



# SITREP



## RSL Hornsby (Sub-Branch)

Supporting veterans in the Hornsby and Ku-ring-gai area



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### President's Message

Hi Everyone,

Our Anzac Day service was attended by approximately 4,000 community members.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your support and assistance on the days leading up to and including Anzac Day. A big thank you to the Committee for the planning, preparation and organisation of a successful Anzac Day Dawn service in particular Neil Turner & Ray Davis for a job well done under difficult and ever changing COVID regulations.

With the relaxation of the COVID regulations, the sub-Branch was inundated with requests for support to schools and aged Care facilities for Anzac Day services. Thanks to the Committee members who attended these venues.

On the 18 April 2021 members of the Committee attended the Australia India Cenotaph Committees Anzac Day service held at Cherrybrook.

I would also like to add a special thank you to the fundraisers who, this year, have raised just over \$10,000 for our Welfare program. Once again, Dulcie and John Zeller worked tirelessly in



preparing the trays for the sellers, organising rosters and acquitting the monies. They are the heart and soul of our fundraising team.

This year's fundraising program was supported, for the first time, by two other organisations, Rotary Club of Pennant Hills and the Australia India Cenotaph Committee. Together, these two organisations raised over \$1000. Thank you to Kaye Carter and Ashwani Jain.

Our work for veterans' support continues. The Committee has applied for a Ku-ring-gai Council Community grant to help offset the cost of establishing the Veterans Well Being Centre - Hornsby and assist with the funding of the next two Mental Health First Aid courses. The Committee will also be applying for a grant from the Club Grants program.

Our Coffee & Chat meetings are proving to be very successful. A light morning tea including limitless coffee & tea is provided at no cost to all attendees. The next Coffee & Chat meeting is scheduled for 14 July, 10am - 12 noon.

Our next monthly meeting is scheduled for Sunday the 27 June 2021.

Looking forward to catching up with you.

Regards  
George Main

## Welcome

Since the beginning of this year, the sub-Branch has welcomed five new service members:

- Kaye Carter. Kaye served for 17 years in the Army in various postings including HQ Logistics Command.
- Jason Winter. Jason joined the Army Reserve in 2001 and has served with 2/17 RNSWR.
- Clancy Roberts. Clancy enlisted in the Army in 2002, serving in infantry and commando units including service in East Timor, Iraq and Afghanistan.
- Philip Loomes. Philip served for 20 years in the Army as a signaller including service in Bougainville, Sinai and East Timor.
- Donald Woolley. Donald was a national serviceman between June 1965 and June 1967, serving in the infantry including 6 RAR in Vietnam.

## Vale

It is with sincere regret that we must announce the passing of Stan Poulson. Stan was born on 10 May 1926 and served in the 2<sup>nd</sup> AIF on Morotai as a member of the Medical Corps. Subsequently, he served as a signaller with the occupation force in Japan. He passed away on 24 February 2021.

We also acknowledge the passing of His Royal Highness Prince Philip, a World War 2 veteran and husband and Consort of our RSL Patron, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth. Prince Philip passed away on 9 April 2021.

## News and Activities

### Sub-Branch Activities

#### ANZAC Day 2021

ANZAC Day 2021 saw a return to a more traditional form of commemoration following the disruption in 2020 caused by the pandemic.

An estimated 3500-4000 people attended the Dawn Service at the Hornsby Cenotaph. Veterans were joined by the Hornsby RSL Pipe Band, Scouts and Cubs, Guides and Brownies, sporting clubs, school children, RFS Volunteers, SES Volunteers, St John's Ambulance and members of the public in what was a return to normality. Hornsby Council, Hornsby Police and Hornsby RSL Club Limited all provided valuable support.

The photos on the two following pages provide an impression of the service. All photos are from Hornsby Shire Council Face book page unless stated otherwise.





REMEMBRANCE

SERVICE

LOYALTY



Photo by Sharon Pearson



REMEMBRANCE

SERVICE

LOYALTY

## Welfare Notes

Our Welfare Officer, Ros Hutchinson advises that the following may be of interest to members:

- **Assistive Listening Device (ALD)**

Veteran Gold Card Holders and white card holders (with hearing loss accepted as service related) maybe entitled to ALD's. ALD's work in combination with hearing aids & are designed to help you hear better in specific situations, such as using telephone, watching TV or some social occasions. Members should discuss their requirements for ALDs' with your audiologist and if necessary, the audiologist can apply direct to DVA.

