

PFH DISTRICT RSL NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2017

The events, meetings, and services I have attended in the last month are as follows:

1. On Tuesday 7 August, I travelled to Brisbane to attend and chair a meeting of the RSL (Queensland Branch) Audit & Risk committee.
2. On Tuesday 8 August, I attended the funeral of long standing Emu Park RSL member, George Russell, who died tragically in a road accident.
3. The Gracemere Sub-Branch has recently transferred from the Wide Bay District to our District and on Sunday 13 August, I attended a general meeting of the Sub-Branch and welcomed them to the District.
4. On Monday 14 August, I travelled to Townsville to attend a Board meeting of Mates4 Mates.
5. From 15 to 16 August, I was in Brisbane to attend a State Board meeting.
6. On Friday 18 August I attended a Vietnam Veterans Day memorial service at Cockscomb Veterans Retreat at Cawarral and delivered the key note address.
7. On the afternoon of Friday 18 August, I travelled to Emerald and attended the Sub-Branch's Vietnam Veterans Day memorial service. After the service, I was invited to unveil their new memorabilia cabinets at their meeting place at Emerald Bowls Club.
8. On Thursday 24 August, I travelled to Brisbane to attend a special meeting of the State Board.
9. I attended and chaired a District Executive meeting in Mackay on Saturday 26 August.
10. On Sunday 27 August I attended a general meeting of the Emu Park Sub-Branch.
11. On Wednesday 30 August I travelled to Brisbane on Mates4mates business.

District President's Voluntary Hours and Kilometers Travelled Statistics for August 2017

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|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Voluntary Hours | 189.5 hours |
| Kilometers Travelled | 2068 kilometers |
| Nights Away From Home | 6 |

District Executive Meeting held on Saturday 26 August 2017

Dental Health Pilot Program

At the meeting held in May 2017, the District Council approved the Dental Health pilot program for 2017.

The program is now up and running and has been well utilized by RSL service members to date. The program guidelines have been disseminated to all sub-branches. However, some procedural changes need to be made and the amended guidelines will be distributed to the sub-branch secretaries when available.

Please note that there is no need to seek a quote for your dental treatment if you are able to pay for the treatment up front. Simply complete the necessary paper work and together with the receipt, submit through your sub-branch to the District Secretary for processing and refund. However, if you are unable to make the payment up front for financial reasons, then we suggest you go to your dentist for a checkup, and then seek a quote for any treatment that may result from this checkup. Submit the quote and receipt for your checkup through your sub-branch for refund of checkup cost and the payment of the quoted amount directly to the dentist by the District Secretary. Once the amount has been made to your dentist, you will need to arrange an appointment to have the treatment undertaken. Remember, under the program, you are only entitled to a maximum refund of \$1000 during 2017 and you may need to make part of the payment yourself.

The program guidelines are available through your sub-branch secretary and we ask that you please complete the necessary documentation and pass it on to your sub-branch secretary for submission to District for processing.

At the end of 2017, the District Executive will review the pilot program and then make recommendations to the District Council on whether the program will continue or continue in an enhanced form.

Gracemere Sub-Branch

The Gracemere Sub-Branch had made a request to transfer from the Wide Bay District to our District. The Wide Bay District had approved the move to our district.

I am pleased to advise that at the last Council meeting, PFH delegates unanimously approved the transfer and I know that you will join with me in welcoming the Gracemere Sub-Branch to our District.

I visited the Sub-Branch on Sunday 13 August and I would like to thank President Steve and his members for their hospitality and making me so welcome.

The Sub-Branch have a very good set up and I will be proposing that the District holds its first meeting at the Gracemere Sub Branch in 2018 so that delegates can meet their members.

LiveLife Alarms

The program is progressing with around 17 alarms ordered to date.

Sub-Branch Presidents are reminded to keep an eye out for members who may need of this facility.

Nebo Sub-Branch

The Sub-Branch is in the process of closing. However, the Nebo Auxiliary will continue to operate to ensure that ANZAC Day service will continue to be run in Nebo.

Deloitte's Governance Study

As you are aware, the State RSL Board has engaged Deloitte's to conduct a study into governance in the RSL in Queensland. For sub-branch delegates who were at the State AGM, they would have seen an initial presentation by Deloitte's. This presentation has been sent to all sub-branches and I urge you to ask your sub-branch secretary for a copy of the presentation.

Deloitte's are in the process of visiting each district before the end of 2017 and will make a presentation at the PFH District Council meeting on Saturday 18 November 2017 at Sarina. Timing details will be advised in due course. Deloitte's have undertaken to have preliminary information made available to Sub-branches two weeks before their presentation.

