

## RSL PFH DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

### AUGUST 2020

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

1. Thursday 2 July, participate in a Teams' special meeting of the RSLQ Board.
2. Thursday 9 July, attend a meeting in Rockhampton of Committee Members of the Rockhampton Combined Services Sub-Branch and the Capricornia & Rockhampton Region Sub-Branch.
3. Attend the deferred AGM of the Yeppoon Sub-Branch on Sunday 12 July.
4. Participate in a Teams' meeting of the Mates4Mates' Audit & Risk Committee.
5. Wednesday 15 July, participate in a Teams' meeting of RSLQ District Presidents.
6. Thursday 16 July, participate in a Teams' meeting of RSLQ Board.
7. Travel to Mackay to work in the District Office on Friday 17 July and attend and chair the postponed District AGM and District Council meeting at Marian on Saturday 18 Tuesday.
8. Attend general meeting of the Emu Park Sub-Branch on Sunday 19 July to present a Life Membership Award.
9. Thursday 23 July, participate in a Teams' RUOK meeting of RSLQ Directors.
10. Attend funeral of veteran, David Bardrick, in Rockhampton and conduct an RSL Poppy Service.
11. Travel to Sarina to attend AGM of the Sarina Sub-Branch on Saturday 25 July.
12. Participate in a Teams' Mates4Mates' Board meeting on Thursday 30 July

#### District President's Voluntary Hours and Kilometers Travelled Statistics July 2020

Voluntary Hours	161.5
Kilometers Travelled	1691
Nights Away From Home	3

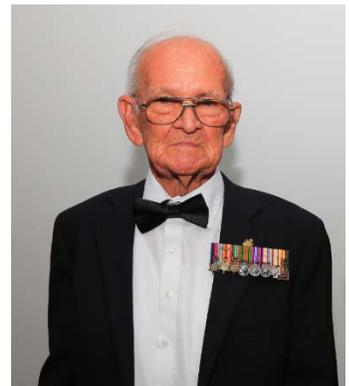
#### Vale – Gordon Wallace – Rat of Tobruk

Sadly, 98 year old World War 2 veteran and Rat of Tobruk, Gordon Wallace, passed away on 20 July 2020.

While Gordon was not a service member within the RSL District, as he lived in Brisbane, Gordon was well known throughout Queensland as the President of the Queensland Rats of Tobruk Association. Gordon had a long association with the Emu Park RSL and was a great supporter of the Emu Park Centenary of ANZAC Project.

I got to know Gordon around 10 years ago when I was President of the Emu Park Sub-Branch and he and his wife Trish stayed with Mandy and I on a number of occasions when he was invited to perform key note addresses at commemorative services on the Capricorn Coast.

District members who attended the District's Centenary of the Armistice Dinner in Mackay in November 2018 will remember Gordon as he was the Key Note Speaker at the dinner.

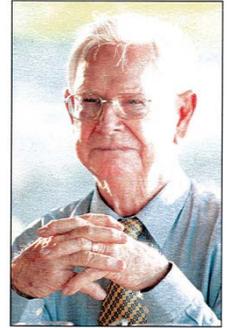


## Vale - Alastair McKenzie – World War 2 Veteran

It is with great sadness that I advise that Alastair recently passed away.

Alastair was a World War 2 veteran and a member of the Mackay Sub-Branch. Remarkably, he joined the RSL in 1947 and was a member for over 73 years.

Alastair served in the 26 Infantry Battalion of the 2<sup>nd</sup> AIF from 21 July 1942 to 21 June 1946 and saw operational service in the Torres Strait Islands, Morotai, and the Philippines.



I thank District Deputy President, John Edwards, for attending the funeral of Alastair on 23 July and conducting an RSL Poppy Service.

## Life Membership - President of Emu Park Sub-Branch -Darryl Dwyer

It was an honor for me to attend a general meeting of the Emu Park RSL on Sunday 19 July to present Darryl with Life Membership of the League.

