

RSL PFH DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2021

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

1. I travelled to Gympie and attended the Wide Bay and Burnett District AGM on Saturday 6 March.
2. On Thursday 11 March, together with RSL Queensland Manager Membership and Chief Financial Officer (CFO), Emily Bateman and Greg Pratt, we undertook Discovery Visits to the Gracemere and Capricornia and Rockhampton Region Sub Branches.
3. While CFO Greg Pratt was in Rockhampton, I took him on a visit to the Emu Park and Yeppoon Sub Branches on the Capricorn Coast on Thursday 11 and Friday 12 March respectively.
4. On Monday 15 March, I attended the funeral of ex-serviceman, Reg Spratley, in Rockhampton and conducted an RSL Poppy Service.
5. I travelled to Mackay and together with District Secretary, Lynette Phillips, and RSL Queensland Membership and Network personnel, Chrissie Drewitt and Nicole Ramsay, conducted Discovery Visits to the Farleigh and Northern Beaches, Seaforth, Kuttabul, Mirani, and Walkerston and Pleystowe Sub Branches on Tuesday 16/Wednesday 17 March.
6. On Tuesday 23 March, I travelled to Blackwater for the Blackwater/Bluff Sub Branch AGM.
7. I travelled to Brisbane for a District Presidents' meeting on Wednesday 24 March and RSLQ Board meeting on Thursday 25 March.
8. On Friday 26 March/ Saturday 27 March, I attended the District AGM events and chaired meetings in Yeppoon with a Meet & Greet at the Yeppoon Sub Branch on Friday evening, a Wreath Laying Ceremony on Saturday morning, then the District AGM and District Council meetings, and the Annual Dinner on the Saturday evening.

District President's Voluntary Hours and Kilometers Travelled Statistics

March 2021

Voluntary Hours	191.0
Kilometers Travelled	3140
Nights Away From Home	5

Vale – Life Member – Ian Power

Sadly, Ian passed away in late February with his funeral taking place on Friday 5 March.

Ian was a Malaya and Vietnam veteran and had a distinguished service record as follows:

Citizen Military Forces	August 1948 to May 1955.
National Service	May 1955 to July 1955
Regular Army	July 1955 to December 1974

As a member of the Rockhampton, Yeppoon, and Capricornia & Rockhampton Region Sub Branches, Ian volunteered considerable time to the RSL and also to Legacy.

I was unable to attend the funeral and I thank the President of the Capricornia & Rockhampton Region Sub Branch, Tiny Clark, for conducting an RSL Poppy Service at the funeral.

Vale – Reginal Charles Spratley

At the request of the family, I attended Reg's funeral on Monday 15 March in Rockhampton and conducted an RSL Poppy Service.

Reg joined the Army as a National Serviceman in July 1971 and signed on in the Regular Army until 1986.

To my knowledge he was not an RSL member but his family was very appreciative of the RSL providing a Poppy Service in his honour.

2020 District President's Award

The District Executive decided in 2017 to introduce the District President's Award. The Award is a perpetual trophy that is awarded to a Sub Branch each year that has engaged with the community and excelled in meeting the welfare and commemorative objectives of the League.

It was announced at the District's Annual Dinner held in Yeppoon on the evening of Saturday 27 March that the Gracemere and District Sub Branch was the winner of the Award for 2020.



Unfortunately, there were no representatives of the Sub Branch present at the dinner to accept the engraved trophy and it will be passed on to the Sub Branch by the District Vice President, Phil Luzzi.

During 2020, the Sub Branch:

1. Has been very active and successful in recruiting new service members.
2. Has a very active welfare program for its members and veterans in general.
3. While it is a traditional Sub Branch, it runs a very active club facility which raises funds for its welfare program.

We all know the restrictions the COVID pandemic placed on the RSL's commemorative events during 2020 with ANZAC Day services being cancelled.

However, the Sub Branch took up the gauntlet and planned and run a very successful Dinner in late August to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the End of World War 2.

I am sure you will all join with me in congratulating the Gracemere Sub Branch on winning this prestigious award.

ANZAC Day 2021

No doubt Sub Branches are well progressed with the planning of ANZAC Day events in their communities and we are all hoping that events will go ahead given the recent COVID scare In Brisbane.

I have been invited to attend the services in Emerald by the Emerald Sub Branch and I am looking forward to the visit.

PFH District Matters

Next District Meetings

District Executive

A meeting was held on Friday 26 February.

2021 AGM

The AGM was hosted by the Yeppoon Sub Branch on Friday 26/Saturday 27 March at Yeppoon.

John Edwards was elected unopposed to the Deputy President's position at the meeting.

I congratulate John on his election and thank him for the service he has given to the District over many years.

The following senior RSL Queensland personnel:

State President, Tony Ferris

Vice State President, Bill Whitburn OAM

RSL Queensland CEO, Melanie Wilson

RSL Queensland General Manager, Membership and Network, Lisa McIlroy.

attended the meetings and events as well as other personnel from the Membership and Network Department.

I particularly thank State President Tony Ferris, State Vice President Bill Whitburn OAM, RSL Queensland CEO Mel Wilson, and General Manager Membership & Network Lisa McIlroy, for giving their time to be with us on this occasion and for their good counsel over the week-end.