I urge sub-branches to ensure that their delegate is at this meeting so their views can be put forward. The District Executive have also decided to meet the costs of other sub-branch members (within reason) to attend this meeting.

In December 2017, Deloitte's will be submitting the findings of their study to the State Board. It is important that the views of the RSL membership is taken into account if RSL governance structures are to change. The State board will be reluctant to institute change if it does not have the backing of the membership.

RSL State Council of Auxiliaries

The Executive of the Auxiliary:

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|-----------|---------------------|
| President | Mrs Lynne Gambrill |
| Secretary | Mrs Maureen Sargent |
| Treasurer | Mrs Lesley Boye |

visited sub-branches in the Mackay region during July.

They intend to visit the sub-branches in the southern part of the District during the 1st week of September and will be contacting the relative presidents to arrange a visit.

It is my understanding that none of the auxiliaries in PFH District attended the 2017 RSL State Council of Auxiliaries AGM which was held in Brisbane about the same time as the State RSL AGM. The State RSL will pay for auxiliary delegates to attend the AGM and I ask executives of PFH auxiliaries to seriously consider sending a delegate to Cairns in 2018.

Kokoda Memorial Foundation Project

Marian Sub-Branch is applying for \$45 - \$50 K's through the State RSL Queensland Centenary of ANZAC Fund to help the foundation fund the provision of memorial plaques in France, Belgium, and at Gallipoli.

Delegates at the last District Council meeting unanimously approved a motion to support the funding application by the Marian Sub-Branch.

The application is being finalised at this stage.

The District President's Award

The District Executive has decided to introduce the District President's Award. The award will be a perpetual trophy and will be made to a sub-branch each year that has excelled in meeting the welfare and commemorative objectives of the League. The sub-branch's engagement with their community will also be considered when determining the award winner.

The District Executive will be responsible for deciding the winner of the award each year and the award will be presented at the Annual Dinner that is held in conjunction with the AGM.

The award will consist of a shield that will be engraved with the name of sub-branch that wins the award. The shield will be hung in the District Office but the sub-branch will get to keep a small replica of the shield.

The award will be made for the first time in 2018 and judging will relate to the performance of sub-branches during operations in 2017.

Proposed Animals at War Memorial

The District has been approached for support for the construction of such a memorial in Jubilee Park in Mackay.

The District has given the person a letter which supports the proposal in principle and the person has undertaken to approach the Mackay Regional Council regarding the proposal.

Council Meeting Dates for 2018

The following dates have been proposed:

- 17 February 2018
- 17 March 2018(AGM)
- 19 May 2018
- 21 July 2018
- 15 September 2018
- 17 November 2018

and will be considered at District Council meeting at Clermont on 16 September 2017.

2018 State AGM

The 2018 State AGM will be held in Cairns from 22 to 24 June.

The District has approached RSL State and pitched a case for the 2020 AGM to be held in Mackay. The matter has been reviewed by State employees and a report has been done up for consideration by the State Board.

Mates4Mates

I am presently a member of the Mates4Mates Board.

Mates4Mates is a fully owned by RSL Queensland and was set up in 2012 with the prime objective of assisting war veterans, especially the younger veterans, who are suffering from physically and psychologically injuries. Many of the mates suffer severely with PTSD and need all the help they can get.

I would like to urge sub-branches, when they are considering which organisations to make donations to, that they consider directing funds to Mates4Mates. I am aware that some sub-branches are making donations to organisations that have no links to the RSL at all. It is my belief that charity should start at home.

A donation to Mates is an easy way of spending money on welfare and the donation will be gratefully received and well targeted.

I intend to invite a representative from Mates to a Council meeting in the near future to tell us about the Mates programs they run for veterans.

State Board Meeting Thursday 17 August 2017

ACNC Investigation

A communication went to sub-branches in late February advising that the ACNC was conducting an investigation into all RSL State Branches including Queensland.

Queensland welcomed the investigation and voluntarily supplied the information requested by the ACNC.

The State Executive and CEO met with the ACNC investigators in late June 2017 and the CEO has now provided additional information requested by the ACNC.

A further meeting with the State Executive and the CEO took place in the latter part of August.

I will keep you posted on any feedback we receive. The finalization of the investigation could take until the end of the year.

Deloitte's Governance Review

See details under District Executive report.

State Based Minister for Veterans Affairs

RSL Queensland is lobbying the State Government to appoint a State based Minister for Veterans Affairs.

The LNP opposition has announced a policy in this regard but the government has not done so at this stage.

Matter is expected to develop further as the State election approaches..

ANZAC Day Two-Up

It has been brought to the attention of the Board that some sub-branches are approving for two-up to be played in some licensed premises in their areas and in some cases are not receiving any funds from the event.