An overview of Darryl's service to the RSL follows:

- He joined the Emu Park Sub-Branch on 23 February 2003.
- He is currently the President of the Sub-Branch.
- He served as Deputy President during 2010 to 2014 and again in 2013-14.
- He also filled in as Acting President in 2013-14.
- He has also served as the Sub-Branch delegate to PFH District and RSL Queensland.
- Over the years he has been in the RSL, he has:
  1. Contributed immensely to looking after the local veterans as a Welfare and Compensation Advocate from 2008 to 2013.
  2. Been instrumental in the organization of ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day commemorative services at Emu Park.
  3. Worked tirelessly in raising funds for the RSL and volunteered his time on the bar and at functions.



I am personally aware of the contribution and service Darryl has given the Emu Park Sub-Branch as he served as Deputy President during my tenure as President of the Sub-Branch from 2009 to 2013.

I am sure you all join with me in congratulating Darryl on receiving this prestigious award of Life Membership of the League.



Four Life Members from Emu Park Sub Branch:  
Barry Vains (Past President), Brian Abrahamson (Past President), Darryl Dwyer (Current President), Roy Cunneen (Past President)

## **COVID-19 Virus**

As reported in my last newsletter, the District Office reopened on Monday 15 June. However, the staff at RSLQ are returning to ANZAC House in Brisbane on a staggered basis due to the continued enforcement of social distancing requirements. As a result, a number are still working from home.

The Stage 3 lifting of restrictions occurred in Queensland in early July and this allowed the District to conduct the postponed AGM and a Council Meeting at Marian on Saturday 18 July.

We are all keeping our fingers crossed that the second wave of infections occurring in Victoria and New South Wales will not spread across the border to Queensland and force us all back into lockdown.

RSL Queensland and District will continue to communicate with the Sub-Branches and the membership regarding Government pronouncements.

## **Sub-Branch AGMs**

Those Sub-Branches that were unable to conduct their AGMs before Government restrictions forced the cancellation of their meetings have now taken steps to reschedule the meetings.

Please note that a blanket extension was given by the Queensland Office of Fair Trading to allow Sub-Branches in this situation to hold the meeting in the 6 months after the 30 June.

## **2020 District Budget**

As you would be aware, the 2020 District Budget was presented and approved at the rescheduled District AGM at Marian on Saturday 18 July.

## **2020 State AGM/ Congress**

The State AGM scheduled to be held in Brisbane on the week-end 27/28 June and postponed until Sunday 6 September has now been rescheduled to Tuesday 24 November due to the on-going COVID-19 restrictions.

Given the present uncertain environment, the current estimations of the duration of the public health restrictions, and the availability of air transport, the RSLQ Board has decided to conduct the AGM by technology.

I provided information to Sub-Branch Delegates in this regard at the District Council meeting at Marian on Saturday 18 July. As explained at the meeting, it is planned for the meeting to take a hybrid format with SE Queensland delegates gathering at the Exhibition Centre in Brisbane and the delegates from each of the 5 Regional Districts gathering at venues in their Districts and participating in the meeting in Brisbane via technology.

The State RSL constitution stipulates that a technology meeting can be called with the permission of the Sub-Branch members. However, this permission must be given by all Sub-Branches (100%).

RSL Queensland will be providing a communique on how this permission will be sought from the Sub-Branches at the beginning of August.

Given the problems that have arisen due to the COVID-19 emergency, I am confident that all the Sub-Branches in the District would support the holding of a technology AGM meeting.

## **Charitable Institution Registration Changes Under Qld Taxation Administration Act 2001**

### **Sub-Branches**

Sub-Branches have recently received an email from the District Secretary attaching correspondence from RSL Queensland regarding the above.

The correspondence advised that the Office of State Revenue had recently changed the requirements for how charities and Not-for Profit organisations register as a charitable institution under the Taxation Administration Act 2001 (Qld) (**TAA**). An organisation must be registered as a charitable institution under the TAA to receive concessions and exemptions from the Queensland Government.

