

## RSL PFH DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

### NOVEMBER 2020

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

1. On Thursday 1 October, I participated in a Mates4Mates Board meeting via Teams.
2. On Friday 2 October, together with the District Secretary, I participated in a Teams' meeting with the State General Manager of Membership and Network, Lisa McIlroy, and a State IT staff member, Barrie Russell, regarding the selection of a District Sub Branch to participate in an IT Pilot Program.
3. On Monday 5 October, I travelled to Brisbane to attend an RSLQ Audit & Risk Committee meeting on Tuesday 6 October and a Meet & Greet with new members of the Investment Committee on Wednesday 7 October.
4. While in Brisbane, I met with the new Company Secretary, Simon James, of Mates4Mates on 6 October and together with Queensland State President, Tony Ferris, I paid a home visit to Trish Wallace, the widow of Rat of Tobruk, Gordon Wallace, who sadly passed away last June.
5. I attended a commemorative service in Yeppoon on Saturday 10 October for Noel (Stewie) Harald who died of wounds on 11 October 1967 while serving with 2 RAR in South Vietnam and laid a wreath on behalf of the District.
6. I paid a visit to the Emu Park Sub Branch on Sunday 11 October and met with a group of visiting 2 RAR veterans who were on the Coast for the Stewie Harald memorial service the previous day.
7. I travelled to Rockhampton on Monday 12 October to attend the funeral of World War 2 veteran, John (Jack) Derrington.
8. I attended an Amalgamation Working Party meeting of members of the Capricornia and Rockhampton Region Sub Branch and Rockhampton Combined Services Sub Branch on Tuesday 13 October.
9. On Thursday 15 October, I participated in a meeting via Teams with RSL Queensland Head of Membership Services, Teresa Brook, and District Secretary, Lynette Phillips, to arrange Discovery Meetings with 6 PFH Sub Branches.
10. On Wednesday morning of 21 October, I attended a Veterans' Coffee meeting at the Rosslyn Bay Boat Harbor Kiosk.
11. On Wednesday afternoon of 21 October, I participated in a District Presidents' meeting via Teams.
12. On Thursday 22 October, I participated in an RSLQ Board meeting via Teams.
13. On Friday 23 October, with RSL Queensland Head of Membership Services, Teresa Brook, I participated in Discovery Meetings with the Emu Park and Yeppoon Sub Branches.
14. I travelled to Mackay on 27 October, and with the RSL Queensland Head of Membership Services, Teresa Brook, and District Secretary, Lynette Phillips, participated in Discovery Meetings with the Mackay and Finch Hatton Sub Branches on Wednesday 28 October and the Marian Sub Branch on Thursday 29 October.
15. While in Mackay, I had the honor of presenting RSL Membership Certificates to Kuttatubul Sub Branch member, Len Lister and Allan McGill, on the morning of Friday 30 October.
16. In the afternoon of Friday 30 October, I attended and chaired a District Executive meeting.

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

Voluntary Hours	171.0
Kilometers Travelled	1437
Nights Away From Home	6

## **Yeppoon Commemorative Service – Saturday 10 October 2020**

16141 Private Noel (Stewie) Harald died of wounds on 11 October 1967 while serving with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Royal Australian Regiment in South Vietnam.

The “Stewie Harald Park” in Yeppoon is named in honour of Stewie.

The Yeppoon Vietnam Legion with the help of the Yeppoon RSL conducted a Memorial Service for Stewie in the Park at 11am on Saturday 10 October 2020.

There was a large number of veterans, Stewie’s family, and members of the Yeppoon community in attendance at the service. A number of 2 RAR veterans who had served with Stewie were also there.



Wreaths were laid in memory of Stewie at the Service and I attended and laid a wreath on behalf of the District.

On behalf of the PFH District, I thank the Yeppoon Vietnam Legion for organizing and conducting the commemorative service and the Yeppoon RSL for assisting and hosting everyone after the service.

## **VALE – World War 2 Veteran – John Arthur Derrington (Jack)**

Sadly, Jack Derrington passed away on 6 October and I represented the RSL at the funeral on 12 October.

Jack was a renown citizen of Rockhampton and spent over 50 years working tirelessly as a Legatee for Legacy. Brian Hollins from Legacy presented a Legacy tribute at the funeral.

I got to know Jack after 1985 when I commenced work with the Rockhampton Grammar School. He always attended the School’s ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day services each year.

I was honored to be asked by Jack’s family to be one of the pallbearers.

## **Presentation of Certificates to Kuttabul RSL Members**

As alluded to earlier, I had the honor of presenting certificates to two members of the Kuttabul RSL Sub Branch at a gathering in Jubilee Park on the morning of Friday 30 October. The Mayor of the Mackay Regional Council, Greg Williamson, also attended the event.

