



June 2017

SIT-REP

CAIRNS RSL SUB BRANCH

Member Magazine



The price of liberty is eternal vigilance



KOKODA HALL

115 The Esplanade (Upstairs) Cairns

8:30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

FREE ENTRY



The Returned & Services League of Australia **Cairns RSL Sub Branch**

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Cover

ANZAC Day 2017- Light Horseman Darren Kynuna



PRESIDENTS REPORT



I would like to start my report by congratulating Phil Watson on receiving the long serving (more than 3 years) Volunteer of the Year Award. This is well deserved and a recognition of Phil's invaluable work that he and

all of the PAWS team do.

I would also like to congratulate Murray O'Neil on his nomination for short serving (less than three years) Volunteer of the Year. The amount of work that Murray has done with Bob and his team in the museum is just amazing.

April saw another successful ANZAC day although it was a little wet. I thank the staff and members who planned and assisted with the running of this day.

The Dawn service and the march were well attended by the current and ex-service members, who were well supported by the citizens of Cairns, despite the inclement weather.

During the past month I have attended three schools for their ANZAC Day services. The effort, time devoted and respect shown by the students of these schools during these services has to be seen

to be believed. Although the Sub Branch is already involved with these schools we plan to expand our engagement with more of the schools within the Cairns area.

The board continues to work on our corporate governance by developing procedures and policies to ensure our compliance requirements. To this end, the board has created portfolios, with directors selecting a portfolio for which they will be responsible, and will report back to the members.

The State Congress will be held in Brisbane on the weekend of the 23-25th June, our delegate Peter Hayton will be representing the Sub Branch.

Recently I met and had dinner in the Club with eight young sappers from No 3 Combat Engineers, Townsville. One of the discussions I had with them was about their knowledge of what services the RSL can offer them. They had some knowledge of the services offered, but not all. The RSL needs to become more engaged with these younger service members and educate them.

Buster Todd, President



EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS REPORT

As the dust settles on my first 6 months in the role I am gaining greater clarity. The directors are proving to be very supportive and engaged with their portfolios. The staff are working together well as a team. The volunteers are growing in number and producing outstanding results with two being nominated and one winning Volunteer of the Year – congratulations to Phil Watson and Murray O'Neill.

New Governance framework is being developed to provide policy and procedure for all facets of the organisation including an induction handbook for volunteers, directors and staff. This will include training for directors. The policy and procedures being put in place will protect the Sub Branch and the Club.

Final handover has happened and now the Sub Branch is responsible for all financial administration of the Sub Branch, employing an external accountant as needed. This will free up Club resources to focus on the growth of the Club. Thank you once more to Craig and the team for their support during this process. The Sub Branch is currently applying for grants to grow the organisation particularly in service delivery to younger Veterans who served after 1991.

If you as a member ever have a question about any aspect of the Sub Branch operations, please do not hesitate to contact me and ask. During these times of revelation in other States, the Sub Branch is more vigilant than ever. As an organisation we are committed to providing greater transparency and accountability to all members.

Rebecca Milliner has now taken on a role of Marketing and Events coordination. Bec is working to deliver regular events (Anzac Day, Remembrance Day etc), attract new events and support the Military community by bringing together members and creating a sense of fellowship and connection. Congratulations to all of the team who pulled together to make Anzac Day a success. It was our first event as a staff of three and a very steep learning curve but I am very proud of how we worked together. There are many new and exciting events in the pipeline for this year and next. Bec has done an outstanding job of stepping up to the role of Marketing and Events Coordinator.

For those who haven't been into the office for a while, a brief visit will reveal a multitude of changes. Cameron Vonarx has taken on a traineeship in Business Administration to learn new skills and keep the office running smoothly. There is a new printer providing colour printing, collating, stapling and scanning functions. There is a new meeting table providing a small meeting room for our staff and volunteers. The IT systems are currently being upgraded and we even have new artwork being hung throughout the offices. Above the doors are the signage for the 'Caleb Shang Boardroom' and the 'Peter Turner Office Suites'.

The museum is proving popular. We have a new brochure that is being distributed to schools and tourism providers in the region. The flow on effect will be more visitors and therefore more customers in the Club.