To continue to receive these concessions and exemptions for land tax, payroll tax, transfer duty, and insurance duty after 9 November 2020, Sub-Branches will need to make changes to their constitution.

Sub-Branches need to assess whether they will be affected by this change. If you are affected and have not already done so, then please contact the District Secretary as directed in the RSL Queensland correspondence.

As expressed at the recent District Council meeting, it is my view that nearly all the Sub-Branches in the District will not be affected by the changes and the required constitutional changes can be delayed until the new RSL Queensland constitution is approved and as a consequence the District and Sub-Branch constitutions are up dated.

### **RSL Queensland**

RSL Queensland is also affected by these changes and stands to lose an estimated \$5 million each year in revenue if the required changes are not made to the RSL Queensland constitution by 9 November.

RSLQ Board recently asked Sub-Branches to vote on a circular resolution to approve the required constitutional changes to the existing 2015 constitution during July/August.

Under the existing constitution all Sub-Branches need to approve the circular resolution or the resolution will fail.

At the recent District Council meeting at Marian on Saturday 18 July, the Sub-Branch delegates were asked to vote on the circular resolution. All the 17 Sub-Branch delegates at the meeting signed the resolution on behalf of their Sub-Branch.

Since the meeting, the 5 Sub-Branch Delegates not present at the District Council meeting, have also signed the circular resolution.

I thank all the Sub-Branches in the District for approving the circular resolution.

## **PFH District Matters**

### **Annual General Meeting and District Council Meeting**

The postponed AGM from 28 March was held at Marian on Saturday 18 July and all business was attended to in accordance with the agenda. A District Council meeting followed in the afternoon.

I thank the President of the Marian Sub-Branch, John Edwards and his members for hosting the meetings. It was a pleasing social occasion given we have been isolated for so long.

### **2020 District Council Meeting Dates**

The District Council meetings for the remainder of the year are scheduled as follows:

19 September Capricornia & Rockhampton Region Sub-Branch

21 November Farleigh & Northern Beaches Sub-Branch (Mackay)

I am pleased to report that RSL Queensland CEO, Melanie Wilson, will be our Guest Speaker at the September District Council meeting.

### **2020 AGM - District Executive Appointments**

I am pleased to advise that at the AGM, Phil Luzzi and Dawn Salisbury, were appointed for another three year term to the positions of Vice-President and Treasurer respectively.

I congratulate Phil and Dawn on their re-appointments and thank them for the service they give to the District.

### **2019 Audited Financial Accounts**

The 2019 Audited Financial Accounts were tabled at the AGM and adopted by the meeting.

As can be seen from the financial accounts, the District is in a sound financial position.

### **2020 Budget**

The Budget was approved by the delegates to the AGM.

### **75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the End of World War 2 in 2020**

An amount of \$20,000 was set aside in the 2020 Budget to help Sub-Branches commemorate the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the end of World War 2 in August.

It is pleasing to see that a number of Sub-Branches are planning to commemorate the event in some way.

### **World War 2 Commemorative Medallions**

As advised by the District Secretary at the last District Council meeting, World War 2 veterans are eligible to receive the medallion from DVA.

However, the medallion has to be applied for on the DVA website.

I ask Sub-Branches to take steps to ensure that their World War 2 members apply for the medallion. You may need to assist the families in this regard.

The District Secretary provided a list of eligible members to Sub-Branch delegates at the District Council meeting.

### **COVID-19 – Sub-Branch Compensation Financial Package**

At the recent District Council meeting, the District Council adopted a recommendation put forward by the District Executive to approve a compensation package of \$45,000 to be allocated to the Sub-Branches in the same way as the Poppy and ANZAC Appeal funds received from State Branch are each year.

Given that ANZAC Day had to be cancelled this year due to the coronavirus health emergency, the District Executive recognized that many of the Sub-Branches used the day for fundraising purposes and were denied the opportunity to do so through memorabilia sales, raffles, etc.