### Len Lister

Len is a World War War 2 veteran and has been a member of the RSL for over 70 years. He served in both the CMF and the 2<sup>nd</sup> AIF and during the war had operational service in New Guinea with the 2/12 Infantry Battalion.

It was a privilege to present the following to Len:

1. The 30 Year and 60 Year RSL Membership Certificates.
2. The DVA 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the end of World War 2 Medallion and Certificate of Commemoration.



### Allan McGill

Allan served in the CMF during the Vietnam War years and has 39 years membership of the RSL.

It was a privilege to also present Allan with a 30 Year Membership Certificate.



### Singer Sharon Heaslip – “The White Cliffs of Dover”

Many of you in the Mackay Region will know Sharon as she has been singing at RSL Commemorative ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day services for many years.

Sharon has recently released an album of songs called “By Request”.  
On the album is her version of the iconic World War 2 song “The White Cliffs of Dover”.

Members can support Sharon and purchase a copy of the album on website <https://www.sharonheaslip.com>

### COVID-19 Virus

It now seems evident that the Victorian Government has now controlled the coronavirus outbreak in their State and given that the other States have also been successful in controlling the virus , there is optimism that restrictions will continue to be eased and state borders will be opened By Christmas.

However, in the meantime, I ask Sub Branches and members to please continue to keep observing the social distancing requirements in place.

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

### **2020 State AGM/ Congress Tuesday 24 November**

RSL Queensland provided a communique to Sub Branches seeking permission to conduct the AGM in a hybrid/technology format. Under the State Constitution, all Sub Branches needed to give their permission for the AGM to be run in this format. Unfortunately, a small number of Sub Branches chose not to give their permission.

This has left the RSLQ Board in a most difficult position. The Board believes that RSL Queensland leaves itself open to a very high risk exposure in relation to the coronavirus situation if a face to face meeting was held in Brisbane. Further, given the present state of the air transport system in Queensland due to the Covid-19 emergency, it is unlikely air transport could be secured for regional and country delegates. The hybrid format structure would mitigate against these risks.

Given that it is imperative that RSL Queensland conduct an AGM before the end of the year, the Board has decided to conduct the AGM in the hybrid format and a notice of AGM meeting was forwarded to Sub Branches on 24 August.

The District has 18 Sub Branch delegates attending the Mackay hybrid venue at Harrup Park in Mackay on Tuesday 24 November.

### **PFH District Matters**

#### **District Executive Meetings**

A District Executive meeting was held on Friday 30 October.

#### **District Council Meetings.**

The next District Council meeting will be held in Mackay and will follow the State AGM on Tuesday 24 November.

#### **Winding up of Sarina Sub Branch**

At the AGM of the Sarina Sub Branch held on Saturday 25 July, regrettably members took the hard decision to wind up the Sub Branch due to insolvency matters and this is proceeding.

RSL members in the Sarina area wish to open a new Sub Branch entity once the winding up matter is attended to and at the meeting District accepted a District Executive recommendation to support and facilitate a request for RSL Queensland consent in principle to establish a new Sub Branch in Sarina.

We await approval from RSL Queensland.

### **Amalgamation of the Two Rockhampton Sub Branches**

The Rockhampton Combined Services Sub Branch has been struggling with its governance since their long term President and Secretary died about two years ago. This year at the AGM they were unable to elect a management committee.

The District had previously met with the management committee and outlined their options for survival. The Sub Branch then approached the Capricornia & Rockhampton Region Sub Branch about an amalgamation of the two Sub Branches and both Sub Branches agreed in principle to the proposal.

At meeting District accepted a District Executive recommendation to support and facilitate a request for RSL Queensland consent in principle to a proposed amalgamation of the two sub Branches.

At RSL Queensland Board meeting on Thursday 22 October, approval in principle was given for the two Sub Branches to amalgamate.

### **State Board Meeting and Related Matters**

A meeting was held via Teams on Thursday 22 October 2020.

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

The RSLQ CFO has been working with the Audit & Risk Committee to set 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 skills based independent committee members has now taken place and the Board at its September meeting approved the committee members. I was appointed as the Interim Chair of the Committee.

As alluded to earlier, I travelled to Brisbane and attended a Meet & Greet for the new committee members which was attended by the RSL Queensland President and members of the Senior Management Team.

The 1<sup>st</sup> formal meeting of the Committee has been set for Friday 20 November.

### **RSLQ Managed IT Service Pilot Project**

RSLQ is looking to roll out a Managed IT Service Program for the Districts and Sub Branches in 2021.

The program will offer and fund the following services as part of the program to Districts and Sub Branches:

- Laptops .

- Office 365 Licensing.
- Phone Service via Teams.
- Managed Photocopier.
- Managed network and Wi-Fi.
- Teams room based video conferencing camera.
- Access to the State IT Service Delivery Team for end to end support on the above items.

Initially, a Pilot Program will roll out in November and December with one Sub Branch from each of the 10 Districts.

