

RSL PFH DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

MAY 2020

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

1. Thursday 2 April, skype Mates4Mates Board meeting.
2. Friday 3 April, skype RUOK meeting with RSLQ Directors.
3. Monday 6 April, skype RSLQ Audit & Risk Committee meeting.
4. Tuesday 7 April, skype RUOK meeting with RSLQ Directors.
5. Thursday 9 April, skype RUOK meeting with RSLQ Directors.
6. Tuesday 14 April, telephone meeting with Michael Bailey of 4RO Rockhampton to organize ANZAC Day commemorative radio service.
7. Tuesday 14 April, skype RUOK meeting with RSLQ Directors.
8. Wednesday 15 April, skype RSLQ District Presidents meeting
9. Thursday 16 April, skype RSLQ Board meeting.
10. Friday 17 April, skype PFH District Executive meeting.
11. Record ANZAC Day interview with ABC Capricornia Radio for playing on Breakfast segment on Saturday 18 April.
12. Monday 20 April, participate in skype meeting regarding the development of an Investment Policy Framework for RSL Queensland.
13. Tuesday 21 April, record interview with Win Local TV News for playing on eve of ANZAC Day night news.
14. Tuesday 21 April, record speech for inclusion in commemorative radio service to be played on 4RO Rockhampton Radio on ANZAC Day morning at 5.45pm.
15. Thursday 23 April, skype RUOK meeting with RSLQ Directors.
16. Friday 24 April, interview on 4RO Radio Breakfast Show regarding commemorative radio service on ANZAC Day morning.
17. ANZAC Day Saturday 25 April, stood in my driveway to remember and listen to the 4RO commemorative service at 5.45am.
18. Tuesday 28 April, skype RUOK meeting with RSLQ Directors.
19. Tuesday 28 April, skype meeting with RSLQ President, Vice-President, and CEO, regarding membership of an RSLQ Investment Sub-Committee.
20. Thursday 30 April, skype RUOK meeting with RSLQ Directors.

District President's Voluntary Hours and Kilometers Travelled Statistics April 2020

Voluntary Hours	124.5
Kilometers Travelled	6
Nights Away From Home	0

COVID-19 Virus

I hope you are all coping with the social isolation restrictions placed on us by Governments at this time. There is speculation that restrictions may start to be relaxed during May.

As outlined in my last newsletter, the RSL and its members are not immune from adhering to these public health restrictions. I continue to urge you to desist from any activity that would put anyone at risk, especially our members who are in the older age bracket of the population and are vulnerable to the severe health complications that the virus can cause and result in death.

RSL Queensland will continue to communicate with the membership regarding Government pronouncements.

We are certainly living in extraordinary times and the uncertainty as to when the restrictions on our lives will be lifted is placing much angst on us all.

Please let us know if you need help in coping with this situation.

ANZAC Day 2020

Given the circumstances around ANZAC Day this year, I hope you all enjoyed the day. For me, it was certainly a strange experience.

I was able to organize a commemorative radio service on 4RO Radio in Rockhampton at 5.45 am for Central Queenslanders and my ANZAC Day entailed standing in my driveway at that time, listening to the radio service, and paying my respects to the fallen and all those servicemen and women who returned and have since passed on. It was so pleasing to see the many others in my street who took the time to supported RSL Queensland's call to "Light Up The Dawn".

From media reports, it seems clear that call was answered by millions of other Australians as well.

I thank all those in the Mackay region who contributed to the radio coverage the RSL and Legacy received:

1. District Deputy President, John Edwards, organised short services on a number of radio stations in Mackay during the day on which he gave a short presentation and recited the ODE.
2. Mayor, Greg Williamson, told the story of 1st World War Gallipoli veteran, James Spence Milne, who tragically died on the first day of the Gallipoli campaign.
3. Nebo RSL Citizens Auxiliary President, Ian Attenborough, gave a commentary about Nebo and their 103 year old World War 2 veteran, Bill Bruce.
4. World War 2 veteran, Terry Hayes from the Mackay Sub-Branch spoke of his war time mates and the ones that he lost.
5. Shane Maloney from the Kuttabul Sub-Branch provided details on the Sub-Branch and reported that they had recently lost their World War 2 veteran, Monty Edmonds.
6. Vietnam veteran Les Palmer from the Mackay Sub-Branch spoke of his involvement with Legacy.