There is a new work bench in the office for visiting workers to utilise. This will maintain the integrity of confidential spaces such as the PAWS offices while continuing to support like-minded ESOs such as the Australian Veterans Foundation. Staff have also cleaned out the offices and utilised new storage spaces. A huge thank you to our volunteer Les Bassett, who installed the work bench and shelving.

Moving forward the team has goals and KPIs in place and we look to achieve great things in the next 6 months. If you have any suggestions or would like to know more please drop in and have a chat with me at any time.

Lara Wilde

ed@cairnssrslsubbranch.com.au





51st FNQR PORTON MESS MEMBERS MILITARY HISTORY TOUR

By Rebecca Milliner

On Friday 19th December we were invited to join the Officers of 51 FNQR on their tour of places with great military significance in the Cairns and Tablelands region. The first stop was at the Armour and Artillery Museum where the audience heard a fantastic presentation by SGT John Lay. John set the scene with the following opening story.

'It's 1939'. Hitler is marching through Europe. Our boys are off fighting the Germans and Italians in the Desert. Cairns is just a sleepy agricultural backwater.

'BAM' flash forward. It's now 1941 and the Empire of the Rising Sun attacks Pearl Harbour and brings the War to Australia and more importantly to Cairns' doorstep.

Cairns' close proximity to the Pacific makes it essential to the War effort, however the War effort had a slow start. It wasn't until February 1942 that the CO of the 51st Battalion met with local government authorities and their engineers, as well as representatives from the oil companies, in order to plan the destruction of essential services and infrastructure should the Japanese invade. After three weeks of working secretly, the 51st Battalion was sent to defend Townsville. Feeling unprotected, the local authorities sent representatives to Canberra to lobby for sending help to the far North leaving only the original militia defenders. Help would come, but not until 1942.

The first troops of any numbers to arrive were the 17th Australian Field Engineer Company, who arrived in late April 1942. They buoyed the spirits of a beleaguered Cairns. The 17th were the 'demolition boys', who completed the job begun by the 51st in case of invasion and mined the Kuranda Range Road and other main transport links such as the Gillies Highway, The Bump Track, railway and wharf facilities.

On the Atherton Tableland it took workers only eight days during March/April to build a new Mareeba airfield capable of taking United States Air Forces B-17 Flying Fortresses. Later that year there were nearly 10 000 Americans in and around Mareeba, which had a local population of 2500. And only a year later, all 10 000 American troops were gone."

John then went on to discuss interesting facts about the following significant military sites around Cairns and the pivotal role they played in the War Effort:

- Z special Unit location in Mooroobool- known as the house on the hill.
- The Malaria Research Unit based at Redlynch.
- 16th Australian Personnel Staging camp in Harley Street
- RAN Fuel Installation which is now the Tanks Art Centre.



- RAAF Catalina No 11 and 20 Squadron base camp on the Esplanade.
- Hides Hotel which is believed to have been host to General Douglas MacArthur.
- False Cape Coastal Battery.
- 'H' Battery, then 'S' Battery which was the Coastal Artillery based at East Trinity.
- Trinity Beach where they conducted the amphibious landing rehearsals.
- The United States 503rd Parachute Infantry Regiment Camp based out in Gordonvale.

The morning was very insightful and great to look at Cairns and the surrounding region from a different perspective.



NEWS BRIEFS

2017 Legends of the ANZACS Coin Collection

Congratulations Simon and Grace Forsyth on winning the 2017 Legends of the ANZACS Coin Collection. We would also like to thank the Cairns Post for kindly donating the prize.



Phil Watson and Murray O'Neill finalist in the FNQ Volunteer of the year

On Wednesday 10th May Katherine Young and I attended the FNQ Volunteer of the year awards luncheon, along with our two nominees and their

wives- Murray and Elwyn O'Neill and Phil and Anne Watson. The luncheon was held at the Plantations Restaurant inside the newly refurbished Bungalow Hotel. The event was attended by the 40 finalists in the region and their guests. Nominees were presented with their Certificates of Appreciation by



the FNQ Volunteer board member Joanna Cray. Thereafter the winners of each category (short term and long term volunteers) were announced. Our very own Phil Watson took out the long term award and was presented his award by Dr George Skeene AO Medallist. We are very proud of all our volunteers and extremely grateful for the continued dedication and support they display towards the Sub Branch. Without our volunteers the Sub Branch would not be able to provide the community with the free services we offer.