The State President has asked me to stress to sub-branches that they need to make sure that the funds raised at the two-up comes back to the sub-branch for spending on the welfare of their members.

Sub-Branch Charters

Previously, I mentioned that RSL Queensland is concerned that some sub-branches have charters dating back pre 1940 and the the charters are sitting on sub-branch walls, in frames and behind glass, and deteriorating in condition.

RSL Queensland is prepared to take responsibility for providing protection for the charters in an archive environment and provide the sub-branch with an appropriate copy for display purposes.

Previously, I have had little response from the sub-branches in this regard and I again make a plea for sub-branches to take up the offer. I am aware that there are at least 3 charters that date pre 1940.

Let me know at the next council meeting if you wish to avail of this offer.

On Going Matters and Reminders

District Website/Facebook

New website site has been set up. It needs some finishing touches. Website address is www.rslpfdistrict.org.au

Sub-branches are encouraged to keep providing details of events, photographs, etc to Vice President, Phil Luzzi, for placing on the district website and facebook page.

Drop in Centre at District Office.

The District Executive had decided to purchase 2 desk top computers together with relevant software and a printer for the Drop in Centre.

However, RSL Queensland has now provided 2 computers for the centre and they have now been installed. The District will provide any software that is needed to get the computers operational.

New Constitution

As reported previously, the new State constitution has now been finalized as the legal advice in relation to sub-branches who have gambling clubs has been received and the constitution has been amended as required.

Matter was not resolved in time for the new State constitution to be put to State AGM in Brisbane on 23/25 June.

While the legal advice was awaited, model constitutions for districts and sub-branches were being developed and members of the Constitution & Awards committee were undertaking another round of visits to District Council meetings to consult on these constitutions.

However, the State Board felt that due to the Deloitte's Review of Governance, it would not be appropriate to continue as new constitutional issues may arise from the review that may have to be incorporated into the new State constitution and the district constitutions.

This may take considerable time and the approval of the new State constitution may take to the 2018 AGM in June next year. Given this situation, it has been decided that those unincorporated sub-branches who are on hold at present, may need to proceed with incorporation under the 2011 draft constitution if there are urgent reasons to do so.

ANZAC and RSL QLD Centenary Commemorative Funding

Funding is now being provided as follows:

1. 2017. To celebrate the 100th anniversary of the establishment of RSL (QLD Branch).
2. 2017 and 2018. To commemorate anniversaries of historical World War 1 events.

The District Secretary has a copy of the Terms of Reference and Guidelines for the funding program.

Applications are to be submitted using the "Event Plan" as a guide (located on RSL(Queensland Branch) website). Submissions are to be submitted through District so the completeness of the application can be checked.

Sub-branches need to be aware that funds will not be allocated to a single sub-branch unless there are geographic isolation reasons. Events need to be community based and in most cases sub-branches in a local area will need to combine and apply for the funding.

Homelessness Report

As reported in recent newsletters, the Review of Veteran Homelessness for RSL Queensland "A Place to Call Home" was released in an electronic form in the later part of 2016 and is on the State RSL website.

I commend the report and urge that sub-branches become familiar with the report, especially the recommendations, which have been accepted by the State RSL Board as a pathway strategy.

State Branch has decided to enter a partnership with the Salvation Army to provide services to homeless veterans and negotiations are now complete.

A report on the homelessness project was made to the State AGM.

At the District Council meeting on 22 July, State Veterans Services Manager, Rob Skoda, provided information and training to delegates. Each sub-branch delegate was provided with a data stick which contained the operations manual and training material.

District Veterans Welfare Fund

Remember there is \$100,000 available in the fund during 2017 and applications are still open.

Approximately \$70,000 of the grant monies has now been disbursed.

Cadet Fund

Remember there is \$24,000 available in the fund. Sub-branches by now should have now liaised with the cadet units in their area and started preparing applications for submission in the next two months.

Applications will need to be received by District no later than Friday 20 October 2017.

My wife and I celebrated our 40th wedding anniversary in April this year and we have decided to go to Norfolk Island for a week in the first part of September. I will be out of contact from 1 to 10 September. If you have any pressing matters, then please contact Deputy President, John Edwards, or District Secretary, Lynette Ney.

I hope to see your delegates at the District Council meeting at Clermont on Saturday 16 September. Please let Lynette know if your sub-branch will be sending a delegate. Until then, stay safe.

Kindest regards

Barry Vains OAM

District President

NJF Wellbeing with RSL Veterans Services support the Mackay Military Family Connect event for Veterans Health Week 22nd October 2017 at Eimeo. A morning event and people will need to bring their passports! Times and locations will be advised closer to the date.

Proudly sponsored by the Farleigh and Northern Beaches Sub Branch.

Contact Tracey on 4957 3626 for further information.