



War Veterans Village [Narrabeen] RSL sub-Branch

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

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PRESIDENTS UPDATE

As I write this report, I am heartened that significant Covid restrictions have/will be lifted. These are:

From Friday 18th February

- Density limits no longer apply.
- QR check-ins will only be required for certain venues.
- Singing and dancing will be permitted at all venues, except music festivals.

From Friday 25th February

- Masks will only be required for certain high-risk settings, such as travel, hospitals, indoor music festivals and corrections facilities.
- Masks are still encouraged for indoor settings where you cannot maintain a safe distance from others and for customer-facing retail staff.

This is certainly good news for all! It is certainly a positive indicator that NSW will be resuming 'business as normal' sooner, rather than later.

You have been advised before of some of the places we would like to visit so please 'watch this space'.

As the Secretary has reported, the AGM will be our next meeting and I encourage you to attend to hear our guest speaker, the Hon. David Elliott BA, MA, MP. David is an Australian Army veteran who, amongst his postings, was awarded the Australian Service Medal for service in Bougainville.

It is pleasing that many are attending the Wednesday morning pantry in the Beersheba Amenities. A big thank you to Pamela Dodd, Jan van Altena, Bev Ash and Ross & Bobbie Fairhall for their assistance in serving and distributing items.

We have had some members in hospitals for a variety of issues but, unfortunately, we have not been able to visit them. It is hoped that this will change with the easing of restrictions. We also have some members in Residential Care who have not been able to receive a visit from us. This too should change.

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READ YOUR EDITION AND ENJOY

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Secretary John attended the recent District Council meeting via Zoom, but it seems that not much is happening. The Committee would welcome receiving any issues you feel we should take to District Council. This is our opportunity to have our say on all matters related to the veteran family. No matter should be too small or thought insignificant. Please contact John if you have any thoughts or would just like to 'throw something around'.

A positive year awaits.

Lest We Forget
Bob Durbin
President



Our next Meeting is on Thursday 10th March and will be held in the Lone Pine Lounge.

This is a breakfast meeting scheduled at 8.30am for 9.00am start and will include our AGM.

Meeting proceedings will be short, so we can enjoy the food and listen to our guest speaker, David Elliott BA, MA, MP Minister for Transport and Minister for Veterans.

*Members can bring their spouse/partner
Cost of the breakfast is subsidised by the sub-Branch and is \$10 per person. Register and pay at the office by 5pm on Friday the 4th March – money in an envelope under the Office door please.*

SECRETARY'S COMMENTS

Life is looking a little brighter each month and hopefully being fully vaccinated with a booster is good protection if the dreaded virus does come your way – as it has to some in our Village. Let's look forward with optimism to the rest of the year.

Our first members meeting since June last year was well attended on the 10th February – with an enjoyable morning tea afterwards – thank you Jan and Peter for the cake to go with the LifeCare provided biscuits and tea/coffee.

We look forward to our March Annual General Meeting (no elections so you will not be called on to take a position!!) to be held as a breakfast meeting in the Lone Pine Lounge at 9am on Thursday 10th March. The cost will be subsidised with members being asked to pay just \$10. You may also bring your spouse/partner - same cost. Pay at the office – money in envelope under door is fine – DEADLINE 5PM Friday 4th March.

Please come to the breakfast as there is a visiting guest speaker, David Elliot BA, MA, MP Minister for Transport and Minister for Veterans – there will be an opportunity to ask questions so please come prepared.

The business part of the meeting will be short as it involves only a financial report and reports from other committee members – all of these will be hard copies delivered to you with the March Dispatches – so no one person will be prattling on very long. But please feel free to ask questions after reading the reports.

ANZAC Day is approaching and we really hope for a return to the pre COVID days of a Dawn Service at the Veterans Parade Cenotaph and our internal Village ANZAC Day service on Wednesday 20th April in the Montgomery Theatre and Forecourt. Final approval and plans will most likely be published more widely after changes to current COVID regulations are announced after February 28.