The Gracemere Sub Branch has been chosen as the PFH District site to participate in the Pilot Program and I thank the Sub Branch for agreeing to do so.

### **New State Constitution**

A Sub 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 now give more time for further consultations with the membership.

### **Sub Branch Discovery Project**

Resulting from the RSL Queensland 2025 Strategy, a new Department called Membership and Network has been set up under General Manager, Lisa McIlroy, to provide direction and assistance to the Districts and Sub Branches.

During September/October, RSL Queensland staff visited a number of Sub Branches seeking information on how Sub Branches can be assisted by this new Department. The District Secretary and I have acted as a liaison between the State Branch officers and your Sub Branch.

The RSL Queensland Head of Membership Services, Teresa Brook, together with myself and/or the District Secretary, Lynette Phillips, paid visits to the following 5 Sub Branches up to the end of October:

1. Emu Park
2. Yeppoon
3. Marian
4. Finch Hatton
5. Mackay

I thank those Sub Branches for participating in these meetings and hosting us on the day.

The other Sub Branches in the District will be afforded visits in the near future.



### **On Going Matters and Reminders**

### **RSL Ties and Scarfs**

As advised at District Council meeting in Rockhampton on Saturday 19 September, RSL Queensland has decided to provide new members with an RSL tie or scarf in their new membership kit.

Further, existing members will be provided with an RSL tie or scarf on request.

Can Sub Branches provide to the District Secretary the names of their members who wish to avail of the offer.

State has advised that ties and scarfs are not available at this time.

### **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 was incorporated into the new Dental & Allied Health Program which commenced on 1 January 2020.

So far this year, 55 applications have been approved at a cost of \$24,920.14: Dental \$15,326.60, Hearing \$2,980.54, and Optical \$6,613.00.

### **LiveLife Alarms Program**

The program is permanent and continues in 2020.

So far this year, there have been 16 new alarms issued, 14 renewals, and 1 upgrade at a cost of \$7,100.00.

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, Phil Luzzi and I met with State Veteran Services Managers, Michael Masters and Alan Birkenhead, and Rockhampton VSO officers in early August to discuss the running of further Basic Welfare courses in the District and discuss other District training needs.

It is unlikely any training programs will be provided before next year.

### **Donations to Mates4Mates**

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

The donation this year is to be used by Mates4Mates to assist with their National Appeal Fundraising Day which aims to raise \$100,000 and the District has been shown as a supporter on the campaign material.

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

We have been advised by GMRF that in view of the District's donations to date, the District will be acknowledged on their Fundraising Board which is sited in the foyer of the Greenslopes Hospital.

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, 8 applications have been approved at a cost of \$20,692.40.

### **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.

### **2020 Cadet Funding**

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

Applications have been received from the cadet units through the Sub Branches and the District council will consider applications at District Council meeting on Tuesday 24 November.

### **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.

As alluded to earlier, I have attended a number of Discovery Visits to 5 of our District Sub Branches towards the end of October.

At one of those visits, I was very disappointed to learn from two young veterans that in some Sub Branches throughout Australia, young veterans are not being welcomed into those Sub Branches. Those of us from the Vietnam War era will recall that some Vietnam veterans were also shunned by some Sub Branches at the time while others were embraced and welcomed.

It appalls me that in some cases, this rejection of the younger veterans is being carried out by older members who should know better.



In the web of human life, RSL members are linked by the common thread of our service in the armed forces of our beloved country, Australia. There is no rank in the RSL, only office bearers who should have a common goal of looking after the welfare and wellbeing of Australia's Defence family while in service and after service. The RSL values direct that we look after all veterans and ex-service personnel and there be no discrimination due to colour, age, sex, and certainly not what theatre of war they served in or whether they served in an operational area or not.

I know most Sub Branches would welcome the inclusion of younger veterans, as for the RSL to survive another 100 years, their generation will need to be the future custodians of the RSL operations.

This is the case with the Yeppoon RSL where these two young veterans are now inclusive members and sing the praise of that Sub Branch on how they were welcomed and made to feel that the Sub Branch was their home too.

I say that I believe I know my District well enough to say that this is the case in other Sub Branches in the District as well and I ask you to keep up the good work in this regard.

Given the continued fight against COVID -19, I again 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.

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

Remember, the District is here to help in any way we can.

Kindest regards

Barry Vains OAM

District President

## **THE LAST POST**

Membership ID	First Name	Last Name	Date of Birth	Owner	Last Financial Year	Deceased Date
1524987	John	Derrington	6/05/1927	Capricornia &	SMLIFE	6/10/2020
1569000	Gerardus	Veldhuis	7/11/1946	Farleigh & Northern	SMLIFE	28/09/2019
1182931	Alan	Sherwell	14/01/1936	Mackay Sub Branch Inc.	SMLIFE	26/10/2020