



# SITREP



## RSL Hornsby (Sub-Branch)

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



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### President's Message

Hi Everyone,

At the time of our last Sitrep, your Sub-Branch Executive were continuing their search for members who could step up to assist with some of the Executive roles that keep our Sub-Branch functioning. Great news, we have two members, both retired RAN officers who have volunteered and are now settling into their respective roles. Let me introduce them to you, even if I can't pipe them on board.



Captain Brett Chandler RAN (Retd) has been elected to fill the role of Vice-President with his focus being on the planning and delivery of our major Commemorations, Remembrance Day and ANZAC Day. He has also been elected to fill the role of a Trustee, following the resignation from that role by Dulcie Zeller. Brett had 46 years' total service with the Navy, including deployments in the Gulf War and Peacekeeping. Significantly, he had a major posting as Australia's Military Attache to Germany (with Ukraine and the Netherlands); he has some serious experience there at organising major commemorations. Welcome on-board Brett.

(Lieutenant) Dean Reeves RAN (Retd) has been elected to fill the role of Honorary Secretary. Dean had nearly 13 years' service with the Navy, and continues to work in Defence industry. Welcome on-board Dean.

Providing administrative support to our Executive Team, we now have Renee Colla working part time, employed by the RSL Club. Renee is a part-time supervisor and administrative support person for the RSL Club. She will be progressively picking up some of the administrative load; as

she settles into the role, you might find her receiving Sub-Branch phone calls and forwarding these on to the appropriate person.

As I mentioned briefly above, Dulcie Zeller has had to step down as a Trustee. Until recently, Dulcie had also been our Treasurer as well. Fortunately, Dulcie is continuing as a member of the Committee so that her great experience is not lost to our Executive Team. Thank you, Dulcie, for your long and faithful service to the Sub-Branch and our veterans.

As we come out of our August stand down, we are starting to gear up preparations for Remembrance Day in November. Behind the scenes, George Main and our welfare/wellbeing team continue to provide services to veterans in need, both through the Sub-Branch and the Veterans Wellbeing Centre Hornsby. Thank you, George and Phil#3.

RSL NSW is running further free Veteran Wellbeing Support Officer courses. A number of our members have already expressed interest in enrolling in that training so that they can assist with supporting veterans in a range of practical ways. Please consider whether that might be for you as well.

I again urge you all, as you are able, to take part in our veteran community activities, general meetings and veteran lunches, Coffee and Chat and even Ten Pin Bowling Extravaganzas. Your involvement encourages others and builds the supportive links that work towards veteran wellbeing, including your own.

Best Regards,  
Neil Turner

## Welcome

Since the last edition of SITREP, the sub-Branch has welcomed three new members:

- Jeanette Conley. Jeanette served with the Royal Australian Navy from 1989 to 2005
- Stuart Golsby. Stuart served in the Australian Army from 1983 to 1986.
- Agnes Young. Agnes served in the Australian Army from 2006 to 2013.

## Vale

It is with sincere regret that we must acknowledge the passing of one of our centenarians Alfred (Roy) Boyle

Roy was born on 16 December 1923. He served in AEME, now RAEME, during World War 2 serving initially in Australia and then PNG on the Bulldog Track, Wau, Lae and Finschafen. Roy passed away on 14 Jul 2026.

LEST WE FORGET

## News and Activities

### Issues and Activities.

#### Changes in the Executive Committee

Neil's message introduced Brett Chandler and Dean Reeves as the new members to the sub-Branch Executive filling vacant Vice President position and the Secretary respectively. Both appointments were confirmed at our General Meeting in June.

#### Admin assistant

Also, as Neil noted, the Hornsby RSL Club has provided one of its employees, Renee Colla, to provide administrative assistance on a part time basis. We really appreciate this additional support provided by the RSL Club.

#### Outcome of RSL NSW General Meeting on 15 July

Readers will be aware that a special General Meeting of RSL NSW to consider four constitutional amendments, specifically:

- Staggered Board Elections;
- The Establishment of a Nominations Committee;
- Establishing Eligibility Requirements for role of President; and
- The process to fill a casual vacancy in the Office of President.

All motions were passed with each achieving the required threshold of a two thirds majority for constitutional amendments.

### Welfare Notes

Please remember that as of the 1 July 2027 TPI ( Totally and Permanently Incapacitated) veterans with high or complex medical needs may be affected by the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) \$5,000 annual allied health limit. TPI Veterans often require regular, ongoing allied health care such as physiotherapy, remedial massage or podiatry for service-related disabilities, meaning many veterans could cross the \$5,000 threshold quickly. This limit also affects Gold and White card holders. DVA states funding will continue above the \$5,000 limit if there is a clinical need.