2020 Anzac of Year Award

You may have seen in the media in the lead up to ANZAC Day, Mike Goodwin OAM, was named by RSL National as one of the Anzac of the Year Awardees for 2020.

Mike was nominated for the Award by our District Deputy President, John Edwards, and the nomination was fully supported by the District.

As most of you will know, Mike is a teacher at the Mackay North State High School where he founded the Lest We Forget Program 22 years ago. The program encourages students to preserve the memory of those who served in the Australian Armed Forces and sacrificed their lives for our country. It is a novel way to educate students about Australia's war history.



Over the time the program has been running, more than 850 service personnel have been honored by the students taking part in the 10 biennial Commemorative Tours that visited 180 cemeteries and battlefields in five countries.

I am sure you will agree that Mike is a worthy winner and join with me in congratulating him on winning this prestigious award.

Sub-Branch AGMs

As reported in my last newsletter, most of the District's Sub-Branched have been able to conduct their AGMs before Government restrictions forced the cancellation of some meetings.

There is the strong possibility that those Sub-Branched that have had to postpone their AGMs will not be able to reschedule the meetings until after the 30 June cut-off date set out in constitutions.

Given this situation, a blanket extension has been given by the Queensland Office of Fair Trading which allows Sub-Branched to hold the meeting in the 6 months after the 30 June.

PFH District AGM

As you are aware, the District Executive took the decision to postpone the District AGM which was to be held in Yeppoon on 27/28 March due to the escalation of the restrictions relating to the coronavirus public health emergency.

At District Executive meeting held on Friday 17 April, we decided to consider the feasibility of running the 2020 PFH AGM electronically if the distancing restrictions are not lifted in the short term. However, this may prove difficult given the geographic expanse of the District and the varying levels of technological software and hardware the Sub-Branched have access to.

If the distancing restrictions are lifted in the short term, then it is the intention of the District Executive to run the AGM in conjunction with the next District Council meeting. Further, it has been decided that given the circumstances, we will not hold an Annual Dinner in conjunction with the AGM.

2020 District Budget

As you would be aware, the 2020 District Budget was to be presented to the March postponed AGM.

The District Executive has general control and management of the administration of the affairs of the District under section 25.1 of the District constitution and we will continue to run the District up until the Budget can be approved at an AGM.

I give an undertaking that we will continue to pay the operating accounts of the District as they fall due but will not authorize the payment of funds that are not operational eg donations and capital expenditure proposed in the budget.

2020 State AGM/ Congress

The State AGM scheduled to be held in Brisbane on the week-end 27/28 June has been postponed until Sunday 6 September.

Given the present uncertain environment and the current estimations of the duration of the public health emergency, this may change.

It is most likely, that there will be no annual dinner at the AGM when it goes ahead and for this reason and others, it was decided at recent District Executive meeting that the District will not send co-delegates to the AGM.

Australian Bushfires Crisis

As reported in the last newsletter, the bushfire crisis faced by communities across Australia over the summer months has caused devastation across many communities, especially in the southern states.

In response to this, RSL Queensland donated \$100,000 to support veterans in bushfire affected regions throughout Australia. The funds will be administered and distributed by RSL National.

The District Executive had included a donation of \$20,000 in the 2020 Budget for approval at the District AGM on 28 March 2020.

It was the intention of the District Executive to ask RSL National to administer and distribute these funds to veterans in need.