By all reports, the week-end was enjoyed by all and who will forget Mel's inspirational address at the Dinner.

I thank our District Secretary, Lynette Phillips, for the work she put into the planning and co-ordination of the event and the President of the Yeppoon Sub Branch and his members for the assistance they gave as the host Sub Branch.

Please see photos at the end of the Newsletter.

District Council

A meeting was held in Yeppoon following the State AGM on Saturday 27 March.

Meetings for Remainder of Year

District Executive

Friday 16 April

Friday 25 June

Friday 27 August

Friday 29 October

District Council

Saturday 8 May at Farleigh Northern Beaches (Farview Tavern)

Saturday 17 July at Finch Hatton

Saturday 18 September at Gracemere

Saturday 20 November at Emu Park

Winding up of Sarina Sub Branch

At the AGM of the Sarina Sub Branch held on Saturday 25 July 2020, 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 is attended to and at the September 2020 meeting the District Council 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.

At the December 2020 meeting, the RSL Queensland Board gave approval in principle for the establishment of a new Sub Branch in Sarina.

I attended a meeting of Sarina RSL members on Sunday 14 February, at which a Steering Group was elected to prepare for the establishment of the new Sub Branch.

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 over two years ago. At the 2020 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 September 2020 meeting, the District Council 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 2020, approval in principle was given for the two Sub Branches to amalgamate.

The District is in the process of seeking legal advice on behalf of the Sub Branches regarding the way the amalgamation will be effected.

State Board Meeting and Related Matters

A meeting was held on Thursday 25 March 2021.

RSL Queensland AGM

The Board has decided to delay the AGM until Wednesday 8/Thursday 9 December. The Board was conscious that it is ideal to hold AGM's on week-ends so younger veteran delegates who work can attend. However, accommodation and venue matters dictated this change for 2021.

The meeting will be held in Brisbane and the Board felt that it is desirable that a face to face meeting of Sub Branch delegates be held due to the important matters that will need to be considered at the meeting. Constitutional changes in relation to a proposed skills based Board and the proposed Member Value Proposition will be presented at the meeting.

The Board also concluded that the delay would also allow time for most delegates to have had their COVID vaccinations and this will mitigate risks associated with COVID transmissions.

The Board has approval from the ACNC to delay the meeting.

Member Value Proposition (MPV)

At District Council meeting held at Yeppoon on Saturday 27 March, RSLQ CEO, Melanie Wilson, gave an overview of the 2025 Strategy as a prelude to a presentation by the General Manager Membership & Network, Lisa McIlroy, on the proposed Member Value Proposition.

The presentation outlined how the proposed MPV is intended to operate.

A hand out was provided to Sub Branch delegates at the meeting and it is envisaged that this hand out will be made available to Sub Branch members. However, other communications will roll out to members in the coming weeks.

If members accept this MVP proposal, then there will need to be changes made to the RSL Queensland constitution and it is intended that these changes will be presented to the 2021 RSL Queensland AGM.

RSLQ Managed IT Service Pilot Project

In terms of the 2021 RSL Queensland Business Plan, RSLQ will 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 was rolled-out in November and December 2020 with one Sub Branch from each of the 10 Districts.

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

Further, Sub Branches can apply to State Branch through District to have an internet service connection installed.

New State Constitution

The Constitution Sub Committee has now finalised a draft of the new constitution which used the 2015 constitution as a base and is posted on the RSLQ website.

Members can now go to the RSL Queensland Website and comment on the current draft constitution by going to www.rslqld.org and scroll across to 'About Us' to drop down to 2020 constitution link.

At this stage, it is intended that a proposed new constitution be presented to members at the 2021 AGM for approval or otherwise.

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 2020, 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 acted as a liaison between the State Branch officers and these Sub Branches.

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 2020:

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

On Friday 19/Saturday 20 February, Membership and Network personnel, Chrissie Drewitt and Nicole Ramsay, District Secretary, Lynette Phillips and myself carried out Discovery visits to Springsure, Emerald, Clermont, and Gemfields Sub Branches.

On Thursday March 11, visits were also held with Gracemere and Capricornia and Rockhampton Region Sub Branches.

Further visits to the Kuttabul, Seaforth, Farleigh & Northern Beaches, Mirani, and Walkerston/Pleystowe Sub Branches in the Mackay District were held on Tuesday 16 and Wednesday 17 March.

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

On Going Matters and Reminders

RSL Ties and Scarfs

As advised at District Council meeting in Rockhampton on Saturday 19 September 2020, 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.

Supplies of ties and scarfs have now been received and can now be distributed as requested.

Can Sub Branches, who have not already done so, provide to the District Secretary the names of their members who wish to avail of the offer.

ANZAC Day Merchandise

In early February, a communication went to Sub Branches via the District advising that RSL Queensland will be refunding the Sub Branches for their ANZAC Day merchandise purchase costs.

A claim form was provided with the communication.

A claim can also be made for 2020 purchases as well given that ANZAC Day did not go ahead due to COVID.

Sub Branches are reminded to submit their claims via the District Secretary.