Allied Health professionals are a distinct group of university-trained health workers who are not doctors, dentists or nurses. They diagnose, treat, prevent and rehabilitate physical, mental and social health conditions. They include physiotherapists, pharmacists, occupational therapists, exercise physiologist, speech therapists, podiatrists and social workers. If you require the services of an Allied Health provider, the Veterans Well Being Centre-Hornsby can connect you with a DVA approved provider.

The sub-Branch advises that you review your Allied Health needs and speak to your providers before July 2027.

### Upcoming Dates

|                  |           |      |         |                                      |
|------------------|-----------|------|---------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>September</b> | Tuesday   | 8th  | 6.00pm  | Committee Meeting                    |
|                  | Wednesday | 9th  | 10.00am | Coffee Club                          |
|                  | Sunday    | 27th | 11.00am | General Meeting & Veterans Luncheon  |
| <b>October</b>   | Tuesday   | 13th | 6.00pm  | Committee Meeting                    |
|                  | Wednesday | 14th | 10.00am | 10 Pin Bowling Club – L2 "the Attic" |

|                 |           |      |         |                                         |
|-----------------|-----------|------|---------|-----------------------------------------|
|                 | Sunday    | 25th | 11.00am | General Meeting & Veterans Luncheon     |
| <b>November</b> | Tuesday   | 10th | 6.00pm  | Committee Meeting                       |
|                 | Wednesday | 11th | 10.30am | REMEMBRANCE DAY Service at the Cenotaph |
|                 | Wednesday | 18th | 10.00am | Coffee Club                             |
|                 | Sunday    | 29th | 11.00am | General Meeting & Christmas Luncheon    |
| <b>December</b> | Tuesday   | 8th  | 6.00pm  | Committee Meeting                       |
|                 | Wednesday | 9th  | 10.00am | 10 Pin Bowling Club – L2 “the Attic”    |

## Heritage

### Snippets from the Past - The Other Australian Victoria Crosses Winners in Afghanistan

During July, we acknowledge the service of the ADF in the Middle East Area of Operations from 2001 to 2021. During that long period of operations, four Victoria Crosses were won by Australians, all during operations in Afghanistan. While, for various reasons, Ben Roberts-Smith VC is well known with the public arena, this snippet reminds us of the actions of the other three soldiers which led to the award of their Victoria Crosses.

#### **Trooper Mark Donaldson VC**

On 2 September 2008, during the Battle of Khaz Oruzgan in Uruzgan Province, Trooper Mark Donaldson of the Special Air Service Regiment (SASR) was participating in a combined patrol alongside Afghan and US forces when their convoy was ambushed by a numerically superior Taliban element. As intense machine gun and rocket-propelled grenade fire inflicted multiple casualties, Donaldson deliberately exposed himself to enemy fire on multiple occasions to draw attention away from the wounded, enabling them to be moved to cover. He also rescued a severely injured coalition interpreter under direct, heavy enemy fire. His selfless disregard for his own safety saved the interpreter's life and stabilized a critical tactical situation.

#### **Corporal Daniel Keighran VC**

During the Battle of Derapet on 24 August 2010, Corporal Daniel Keighran of the 6 RAR, was part of a joint Australian and Afghan patrol that came under prolonged, coordinated attack from multiple enemy positions. During the three-and-a-half-hour engagement, Keighran repeatedly broke cover on his own initiative to draw heavy enemy fire so he could locate insurgent firing points and direct fire support from Australian and Afghan elements. When a fellow soldier was wounded, Keighran, again, exposed himself to draw fire away from the team treating the casualty, remaining exposed to clear the medical evacuation landing zone and ensure the combined force could withdraw without further losses.

#### **Corporal Cameron Baird VC, MG**

On 22 June 2013, during an assault on an insurgent stronghold in Ghawchak village, Uruzgan Province, Corporal Cameron Baird of the 2nd Commando Regiment led his team through intense small-arms fire to suppress multiple enemy positions before rushing to support an adjacent team whose commander had been severely wounded. Drawing enemy machine-gun fire onto himself to allow his soldiers to advance, Baird led the assault on a fortified compound. Facing heavy resistance from insurgents inside a building, he charged the doorway on three separate occasions. On his third assault, Baird successfully neutralized the enemy position, securing the objective, but was killed in the process. His posthumous award made him Australia's 100th Victoria Cross recipient.