By Rebecca Milliner

MUSEUM VISITORS

Since officially opening the Armoury and Bunker room we have had a number of people come through the doors. More recently we have had:

- A visit from the Jungle Training Wing based in Tully
- Mr John Thomas President of the Stirling RSL Sub Branch in South Australia with Mrs Doreen Thomas a Stirling RSL committee member, Mrs Barbara Howard Cairns RAAFA committee member and Mr Neil Howard Vice President of the Cairns RAAFA.
- Senior observer trainer at the combat training centre in Townsville Major Tim Palmer US presented an Army commendation medal to Corporal Glen Macpherson in the Kokoda Hall
- The Ladies of the local Scope Club in Cairns
- Four Wartime Walking Tour groups enjoyed learning the history of our memorabilia in the museum





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For more information please contact your Smartsalary consultant for HMAS Cairns and 51FNQR, who specialises in working with members of the Australian Defence Force.

Melissa Murphy | 0458 298 571 | melissa.murphy@smartsalary.com.au

THE ART OF WAR

We are now up to the fourth Artist in our series The Art of War. The initiative has been a great success with several people coming in to view the art work and an influx of interest from budding artists on how they can participate in the series. This month's artist is Nathan Jarius.

Nathan enlisted in the Army on the 12th February 1991, and was assigned to the Infantry Corp. He served for 25 years and was medically discharged in 2016. Nathan was lucky enough to have served with multiple units that ranged from large scale conventional operations to isolated small tactical teams. Some of the units that Nathan served with were 8/9 RAR, 2/4 RAR, 2 RAR, SASR and 51 FNQR.

During his time in the Army, Nathan met and worked with a diverse range of soldiers, from many different backgrounds and cultures. He stated that this was one of the many highlights throughout his career. During his service Nathan was deployed on a number of operations in different areas around the globe. This included two tours to East Timor, the Solomon Islands, Iraq and three tours to Afghanistan. Of note Nathan deployed on all these operations whilst



serving with SASR. Nathan stated that his 11 years of service with the SASR, and representing Australia overseas, was another climax of his service.

Nathan originally became interested in photography when he completed a military wet film photography course. He later pursued this discipline as a hobby and found it both to be challenging and rewarding. Nathan said *"To have the ability to replicate a moment or surrounding is really an art form in itself"*.

Nathan enjoys taking photos of a number of different situations and surroundings, but his real passion is landscape photography. *"My objective is capturing the moment that I have just experienced; and by taking this representation I am able to remember that moment and share it with others"*. For this exhibition, his vision is to share all the different subjects he enjoys capturing.



PROFILE OF A SUCCESSFUL VETERAN - MAYOR BOB MANNING OAM

1. What was your role in the Military? *Second Lieutenant*

2. What was the highlight of your military career? *Graduating as a Second Lieutenant into the Australian Army*

3. What do you do for a job now? *I am currently the Mayor of Cairns Regional Council. I was elected into the office in 2012.*

4. Best part about your job now? *Being able to have a positive impact on the city you grew up in- To be able to have a role in bettering this city for future generations socially, environmentally and economically.*

5. What do you think is the greatest challenge facing veterans today? *To accept a leadership role 'on civy street'.*

6. What is your greatest accomplishment thus far? *Being married to Clair for 47 years, our two children, Mark and Belinda and now two beautiful grandchildren, Josiah and Faith-Claire.*

7. What are your proudest achievements in the community? *Being seen by locals as a local bloke who doesn't have a big head and who gets on with the job of working for our city.*

8. What advice do you have for people who are leaving the services? *Assimilate into civy life as quickly as you possible can.*

9. What are the greatest opportunities for ex-serving members in our region? *Our region abounds with great opportunities, whether it's work-related or recreation-related. Our city offers an enviable relaxed lifestyle in one of the most beautiful places on the planet so I think anything is possible for someone wanting to try their hand.*



10. What is your philosophy or value that you hold dearest in life? *The truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.*

PAWS NEWS

On Tuesday 2nd May I attended the ATDP update meeting at the RSL. The introduction of the new training system is so that there is a nationally recognised standard of competence which will deliver better services to Veterans. During a process of reviews in 2004, 2010 and 2014 they have identified the deficiencies in the current system and through the development process have now identified the way ahead through a Strategic Governance board.