However, given the likely affect the coronavirus will have on our District, the District Executive has decided that the funds will now be held to provide financial assistance to our Sub-Branches adversely affected by the coronavirus crisis.

District Council and Executive Meetings

There has been no District Council meeting since the last one in November 2019. Executive Council meeting were held on Saturday 8 February, Friday 28 February and by skype on Friday 17 April. The District AGM and Council meeting set for 28 March had to be postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic.

2020 District Council Meeting Dates

16 May Gracemere Sub-Branch

The District Executive have decided to postpone this meeting and set a new date when it becomes clear as to the lifting of coronavirus restrictions.

18 July Finch Hatton Sub-Branch

19 September Capricornia & Rockhampton Region Sub-Branch

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

2020 AGM – Nominations for District Executive Positions

A nomination for each of the Vice-President and Treasurer positions has been received from incumbent Executive Members, Phil Luzzi and Dawn Salisbury, and their positions will be confirmed when the District AGM is held.

2019 Audited Financial Accounts

The Audit of the 2019 Financial Accounts has been completed by the auditor and reviewed by the District Executive.

The Audited Accounts have been signed off by the District Executive and will be presented when the AGM is rescheduled.

75th Anniversary of the End of World War 2 in 2020

It was decided that funding would be provided in 2020 Budget and made available to Sub-Branches for the commemoration of the event.

The District Executive has included \$20,000 in the 2020 Budget for approval at the AGM when it is rescheduled.

However, anniversary commemorative events may also be affected by the public health emergency.

State Board Meeting

A meeting was held via skype on Thursday 16 April 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 down turn in the Australian economy, there will be delays to programs planned in Horizon 1 of the 2020 Business Plan and reductions in revenue budget targets.

Management are in the process of conducting a complete review of the Horizon 1 time lines and the reforecasting the 2020 Budget.

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.
3. There was to be three major strategic projects in 2020:
 - Reimagining membership.
 - Reinvigorating our brands.
 - Piloting a service hub.

2020 was to be 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 CFO is presently working with the Audit & Risk Committee in setting up a skills based Investment Sub-Committee and developing an Investment Policy for RSL Queensland.

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.

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 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.

There may be some minor changes to this document before being presented to members at the AGM in September.

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 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, 26 applications have been approved at a cost of \$9,319.04:

Dental \$5,487.90, Hearing \$1, 943.29, and Optical \$1,887.85.

LiveLife Alarms Program

The program is permanent and continues in 2020.

So far this year, there have been 5 new alarms issued and 2 renewed at a cost of \$2,065.

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 be liaising with Veteran Services at State regarding the running of further General Welfare courses during the year.

Donations to Mates4Mates

The District Executive has considered providing a further donation to Mates4Mates in 2020. \$5,000 has been provided for in the 2020 District Budget to be presented at the AGM when it can be held.

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.

Gallipoli Medical Research Foundation (GMRF)

The District Executive has considered providing a further donation to GMRF in 2020 and \$5,000 has been provided for in the 2020 District Budget to be presented to the AGM when it can be held.

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, 1 application has been approved at a cost of \$ 2,068.

Sub-Branch Support Program

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

So far this year, no applications have been received.

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 will be extended to October 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, \$3,513.91 has been spent.

Since my last newsletter, there is no clarity as to when the public health restrictions might be lifted and when we can expect to get back to living our lives in a normal way. It seems likely that 2020 is going to be a very difficult year for the RSL and our members given the challenges facing Australia at this time.

I 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. This will be challenging 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. Please do not put them at risk by making social visits, but check up on them regularly by telephone or through a family contact.

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 Da	Owner	Last Financia
1537685	Maxwell	Simmons	13/06/1947	3/05/2020	Gemfields Sub Branch II	SMLIFE
1020924	Robert	Davidson	10/01/1933	6/04/2020	Sarina Sub Branch Inc.	SMLIFE

Anzac Day in the District