These funds have now been made to the Sub-Branches and the District Executive asks that the funds be used for welfare and commemorative purposes.

### **State Board Meeting**

A meeting was held via Teams on Thursday 16 July 2020.

### **Strategic Plan 2020 – 2025**

#### **2020 Business Plan**

As resources have been diverted to respond to the coronavirus public health emergency and given the expected downturn in the Australian economy, delays to programs planned in Horizon 1 of the 2020 Business Plan and reductions in revenue budget targets were expected.

However, management has now conducted a complete review of the Horizon 1 timelines and has re-forecasted the 2020 Budget which will be presented and approved at the July Board meeting. Remarkably, the revenue from the lotteries sales and the Horizon 1 lines has not been materially affected.

Highlights of the 2020 Business Plan were as follows:

1. Lotteries sales were expected to grow from \$130 million in 2019 to over \$150 million, strengthening sustainability.
2. A contingency fund was set aside to fund emergent initiatives identified in the 2025 Strategy. These funds have now been allocated to specific programs in the review.
3. There was to be three major strategic projects in 2020:
  - Reimagining membership.
  - Reinvigorating our brands.
  - Piloting a service hub.

2020 remains a year to:

- Re-instate our relevance to the entire veteran community.
- Grow our influence across various stakeholders and governments.
- Strengthen sustainability in the future.

### **Investment Strategy/Establishment of Investment Sub-Committee**

The RSLQ CFO is presently working with the Audit & Risk Committee in setting up a skills-based Investment Sub-Committee.

The Investment Sub-Committee will provide direction and guidance to the Board and Management of RSLQ in the investment of cash and reserves which are surplus to operating requirements, RSL Art Union property prize portfolio purchases, and other business investment opportunities.

RSLQ presently has a large cash reserve figure which will be prudently invested to supplement the revenue stream of the Art Union activities.

At the May Board meeting, the Board approved the Investment Committee's Terms of Reference and an Investment Policy.

The recruitment of appropriately skilled committee members is now in train.

RSL members have been sent a communication inviting those with the necessary skills to apply for positions on the Investment Committee if they so desire.

### **2020 Membership Renewals**

Due to problems caused to the Sub-Branches by the coronavirus health emergency, the RSLQ Board has decided to extend the membership renewal cut-off date beyond 28 February. No alternative cut-off date has been set at this stage, but a date will be set once there is more clarity in relation to the lifting of the public health restrictions.

### **New State Constitution**

The Committee drafted a new constitution using the 2015 constitution as a base.

The draft of the new 2020 constitution was posted on the RSLQ website in early December 2019 and feedback and comments were sought from members up until the 21 February 2020.

A revised draft document has now been completed based on the feedback provided and this draft is now posted on the website.

Given the COVID-19 health restrictions the Board has decided that the new draft constitution will not be presented to members until a face to face AGM can be held in 2021.

This will give more time for further consultations with the membership.

### **RSL Queensland 2019 Audited Financial Accounts**

The accounts have now been signed off by the Board and will be tabled at the AGM in November.

### **RSL Queensland By-Laws**

The following by-laws have been updated and were approved by the Board at the meeting:

#### **By-Law 7 - Discipline and Disputes**

Changes have been made to the by-law to clarify the processes and discipline matters.

#### **By-Law 1 – Service Membership**

The by-law has been updated to conform with the new RSL National by-law which reduces Australian Defence Force service requirements to 1 day in line with DVA recognition.

The new by-laws can be viewed on the RSL Queensland website.

## **On Going Matters and Reminders**

### **District Website/Facebook**

Website address is [www.rslpfhdistrict.org.au](http://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 Phillips, for placing on the district website and facebook page.

### **Dental & Allied Health Program**

The Dental Health Program has been incorporated into the new Dental & Allied Health Program which commenced on 1 January 2020.

So far this year, 33 applications have been approved at a cost of \$18,903.89: Dental \$10,708.40, Hearing \$2,933.29, and Optical \$5,262.20.

