

PFH DISTRICT RSL NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2018

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

1. I attended the funeral of Emu Park Sub-Branch World War 2 veteran, Alex Scott, on 8 May in Rockhampton.
2. I travelled to Mackay to work in the District Office with the District Secretary on 9/10 May.
3. I attended the reconvened AGM of the Yeppoon Sub-Branch on Sunday 13 May.
4. I travelled to Brisbane to attend and chair a meeting of the State Audit & Risk Committee on Monday 4 June.

From 17 to 29 May, I took leave to holiday with my wife, Mandy, in France.

District President's Voluntary Hours and Kilometers Travelled Statistics for May 2018

Voluntary Hours	95.0
Kilometers Travelled	1021
Nights Away From Home	3

District President's Award

At the Annual Dinner held at Sarina on 17 March, it was announced that the Springsure Sub-Branch had won the inaugural award for 2017.

Unfortunately, the Sub-Branch was not represented at the Annual Dinner and the award could not be presented on the night. I was to attend the AGM of the Springsure Sub-Branch on Saturday 21 April to present the award, but the meeting was cancelled.

Together with District Vice president, Phil Luzzi, I will be attending the AGM of the Springsure Sub-Branch on Saturday 9 June to present the award.

Life Membership – Noel Wales

I ask that you join me in congratulating the Walkerston/ Pleystowe Sub-Branch President, Noel Wales, on being awarded Life Membership of the RSL.

In my absence, District Deputy President, John Edwards, attended the Sub-Branch general meeting on Sunday 3 June and presented the award to Noel.

I thank John for undertaking this most pleasant duty and I apologise to Noel for being unable to attend due to a prior commitment.

District Council Meeting at Moranbah on Saturday 19 May 2018

District Corporate Cards

The District Council approved the increase of District Executive corporate card limits to \$1,000 per month.



Sub-Branch ACNC Compliance Documentation

I reiterate the information provided at District Council meeting in Moranbah by the District Secretary:

1. 6 sub-branches are yet to send 2018 AGM compliance documentation to the District Secretary.
2. 11 sub-branches have not returned AIS Statement to District Secretary.

The documentation is required so that RSL QLD can attend to the lodgment of the AIS Statement on behalf of the sub-branches with the ACNC and assess whether sub-branches meet ACNC charitable status requirements.

Sub-branches that do not provide this documentation are in danger of having their charitable status revoked and this will result in the sub-branch having to pay tax.

The next Council meeting will be held on Saturday 21 July and will be hosted by the Farleigh & Northern Beaches Sub-Branch at Farview Tavern, Farleigh.

District Executive Meeting Saturday 30th June 2018

The next District Executive meeting will be held on Saturday 30 June.

State Board Meeting 24 May 2018

Due to my absent on leave I did not attend this meeting.

Defence Families Research Project

In 2017, RSL QLD commissioned a marketing organization to undertake a research project into Defence Force families in Queensland (ex-service and those still serving).

This valuable research will provide RSL QLD with demographic data on current and ex - Defence Force personnel and their families and will enable RSL QLD to enhance their strategic planning and target their services to particular areas of need.

The Stage 3 Report for the project was tabled at the Board meeting and relevant information will be disseminated in due course.

ACNC Investigation

A communication went to sub-branches in late February 2017 advising that the ACNC was conducting an investigation into all RSL State Branches including Queensland.

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

The ACNC has indicated that they would like to see changes made to the Governance of RSL QLD, particularly the Board structure.

In November 2017, the State Board approved and submitted a Governance Improvement Plan document to the ACNC for their approval and the plan was accepted. In fact they have said that it is the best plan they had seen. (This plan has now been updated to take account of the timelines set in the Directions Notice referred to below)

Representatives from the ACNC visited RSL QLD and met with the Board during the March 2018 Board meeting. They have again made it very clear that they are looking for progress towards a skilled based board and they will be very disappointed if the members do not approve such in the new constitution that will be considered at the AGM in Cairns in June this year.

In late March 2018, the ACNC finalized the investigation and RSL Queensland has now received the formal outcome of the year- long investigation. The ACNC has identified some breaches of its obligations under the ACNC Legislation in RSL Queensland's governance and has issued a Directions Notice. The Directions Notice compels RSL Queensland to undertake specific actions within a set period, otherwise the failure to comply with the direction is an offence and may result in further regulatory action including the loss of charitable status.