You will recall we have been looking for a Fundraising Coordinator for some time. Our requests have been answered – Leigh Haines has enthusiastically taken on this role. Leigh is a village resident of 18 months and joined our sub-Branch soon after moving into Labuan village. Leigh and I have settled on items to purchase for sale for ANZAC Day – volunteer sellers who were at our February general meeting were also consulted – and if you would be willing to assist in this area, please let us know at the office – probably takes just 2 days.

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There will be a sales table in the Dug-Out area over the two weekends prior to ANZAC Day. We are unsure if we will be able to sell outside our Village.

We are still planning outings for May and October – they will be on our general meeting days – 11th May and 12th October – if interested at this early stage please pass your name to the office.

PLEASE NOTE – Pending people being healthy and well, the office is open on Monday, Thursday and Friday mornings from 9.30am till Noon – it MAY be open at other times pending work requirements and personnel availability.

We look forward to seeing you at the March 10th breakfast.

John Sowden, Secretary

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Current total Membership = 117

Life Members	3
Life Subscribers	4
Service	47
Affiliate	44
Associate	19

We mourn the recent sad loss of our Service members Trevor Swift, Frank Phillips and Joan Walters.

The following new members were welcomed at our Christmas Meeting on 15th December and are included in the above numbers.

Peter Cole – Service
Bev Kelly – Affiliate
Sue Birch – Affiliate

The following new members were inducted at our February Meeting and are also included in the above numbers.

Darrell Hatch – Service
Jan Hulse – Affiliate
Helen Gribble – Affiliate

Membership Applications are in train for:

William Murphy – Service
Gerda Murphy – Affiliate
John Heald – Service
Randall Jones – Service
Peter Hackett – Service
Cyril Laverack – Associate

A further number of prospective members have shown interest and their applications are being sought.

Thanking you for your support.

Jan Slater,
Membership Officer

VISITATION REPORT

Perhaps it is due to our new found freedom and our members having de-conditioned a bit during lockdowns that there have been more of us having falls, some more serious than others and we should consider just a few tips to help prevent them. Fall prevention is an important topic to consider as you get older. Physical changes and health conditions – and sometimes the medications used to treat those conditions – make falls more likely as you age. Still, fear of falling should not rule your life, here are a few tips to consider to protect yourself:

1. Discuss with your GP about a physiotherapy referral for assessment and some exercises to improve balance and balance reactions.
2. Stay physically active
3. Have your eyes and hearing tested – both can impact on balance reaction
4. Are you using a walker? Do the brakes hold correctly? If not refer to TLC for support.
5. If you use a walking stick, check the ferrule, has it worn? Replace immediately.
6. Wear sensible shoes and check to see if the soles are wearing, are they uneven? Replace or repair as soon as possible.
7. Slippers are often a cause of a fall, check they fit snugly and the sole is in good condition.
8. Do you have elastic laces? This saves you bending down to tie your shoes.
9. If you have a bedspread that reaches the floor, consider replacing it with a doona instead. Keep around your bed clear.
10. Check the lights in your home – poor lighting contributes to falls.
11. Are there electrical cords lying on the floor?
12. Secure rugs with double-faced tape.
13. Store the things you use most within easy reach – minimise bending and definitely no climbing on chairs or ladders!
14. Use a non-slip mat in the shower and preferably a shower stool for safety.
15. Use assistive devices such as a raised toilet seat, a grab rail or rubber treads on your steps.

If I can help with any of this, please contact me on 0439169982

Bev Ash
Visitation Officer

Answers to the wake-up puzzles in our February 'Dispatches'.

1. How many legs does the Legs of Man have?
There are 3 'legs of man' - the famous 3 legs of Mann appear to have been adopted in the 13th century as the royal coat of arms for 3 kings of the Isle of Mann.
2. Which Sea creature has 3 hearts?
The octopus has 3 hearts, also has blue blood and a dough-nut shaped brain.

