoy the food and guest speaker.

Nicki Young, RSL LifeCare, General Manager Veterans Services is the guest speaker and is going to share with us, what her role involves within RSL LifeCare.

For catering purposes members are requested to give names to our Secretary by Thursday 4th March. Call the Office on 8978 4266 and leave a message or call John Sowden on 0427 259 419

WELFARE REPORT

I am continuing to contact our members as COVID-19 allows and was interested to read recently that the benefits of camaraderie and friendship, according to my research sources, (collected by WebMD), can help us sleep better, lower our risk of heart disease, lower stress-induced blood pressure and help us to recover from illness faster.

WOW!! in short, people who feel a sense of camaraderie are not just happier but are healthier too. With that in mind, Jan and I have been discussing how we can support this concept through social connection.

We are proposing that we get together a group no larger than 6 at a time each fortnight for coffee and a chat.

We are anticipating starting these groups from 27th February.

If you would like to join these groups please let me know by contacting the RSL sub-Branch on 8978 4266.

Bev Ash, Visitation Officer

TO INCORPORATE OR NOT THAT IS THE QUESTION

The sub-Branch is currently an unincorporated association operating under the charity umbrella of RSL NSW. We must adhere to the requirements of the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission (ACNC) in terms of how we spend money and there are significant penalties for breaching these procedures. The ACNC sets out that “the members of an unincorporated association may each have individual legal liability for the association’s debts and defaults”. We do things on behalf of the members of this sub-Branch and we are NOT a legal entity. Spending monies on ‘welfare’ and the definition of ‘welfare’ can be complicated.

The lack of legal entity causes problems for unincorporated associations in areas such as the liability of committee members, members’ rights, gifts to the association and the conduct of legal proceedings. Trustees who hold the assets “on trust” for the membership are also exposed to claims. The 2019 RSL NSW Constitution under item 15 provided for sub-Branches to become incorporated.

The process through which we need to proceed to become incorporated is straightforward and requires application to NSW Fair trading to reserve a name – “War Vets RSL sub-Branch Incorporated”. The cost is minimal and we must obtain approval from RSL NSW to incorporate. We would most likely register as a not-for-profit association with ACNC which then eliminates the strict adherence to spending monies only on ‘welfare’ and it negates the need to have trustees.

This is purely an over-arching view of what may lie ahead for our sub-Branch if we decide to proceed down the path to incorporation. Nothing much changes. We will continue to operate perhaps with a little more freedom without the ACNC continually looking over our and RSL NSW’s shoulder and I can assure you the three trustees will feel very much more comfortable without their lives and livelihoods being subject to claim.

A briefing document is available from the sub-Branch office if you would like some “light reading”

The Committee

NOTE YOUR DIARY

Our April Meeting will be held on Thursday
8th April at 9.30am in the Montgomery
Forecourt followed by morning tea in the
Montgomery Theatre.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW TREASURER



At our February Meeting Arthur Skene was elected as our Treasurer. The photo was taken on Remembrance Day 2020

Arthur is a Manly Boy, educated at Manly Primary School and Balgowlah Technical High School, the latter he loathed as he is not at all technical.

Left school at 15 to join the Commonwealth Bank, at Balgowlah and then Inspectors’ Department in Sydney Head Office. While in bank joined the Royal Australian Naval Reserve, Sydney Port Division, based at *HMAS Rushcutter*, as a 16 year old Cadet Writer, and undertook two training cruises *HMAS Wagga* (Bathurst Class Ocean Minesweeper) to Noumea, and *HMAS Vendetta* (Daring Class Destroyer) to New Zealand and Melbourne.

In January 1963 joined the Royal Australian Navy for full-time duty as a Recruit Writer, rapidly rising through all ranks to Chief Petty Officer Writer in 1972. Memorable postings as sailor were as Admiral’s Secretary’s Writer onboard the Flagship, *HMAS Melbourne* (Majestic Class Light Aircraft Carrier) in 1965-66, and in all ranks as a Writer category sailor at *HMAS Tarangau* (Manus Island, PNG) in 1966-67 and 1971-73.

Arthur was promoted to officer as a Special Duties List Writer in 1974, transferring to the General List as a Supply and Secretariat Officer as a Lieutenant in 1978, promoted to Lieutenant Commander in 1982 and Commander in 1984. Memorable postings as an officer were Base Supply Officer, *HMAS Cairns* at Cairns, Admiral’s Secretary to Rear Admiral David Martin, Naval Support Commander (who was to later become Governor of New South Wales), Supply Officer at *HMAS Cerberus*, Westernport Vic, and Financial Resources Coordinator to the Personnel Division of Australian Defence Headquarters in Canberra.

Arthur parted from full-time service in 1991, joining the Commonwealth Public Service, with three key postings, firstly as Business Manager to 2nd Field Logistic Support Battalion in Townsville, Business Manager to Army Command and Staff College in Queenscliff, and Executive Officer in Strategic Resources and Analysis Section of Defence Headquarters in Canberra.

Arthur then transferred back to Navy Service as Director Naval Reserves as a part-time Reserve Officer in 2000 and 2001, at which point he retired from Navy and Defence Service.

During his Navy career Arthur became a specialist in Administration, Personnel, Financial Management and Budget Forward Planning, and as a senior Staff Officer.

He now enjoys travelling, particularly to Greece and Europe, dabbles in pen and water-colour sketching, photography and genealogy.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Isn't it just great to be able to hold meetings again!! It's almost like we've all lost the last 12 months to something that's hard to describe except that we don't want to go through it again.