RSL Queensland has accepted all the directions issued by the ACNC and the Board has unanimously committed to implementing our Governance Plan and agreeing to an independent, third party assurance of governance processes over the next 12 months.

An online copy of the Summary of Direction Notice is available at www.rslqld.org/governance

As at the May Board meeting date, RSL QLD has met all its reporting obligations under the Directions Notice.

Deloitte's Governance Study

As you are aware, the State RSL Board engaged Deloitte's in June 2017 to conduct a study into governance in RSL Queensland.

Deloitte's representatives travelled throughout Queensland and made presentations to each of the 10 Districts and sought member views and feedback on what changes they were contemplating.

Deloitte's presented their final report recommendations to the State Board at the December 2017 meeting. The report was posted on the RSL State website and was sent electronically to each sub-branch in the districts before Christmas.

The State President, Stewart Cameron CSC, and the Chair of the Constitution and Awards Committee, Roy Cunneen, has carried out a round of district consultations and has presented a hybrid board structure version to the membership for feedback and comment. This presentation was made to the PFH District AGM in Sarina on 17 March 2018.

At the April Board meeting, the new skills based Board structure was finalized and incorporated into the constitution that will be presented to the AGM in Cairns in June of this year.

The new proposed constitution is now on the RSL Qld website.

The outcome of this matter is very important as it relates directly to the ACNC Direction Notice issued and it is an integral part of the Governance Improvement Plan the Board of RSL QLD is committed to. It is my belief that the change to a skilled based board is in the best interests of RSL QLD and the League in general. I urge sub-branches to seriously consider voting for the new constitution as this will allow RSL QLD to proceed into the 2nd centenary of our existence with a state of the art governance system that meets the modern day standards of the ACNC.

The ATO Private Binding Ruling

The ATO responded to RSL QLD's application for a Private Binding Ruling in March 2018 and has determined that the historic out of pocket expenses paid to volunteer RSL QLD directors are to be treated as income for taxation purposes. Further, they have now also advised that RSL QLD does not have to pay superannuation on these amounts.

RSL QLD is still liaising with the ATO in terms of the next steps, but it is likely that retrospective PAYG statements will be issued to the directors of RSL QLD.

This ruling has huge implications for how these out of pocket expenses are treated at district and sub-branch level and an advice will be issued to districts and sub-branches in due course.

Transition to Employment Program

One of the major issues current veterans are faced with during their transition from the Australian Defence Force is finding a job.

RSL Queensland launched a pilot program in Townsville on 25 September 2017 for a six month period with the view to extending the program throughout Queensland.

The pilot program has been very successful and on 30 April 2018, RSL QLD launched this program Queensland wide. Response from veterans undertaking transition to date has been very positive.

Nasho's CC Sub-Branch Name Change

At the District Council meeting in February, the Sub- Branch sought approval of RSL Queensland to change its name to the "Rockhampton Combined Services" sub-branch. The District supported the name change.

The request has been sent to the State Constitution & Awards Committee and it is expected that the committee will make a recommendation to the Board at the June Board meeting.

Extra Funding to Districts

State Branch has allocated an extra \$25,000 worth of grant funds to our District. The guidelines for the allocation of these funds are now being drawn up and in due course we will advise details to the sub-branches.

State AGM in Cairns 22/24 June 2018

At the AGM in Townsville in June 2016, a motion was put and passed which required RSL State to allocate \$2million to sub-branches each year for welfare spending. Legal advice has been received that this motion was invalid.

A motion will be put to the members in Cairns to rescind this motion and I ask that you give due consideration to supporting this motion.

This motion commits RSL Queensland to allocate these funds in perpetuity regardless of the financial position of the organization and this is not prudent management. RSL Queensland currently allocates \$1million to the districts for welfare funding by providing \$100,000 to each district.

The District Executive has approved the appointment of District Vice President, Ralph Strecker, as the District's Alternative Delegate to the State AGM.

On Going Matters and Reminders

District Website/Facebook

Website address is www.rslpfhdistrict.org.au

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

Centenary of Armistice Dinner

The District is to run the dinner in Mackay on the evening of Friday 9 November 2018 to commemorate this historic event.

District Deputy President, John Edwards, is chairing a sub-committee which is planning and organizing the event.

Planning for the event is continuing.