### **LiveLife Alarms Program**

The program is permanent and continues in 2020.

So far this year, there have been 10 new alarms issued and 11 renewed at a cost of \$4,445.00.

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

### **District PAWS Coordinator**

The District PAWS Coordinator will meet with Michael Masters from Veteran Services at State in early August regarding the running of further Basic Welfare courses and others in the future.

### **Donations to Mates4Mates**

The District has made a donation of \$5,000 to Mates4Mates in 2020.

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 paperwork that needs to be completed and sent with your donation.

### **Gallipoli Medical Research Foundation (GMRF)**

The District has made a donation of \$5,000 to GMRF in 2020.

RSL Queensland has donated considerable funds to GMRF over recent years to enable the completion of the Vietnam Veterans PTSD study. Further, State is currently funding a study into the transition of servicemen and women from the services to civilian life.

Sub-Branches are encouraged to consider donating to GMRF if they are in a position to do so as it would be worthy welfare spending.

### **District Charitable Objects Fund**

A further \$100,000 of funds has been allocated to the District for 2020.

The guidelines and application form have been sent to all Sub-Branches. Please note that applications are limited to a maximum amount of \$10,000 and applications cannot be retrospective.

All applications need to be on the application form and be in accordance with the guidelines. Sub-Branches need to ensure they familiarize themselves with this documentation before an application is made.

Sub-Branches are encouraged to come up with worthy projects and apply for funding. You need to sell your proposal in the application.

So far this year, 3 application have been approved at a cost of \$ 8,632.40.

### Sub-Branch Support Program

Funding is available in 2020 through this program for those sub-branches in financial need.

So far this year, 1 application at a cost of \$330.00 has been made.

Please refer to program policy and guidelines. An application needs to be made on application form.

Sub-Branches that are adversely affected by the coronavirus emergency and are in need of emergency funds to run their Sub-Branches need to consider seeking assistance through this program. Please give me a call to discuss you Sub-Branches' circumstances.

### 2020 Cadet Funding

State Branch has provided funding of \$ 27,399 for 2020.

The District Secretary put out an advice early in the year to Sub-Branches calling for applications by a date in late June so the District Executive can assess applications at meeting on Saturday 4 July and make recommendations to the District Council at meeting on Saturday 18 July.

However, due to the coronavirus emergency the closing date for applications has been extended to 28<sup>th</sup> August so that Sub-Branches have more time to liaise with the cadet units.

### Emergency Welfare

A budget of \$10,000 has been allocated for Emergency Welfare funding during 2020.

So far this year, \$3,125.08 has been spent on 4 veterans.

In the last 6 weeks, I have lost two of my World War 2 mates and I will miss them immensely. The time is nigh, like with the World War 1 veterans in 2001, when Australia will lose its last World War 2 veteran. So, if your Sub-Branch has any World War 2 veterans left, please look after them as they are precious. Their generation, like their mother and fathers' generation before them, have been Australia's greatest generations.

Given what is happening in Victoria and New South Wales, the COVID-19 emergency crisis is not over yet and Queensland is locked in a dire battle to stop a second wave of infections in the State. I continue to ask Sub-Branch Presidents and their Executive members to be on the lookout for veterans and RSL members who are doing it tough as a result of this current public health emergency. I know that this is a challenge given that a large number of our members are in the age group vulnerable to the severe health complications that can be caused by the virus.

The District and State are in a position to provide financial resources if funds are needed.

Keep up the good work and remember that your District is here to help in any way we can.

Kindest regards

Barry Vains OAM

District President

## The Last Post

Member ID	First Name	Surname	Date of Birth	Deceased Date	Owner
1518798	Alastair	Mackenzie	2/09/1921	19/07/2020	Mackay Sub Branch Inc.
1013786	John	Currie	29/07/1934	6/07/2020	Sarina Sub Branch Inc.

# District AGM and Council Meeting