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 program is permanent and continues in 2021.

For 2021 year to date, 22 applications have been approved at a cost of \$8,646.20: Dental \$4,368.95, Hearing \$2,047.25, and Optical \$2,230.00.

LiveLife Alarms Program

The program is permanent and continues in 2021.

For 2021 year to date, 4 new alarms have been issued and 1 recharged at a cost of \$1,747.00.

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 is in the process of organizing training courses that will provide a First Aid & Defib certificates for Sub Branch members and has contacted a number of Sub Branches.

A course has been held at the Emu Park RSL for 14 participants and was well received.

Donations to Mates4Mates

The District has approved a donation of \$5,000 to Mates4Mates in the 2021 Budget.

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 approved a donation of \$5,000 to GMRF in the 2021 Budget.

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 Defence Forces 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 was allocated by RSL Queensland to the District for 2021.

In 2021 year to date, 2 application from the Sub Branches has been approved at a cost of \$2,490.63. When we add in the spending in relation to the District's Dental and Allied Health Subsidy Program and the Live Life Alarms Program, \$12,883.83 of the fund have been spent in 2021 year to date.

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.

Sub-Branch Support Program

Funding will be available in 2021 through this program for those Sub-Branches in financial need.

For 2021 year to date, no applications have been approved.

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

2021 Cadet Funding

State Branch provided funding of \$27,000 for 2021.

Applications are in the process of being called via the Sub Branches.

Emergency Welfare

A budget of \$10,000 has been allocated for Emergency Welfare funding during 2021.

For 2021 year to date, \$544 has been expended.

As I write this newsletter, I am in social isolation at home for 3 days as I was in Brisbane for an RSLQ Board meeting on Wednesday 25 March. The 3 day lock down in the Brisbane Greater area is a timely reminder that COVID has not gone away and I urge all our members over 70 years of age to register for the vaccination as soon as possible.

The District AGM in Yeppoon was a huge success and it gave delegates the opportunity to mix and discuss RSL issues with the State President and others from RSL Queensland. No doubt a talking point would have been the proposed Member Value Proposition (MPV) which was outlined at the District Council meeting and is designed to arrest our membership decline.

I urge all of our members to become familiar with the MPV proposal and provide feedback on the proposal.

Remember, the District is the linchpin between RSL Queensland and the Sub Branches and we are here to help in any way we can.

Kindest regards

Barry Vains OAM

District President

The Last Post

Member ID	First Name	Surname	Deceased Da	Owner	Last Financia
2410602	Allan	Duffy	21/03/2021	Gracemere & District Su	SMLIFE
1518804	James	Mcbride	24/02/2021	Mackay Sub Branch Inc.	SM2006

A Letter from our MEMBER EXPERIENCE SPECIALIST Nicole Ramsay

Dear Members,

Some of you may have already met me during our recent Discovery Tour visits, which were an eye opening and educational insight to your Sub Branches. The work you do as volunteers is truly inspirational and I thank you for your warm welcome and hospitality during those visits.

The reason for my email/letter is to start the conversation and share some more information with you about myself and my role. Communication is key and I will do my best to make sure information is being shared and welcome any feedback or suggestions.

For those of you who I had the privilege to meet during the Discovery Tours had a brief introduction to my role as *Member Experience Specialist*, however for those of you who did not, here is a little more on the membership team and the kind of support on offer and what it this means for your Sub Branch.

I'm here to **support** Wide Bay & Burnett and Pioneer-Fitzroy & Highlands Districts - supporting your Sub Branch to attract, grow and retain members so your legacy can live long into the future and you can continue to do all the great work you already do and more for veterans.

But, what does this mean? It means we support members to recruit members because we are a member-based organisation and who can do it better than you, its members?

Support means I can visit if you would like me to and spend time with you to understand everything you're doing well, your challenges and opportunities with membership. I'll probably ask a whole lot of questions, because it's important for me to really know and understand your Sub Branch.

This time that we spend together will help me to work with you and bring your ideas to life, so together, we will create a membership growth and engagement plan specific to your Sub Branch. In this plan there will be actions to help you to showcase your Sub Branch with all that you offer as well as engaging with the current members you already have.

I know you already have a lot of great connections in your communities so we will work with you on how to better raise your profile and use those connections to reach potential new members. The exciting thing about

this means that we can also work collaboratively to understand how the proposed Member Value Proposition will look and feel in your Sub Branch and how I can help you to get ready to navigate the future should the new **Member Value Proposition** be voted in at the upcoming State AGM!

I plan to do a 'road trip' over the next few months with the intention to learn more about what it means to be a member in your Sub Branch and to present the proposed Member Value Proposition to allow you and your members the opportunity to ask questions and welcome any feedback.

If you want to learn more about me on a more personal level, please feel free to look me up on LinkedIn 😊
<http://linkedin.com/in/nicole-ramsay->

Please feel free to get in touch via email Nicole.Ramsay@rslqld.org and Lynette (your dedicated DS) with any questions.

I look forward to working with you,

Warmest Regards,
Nicole Ramsay
Member Experience Specialist



District AGM, Council Meeting and Annual Dinner