Innovation Networks Committee

State Branch has set up the abovementioned committee and the District nominees on the committee were:

Warren Shearer – Farleigh & Northern Beaches Sub-Branch

Rob Murray – Marian Sub-Branch

The Committee has now met in Brisbane and will continue to meet via technological means.

Warren Shearer provided a report to delegates at last District Council meeting in Moranbah.

District Strategic Plan

The District Plan is in the process of being reviewed.

It is planned for the amended plan to be submitted to the District Council at the July 2018 District Council meeting.

Sub-Branch Board Governance

Following on from the Governance Training provided by the District Secretary at the District Council meeting in Clermont in September 2017, I continue to remind sub-branches that members of sub-branch boards need to familiarize themselves with the TOBI booklet and undertake the on-line learning program so they understand what their responsibilities and duties are as a member of a Not-For-profit Board.

In terms of the TOBI Booklet, sub-branch boards should also ensure that board members have a written appointment which sets out these responsibilities and duties and acknowledges that board members are aware of the sub-branch's Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest policy.

Further, sub-branch board members should be aware that board members can be held liable for the debts of the organization if they allow the sub-branch to trade while insolvent.

It is recommended that at each meeting of a sub-branch, board members should rigorously review the financial position and once this happens pass the following motion:

“That in the opinion of the Board/Management Committee (whichever is appropriate) the sub-branch is solvent and there are reasonable grounds to believe that the sub-branch will be able to pay its debts when they become due and payable”.

Dental Health Pilot Program

The program has now been up and running since May 2017 and the District Council has resolved to continue the pilot program into 2018.

During 2018, the District Executive will review the program. Given the success of the program to date, I can see no reason why the program would not become a permanent one.

So far in 2018, 20 members have availed of the program at a cost of \$5,437.10.

LiveLife Alarms Program

The program is now permanent and is proving very popular with our members in need.

So far in 2018, 9 alarms have been issued at a cost of \$3,555.

Sub-branch presidents are reminded to keep an eye out for members who would benefit from the program.

District PAWS Coordinator

Phil has been contacting sub-branches on how he can help with their welfare and pension services.

Phil is in the process of organizing a basic welfare course to be run in the north and south of the District for all interested district sub-branch members and presidents are asked to encourage members to attend the course so they can provide welfare services within their sub-branch. 10 participants are needed for each course.

The course will run over 2(two) days and there will be no cost to the sub-branches.

You can contact Phil for further details.

Donations to Mates4Mates

Sub-branches are encouraged to consider donating funds to Mates4Mates if they are in a position to do so.

District Secretary, Lynette, has the relevant paper work that needs to be completed and sent with your donation to Mates4Mates.

The District provided for a donation of \$5,000 in the 2018 District Budget and now that the budget has been approved at the AGM, the amount has now been made to Mates4Mates and earmarked for the Equine Program.

Cadet Fund 2018

RSL State has increased the amount provided to the District from \$24,000 to \$33,750.

The Executive has decided to bring forward the date of allocation of the funds from November to Council meeting on 15 September 2018.

Applications closing date will be in early August with the District Executive vetting the applications on 25 August 2018.

Sub-branches need to start liaising with the cadet groups in their areas to establish what their needs are.

ANZAC Centenary Commemorative Funding

Funding is still available until the end of 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.

District Veterans Welfare Fund

A further \$100,000 of funds was allocated to the District for 2018.

To date 8 applications have been approved by the District Executive at a year to date cost of \$57,002.

Sub-branches should be thinking about the welfare projects they will be applying for to benefit their members and need to get the applications in early.

As I alluded to earlier in this newsletter, I took leave in the second half of May and together with my wife, Mandy, travelled to France for two weeks. My travel itinerary included a visit to the Somme battlefields of World War 1 and the Normandy D-Day landing beaches of World War 2.

My visit to the memorable Villers-Bretonneux included the Australian National Memorial and the Victoria School. While there, I was able to tour the new John Monash Centre which was opened on the eve of ANZAC day this year.



My visit also included a visit to the Anglo French Memorial for the missing soldiers at Thiepval near Poziers. All the names of the missing soldiers are inscribed on the walls of this massive memorial. As we entered to visit the Memorial, our French guide asked us to sit in a shaded area at the entrance and listen to a poem which she had one of the members of the tour group recite. The reciter was visibly shaken at the end and everyone had a tear in their eye. You will know why as I have included the poem in the newsletter.