- **Eligibility for Discounted Parking Fees at NSW Public Hospitals**

Members may be eligible for discounted parking at NSW Public Hospitals. For more information on eligibility, access & concession fees, members should call 13 77 88 or visit <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Hospitals/parking/Factsheets/concessional-parking.pdf>

## Volunteers Needed

As George noted, our fundraising leading up to ANZAC Day raised over \$10,000. As members are aware, all of the funds raised are used to support veteran services. However, the Committee is concerned that the workload for this activity continues to fall upon a regular few. It would be appreciated if other members could offer some time to assist in the selling of the memorabilia items which form the core of the fund raising. If you can help, please contact John Zeller to register your interest. The next major fundraising effort will be in the lead up to Remembrance Day.

## Then and Now Photos



Members who attended the Gunfire breakfast would have noticed the 'then and now' photos included in the Club's audiovisual display. We are currently in discussions with the Club to establish the best way to incorporate the images into the Memorabilia Display.

To date, we have just over 30 and would love to add other members to this collection. If you would like your photos to be added to this collection, please email then and now photos to Phil White ([white.phil.gail@gmail.com](mailto:white.phil.gail@gmail.com))

## Heritage

### Anniversaries

On 31 March, the RAAF celebrated its 100th birthday. Its predecessor, the Australian Flying Corps was disbanded in 1919 along with the AIF and was replaced by the Australian Air Corps which was re-established as the Australian Air Force on 31 March 1921. The prefix Royal was granted on 31 August 1921.

Starting with aircraft types which had seen service in World War 1, the RAAF really came of age during World War 2 with over 200,000 men and women enlisted during the war and sustaining almost 10,000 deaths. While the majority of RAAF personnel who saw active service did so in the war against Japan, the Empire Air Training Scheme ensured that around 40,000 served in other theatres, including 10,000 in England with Bomber Command where more than one third of these were killed in action.

By the end of World War 2, the propellers were coming off aircraft as aviation entered the jet age. The RAAF made that transition during the Korean War and since then, it has been involved in every substantial operation where Australia has committed forces as well as many humanitarian missions around the world.

We can be very proud of our Air Force and its heritage.

### Snippets from History - 1

#### Phillip Chin Quan Interview

As part of the 2021 ANZAC Day commemorations, SBS published a feature on the experiences of one of our members, Phillip Chin Quan during his time in Vietnam and his subsequent struggles with PTSD. Interested members can find the feature at [SBS feature Phillip Chin Quan](#)



During his tour in South Vietnam in 1970-71, Phill served with D & E Platoon and then 1st Australian Psychological Operations Unit.

### Snippets from History – 2

The story comes from a former sub-Branch member, Norm Windeatt, who passed away in 2016. Norm served in the Royal Navy during World War 2 aboard a destroyer, HMS Tenacious. During the later part of the war, Tenacious was part of the British Pacific Fleet. However, this vignette is not about its wartime activities but rather, its rescue of survivors from a RAAF Dakota which ditched in the ocean off Hong Kong on 4 January 1946.



**HMS Tenacious with HMS Indomitable off Sumatra 1945**

Immediately after hostilities ceased, Tenacious was involved in the repatriation of POWs from Japan followed by a few months in China.

On 4 January 1946, RAAF Dakota KN363 took off from Hong Kong bound for Sydney

via Saigon. About 2 hours later and 200 miles from Hong Kong, the aircraft ditched following fuel problems. Six of the nine crew and passengers were able to get into life rafts in appalling weather conditions. Tenacious was despatched from Hong Kong to search for survivors. In a magnificent display of navigation and seamanship, the Tenacious located the survivors around 2000 on the same day.

Norm often related a story which probably circulated on the mess decks of the Tenacious after the rescue. One of the aircraft's crew had purchased diamonds in Hong Kong which he had sown into his cap for safe keeping. During the ditching and subsequent time on the life raft, in strong winds and 30ft seas, he managed to keep hold of his cap. However, as the survivors were being hauled aboard the Tenacious, a sailor grabbed the cap and threw it into the sea with words to effect that "you won't need that now!" So if true, right now there's a collection of diamonds on the ocean floor about 200 miles south of Hong Kong.

Norm who was at the helm of the Tenacious during this rescue was justifiably proud of his achievement on that day but after emigrating to Australia in 1948, he had lost contact with other members of the Tenacious crew. Some of the Dakota survivors had also attempted to contact with Tenacious crew but without success. However, finally in January 2014, the last of the Dakota survivors, Gilbert Jan, was able to meet Norm and another former member of the Tenacious crew, Tom Fogg who was visiting Sydney for his daughter's wedding. Gilbert who had been a passenger on the Dakota was an LAC in the RAAF. He had served as wireless operator/mechanic with 43 Squadron flying Catalinas in the south west Pacific in the later years of World War 2. Since that reunion in 2014, both Tom and Norm have passed away but Gilbert is still with us and was able to march in this year's ANZAC Day's parade.



**L to R Tom Fogg, Gilbert Jan and Norm Windeatt**

## Editor's Note

Any feedback on content and style is appreciated. Please take care and thanks for reading.

Phil