The year has started well with our February meeting and morning tea. Please give us your feedback as we need to know if this is a better format than just "the meeting and goodbye." I will try and ask you when I see you next. Electing a Treasurer was most important – welcome Arthur Skene - and it's good to have Denise and Horst Kuessner again contributing in some way for the sub-Branch.

We are hoping the year will continue to see an easing of COVID-19 restrictions and as of now we can have up to 60 people for our breakfast and guest speaker meeting with AGM on Thursday March 11th. Come and enjoy breakfast – no cost to you – and hear what the General Manager Veteran Services has to tell us about the exciting things happening in that part of the RSL LifeCare organisation. The doors will open at 8.30 for 9am start in the Montgomery Theatre.

You must let the Office know by 4th March that you are coming for catering purposes.

No name no breakfast!

With the AGM coming up, and the office holders in the second year of a three-year term there are no elections – so you will not be asked to take on any responsibilities. Just encourage other members to come to this first of 3 or 4 breakfast meetings we plan for this year. We are also anxious to have your views on day trips and perhaps a 2 night/3-day trip to the national capital. Would you be keen to take part in these sorts of activities?

One area we are having difficulty in maintaining is the office open hours. Remember we are all volunteers and are of an age where paid work is behind us and we like to spend as much time enjoying our time left. As an operating sub-Branch, we have phone contact (8978 4266), an answering machine, email address (War-Veterans-VillageSB@rslnsw.org.au) so face to face sessions are not always necessary. The Monday and Tuesday morning open times of 9.30 till Noon are still operating so please make a point of using these opportunities to speak with us. You may well find someone there at other times but that is your good fortune.

See you at the AGM breakfast.

John Sowden
Secretary

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

At the end of 2020 all members were financial
Current total Membership = 100

Life Members	2
Life Subscribers	3
Service	45
Affiliate	31
Associate	19

We mourn the sad loss of long-standing Service Member Shirley Grinyer OAM who passed away on the 14th January 2021.

New member Pamela Meyers (Affiliate) was welcomed and inducted on 10th February and is included in the numbers above:

Applications for new membership are in progress

for: Ray Green -Service
Janet Green-Affiliate
Joyce Pickard-Affiliate

We have some further prospective members in train and are optimistic that our numbers will grow as the year progresses.

Jan Slater
Membership Officer

A TREASURED RELIC

This story relates to the extraordinary circumstances surrounding the death of my great-uncle Athol Morrison, Driver, New Zealand Field Artillery who died on the 2nd September 1915 aged 24 years. He is buried at East Mudros Military Cemetery on the Greek Island of Lemnos.

Jan Slater



Athol in his WWI uniform. Sadly he never returned.



"A Christchurch Soldiers Death." The Press 16th March 1916.

"Among those who were drowned when a British Transport was recently torpedoed in the Mediterranean was an artilleryman belonging to Christchurch.

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Before he left his home in New Zealand a member of his family asked him to bring her a souvenir from Egypt and he chipped off a small portion of the pyramids there.

He was ordered aboard the transport ship "Sutherland" at very short notice and having no time to post the relic, took it aboard with him. On the run across the Mediterranean the transport passed quite close to a hospital ship and the artilleryman threw the package onto the vessel and shouted out that if anyone was returning to Christchurch, he might deliver the package to the address written on it.

A soldier aboard the Red Cross ship caught the package and later gave it to a soldier who was invalided back to the Dominion, with the result that the latter delivered it in person to the lad's mother.

Just an hour or two after the package had been transferred to the hospital ship the transport was struck by a torpedo and the artilleryman, who was on sentry duty at the time was killed. The transport did not sink but the soldier's body fell through the hole caused by the torpedo and was lost at sea.

It was surmised that he had important papers on his person at the time and a diver belonging to one of the warships recovered the body. The diver subsequently wrote to the lad's parents, telling what happened and expressing his sympathy with them.

Sometime after the parents had received news of their son's death, the returned soldier delivered the souvenir, which the parents were naturally very pleased to receive. The stone has now been polished and gold mounted and made into a pendant, which is much treasured by the unfortunate soldier's relations."

Editor: Thank you, Jan Slater, for this amazing story of the Treasured Relic.



Bob Durbin presents Denise Kuessner with a Certificate of Thanks for her role as the previous sub-Branch Secretary. *(Apologies for the quality of photo due to the bright sun light – Editor)*

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

In Australia we celebrate and commemorate our heritage and those who have given us the legacy we hold so dear. In March we commence to commemorate the sacrifice made for all of humankind by Jesus Christ as he was crucified, died, and was buried. Three days later we will celebrate His resurrection.

The values on which our great country was built are those Jesus taught almost two thousand years ago. Some people would argue that these values are not relevant to us today; that people should be able to live their lives as they choose, and not be bound by 'rules' that may have worked a long time ago but should not apply to them today.

The success of any country, or indeed any organisation, is based on its ability to maintain and adhere to a very sound set of core values. Of course, success may be defined in many ways, financial wealth, healthy environment (mental, physical & spiritual – personally & collectively). However, I think a truly successful country/organisation is one which embraces all these elements, finding their right balance to ensure the best possible outcome and wellbeing.

Sometimes we laugh, sometimes we are dismayed when we look at what is happening in other countries. The CORONA Virus pandemic has shown us the good and bad, some would say ugly side of humanity. The countries which have been most successful at navigating their way through this are those which have adhered to solid core values.

I wonder just how many people would want to be treated the way they treat others? Jesus taught us that we should love our neighbour as ourselves. How simple and easy is that. Let each of us continue to hold on to and live the legacy given to us through the Cross of Christ.

Blessings always Bob Durbin, Chaplain



Our sub-Branch is privileged to have Bob Durbin as President and Chaplain. The photo is of President Bob, chairing our February Meeting. Thank you, Bob.