Why Do You Cry

I stood in a field in a faraway land drawn to the spot but could not understand
What made me stop right next to this grave and what was this strange sad feeling it gave
Though there all alone I really felt a presence of someone and so I just knelt
It seemed I needed to sit in the cold and wait for something to me to be told
Why do you cry the young soldier said and why are you here in the field of the dead
His voice was so soft I hardly could hear and when I first looked there was nobody near
He looked like a shadow in his old uniform and it seemed to me he could never be warm
I knew in my mind he could not be real but it seemed his presence would help me to feel
What all people feel when they come to see the place where their loved ones lie over the sea
He asked me again and when I replied I said it was for all of mankind that I cried
I cry for the children that were never to be when all of the soldiers came over the sea
I cry for those fathers who all had to stay as their sons went to war in a land far away
I cry for the mothers every last one who watched as the war took their dearly loved son
I cry for the girl who lost her sweetheart as she waved him goodbye when they had to part
I cry for the friends who at home had to be as their mates went to war far over the sea
I cry for the man who lies in this ground not knowing if ever his body was found
I cry for the freedom this hero gave me and I cry that his knowing this never will be
I heard a soft sigh and his voice gently said this is my grave and though I am dead
You have found me and so I know I can rest happy to know we all gave our best
I then saw his eyes fill with tears so I said for whom do you weep young soldier now dead
And as he faded away like I knew he would do his voice said my son my tears are for you.

Ray Jackson. Remembrance Day. 2013



Stay safe and continue the good work of the League.

Kindest regards

Barry Vains OAM

District President

The Last Post

Member ID	First Name	Surname	Date of Birth	Deceased Date	Owner	Last Financial Year
1012890	Ernest	Baillie	25/11/1933	25/05/2018	Sarina Sub Branch	SMLIFE
1551235	T	Mccarthy	23/10/1924	23/05/2018	Mackay Sub Branch	SM1993
1558031	J	Marchant	22/11/1922	15/05/2018	Mackay Sub Branch	SM2006
1012442	Kenneth	Morris	19/02/1925	14/05/2018	Mackay Sub Branch	SMLIFE

Membership

	<26 yrs	26-35 yrs	36-45 yrs	46-55 yrs	56-65 yrs	66-75 yrs	76-85 yrs	86+ yrs	Total	>65
Blackwater/Bluff Sub Branch	4	23	41	98	156	387	215	108	1,032	710
Blackwater/Bluff Sub Branch	0	3	4	2	3	9	0	0	21	9
Capricornia & Rockhampton Region Sub Branch Inc	0	0	1	0	5	18	14	22	60	54
Carmila Sub Branch	0	0	0	2	1	2	1	0	6	3
Clermont Sub Branch Inc.	0	0	2	1	3	7	2	3	18	12
Emerald Sub Branch Inc.	0	2	2	4	8	18	2	2	38	22
Emu Park Sub Branch Inc.	1	5	4	16	22	78	32	15	173	125
Farleigh & Northern Beaches Sub Branch	0	0	0	3	2	18	7	2	32	27
Finch Hatton Sub Branch Inc.	0	1	4	7	4	7	7	0	30	14
Gemfields Sub Branch Inc.	1	0	1	1	5	24	7	2	41	33
Gracemere & District Sub Branch Inc.	1	3	5	6	13	17	5	5	55	27
Kuttabul Sub Branch Inc	0	0	0	0	4	4	4	2	14	10
Mackay Sub Branch Inc.	0	1	3	4	16	40	26	29	119	95
Marian Sub Branch Inc.	1	1	0	3	10	9	6	0	30	15
Mirani Sub Branch	0	0	0	2	5	1	0	0	8	1
Moranbah Sub Branch	0	2	9	6	1	3	0	0	21	3
NASHO CC Sub Branch	0	0	0	2	2	6	27	0	37	33
Nebo Sub Branch	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	2	2
Sarina Sub Branch Inc.	0	1	1	9	19	35	23	8	96	66
Seaforth Sub Branch Inc.	0	0	0	1	3	2	10	1	17	13
Springsure Sub Branch	0	1	0	0	0	3	2	1	7	6
St Helens Sub Branch	0	0	0	3	1	3	5	0	12	8
Walkerston-Pleystowe Sub Branch Inc.	0	2	2	10	7	31	9	3	64	43
Yeppoon Sub Branch Inc.	0	1	3	16	22	51	26	12	131	89
	4	23	41	98	156	387	215	108	1,032	710