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3. How many bones does an adult human have?
There are 206 bones that make up the human skeleton.
4. What was Marilyn Monroe's natural hair colour?
Marilyn's hair was originally brown.

FIND THE ODD ONE OUT ?



5. Middle one – wrist has a watch



6. In Roman numerals

CHAPLAINS CORNER



A husband and wife are in church. The preacher notices that the husband has fallen asleep and says to the wife, "Wake your husband up!" The wife answers, "You're the one who made him fall asleep, you wake him up."



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Grace & Peace, Bob Durbin, Sub-Branch Chaplain

A couple of photos (thanks Bev Ash) of members at our first General Meeting on 10th February



My Grandfather – by Emma Wakely, aged 10

In 1944 a mother from Dee Why received the worst possible news. Her son had gone missing on a mission from England to Germany. The man who went missing is my great grandfather. His name was Jack Raymond Sweeny. When he was 18, he left his life in Dee Why to train to be in the R.A.A.F as a navigator.

Being on a Lancaster, on a mission was very dangerous because, obviously, the Germans were always trying to shoot down planes on the opposite side to them. They would use torches to spot planes at night which is usually when the planes on these missions would leave for the mission. On his third mission Jack's plane was shot and caught fire so everyone in the plane parachuted out. This is why Jack was in the caterpillar club. The caterpillar club was a club for people who had been saved by a parachute. The reason it is called the caterpillar club is because caterpillars make silk and parachutes are made from silk. So, if you jumped out of a plane with a parachute (in an emergency) you were saved by a caterpillar.

Three weeks after this devastating news had been sent, (to his mum) a telegraph came saying that Jack had been taken to a prisoner of war camp. The news was relieving but yet very upsetting. He was on a bombing mission at night when the Germans easily spotted his plane. His plane got shot at and it caught fire. When he jumped out of the plane (with his parachute) he broke his pelvis. Because his pelvis was broken, he couldn't walk, so a farmer carried him in a wheelbarrow until the Germans took over. He was then taken to a temporary war camp where he was treated for his injuries. When he was in hospital, he sent a letter to his family. The letter read: *"I have been taken prisoner of war in Germany. I am in good health – slightly wounded. We will be transported from here to another camp in the next few days. Please don't write until I give you a new address*

Kind regards

Jack"

Slightly wounded is crossed out because he didn't want his parents to worry about his situation.

In the camp the prisoners made the most of their time by doing things like having schools and libraries where to study. This is because most of the people taken as prisoners were teaches and professors. They studied things like Maths, English and more. My great grandfather (Jack) studied Maths and Bookkeeping. They even learnt other languages.

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It was two months before Christmas in the camp. At Christmas he sent a letter to his Mum with a list of items he needed to be sent in a parcel. The list of items included: underwear, a shirt, a pair of shorts, handkerchiefs, tooth powder, toothbrushes, razor blades, a notebook and good ordinary pencils, a pair of pajamas, a towel, a bit of hair grease, khaki shorts and chocolate. He never received the parcel although his mother would have sent it straight away

He didn't receive it because a month later the prisoners were marched out of the camp to safety in England. It took months before soldiers could return home to Australia. The reason for this is because the war was still happening. The reason they could march out of camp safe from the German's is because the Germans were losing the war and they had to start dropping their guard so the punishment after the war wouldn't be so harsh.

After the war he returned home. He went to university to become a civil engineer. Then later on becoming a lifeguard at Dee Why beach (in the Northern Beaches). He got married and had 4 daughters in Tasmania (including my grandma). He only died when my mum was 11. My great grandfather was an amazing man who was a navigator on a Lancaster in World War 2.

Editor: Thanks to Lyn Hillard for passing on this article. Jack's two sister-in-law's Joyce Sweeney and Rose Knight live in the War Veterans Village in Narrabeen.



Membership Officer, Jan Slater with Jan Hulse, Darrell Hatch and Helen Gribble. All welcomed at our February meeting.