There will be three Regional Management Groups who will replace the previous 6 state based TIP Training Consultative groups.

Region 1 - QLD & NT Regional Manager – Peter McNamara and Deputy RM – Terry Meehan

Region 2 - NSW, ACT, WA

Region 3 - SA, TAS, VIC

The responsibility of the Regional Management Group (RMG) is to deliver:-

- ATDP training
- Provision of admin support and resource co ordination
- Development of Communities of Practice (COP)
- Provide Regional input to National initiatives through the RMG Military Welfare

The training will be through Competency based training using adult learning principles and have experience log books for completion.

Key issues identified:

1. That each ESO is to apply selection guidelines to choose and assess suitability of new trainees. Training funding is to be provided by the ESO (likely cost approx. \$1500 to cover airfare & accommodation for course held in Brisbane). If there are 10-12 new trainees the training may be completed at the ESO.

2. RM for QLD has suggested that when the new business plans are being completed each year, a bid for funding for the RM to be able to travel to ESO for training be included, or to apply for “Best” Grants.
3. Members have to find their own mentors. Mentors need to be of a Level 2 or 3 and must have completed the mentor course. Phil Watson has identified there is a lack of mentors and mentoring people remotely could be an issue and also the number of people each Mentor has to supervise.
4. These will likely phase out those people who are TIP trained who are only currently practicing in one Act, ie VEA. Now Compensation Advocates will need to be accredited in all ACTS.
5. There is currently no set date for the changeover.
6. There is currently some confusion regarding recording of mentee's / trainees progress. This is currently being queried by Phil Watson.

There will also be a National register of Advocates. The training will now be nationally accredited.

For further details please visit the ATDP (Advocacy Training & Development program) Website:- <http://www.atdp.org.au>

On Wednesday 10th May I attended the FNQ Volunteer Association's award ceremony, where our own volunteers Phil Watson and Murray O'Neill had been nominated for the Volunteer of the Year Award. Big congratulations to Phil Watson who received the FNQ Volunteer of the year award for his tireless dedication and work with veterans at the PAWS office.

Phil Watson has also recently been nominated for, and was accepted as the coordinator for the ATDP supported Communities of Practice, (COP) for the Cairns area.



This COP is a means of ensuring communication with all advocates in the area and serves as a means of sharing information, passing of complaints regarding DVA or other government agencies, advising of amendments and changes to legislation and policy etc. All this is coordinated through Phil who has access to the ATDP Regional Manager and through him to DVA.

The Cairns area covers from Ingham north to Weipa and involves all advocates in this area both welfare and compensation.

Two introductory e-mails have been distributed so far, one explaining COP and the other the

transition from TIP to ATDP, RPL and primary training. Future correspondence, generally on a weekly basis, will deal with advocates concerns, new information and any and all advocacy related matters.

A meeting format is under development and meeting minutes have to be forwarded to the ATDP Area Manager monthly.

The ATDP area manager has responsibility for Qld and the NT.

**By Director of PAWS
Katherine Young**

FND UPDATE

State AGM: The 2017 RSL State Council of Auxiliaries AGM is taking place on Friday 23 June, 2017 at Rydges South Bank.

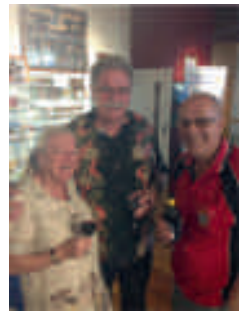
ATDP: An information session was held at Cairns RSL early in May, I found it to be very informative and now have a better understanding of how it is all going to work. Phil Watson from Cairns Sub Branch has volunteered to be the contact for the region for ATDP. I have also sent out an open letter to all Sub Branch's from VITA Chairman, for PAWS officers information.

District Training: There will be two District training sessions after State AGM, there will be one held on the Tablelands and on the Coast. Not sure where as yet, but you will all get plenty of notice, this training will be for Sub Branch executive and members who may be interested.

**By Norma Short
FND Secretary**

VOLUNTEER NEWS

Our volunteers are forever giving their time to the Sub Branch and as a way of thanking them we will be holding Volunteer drinks and canapes on Thursday afternoons prior to the General meetings. This is an opportunity for the board members to get to know the volunteers better and for us to say thank you for their extraordinary efforts and commitment to the Sub Branch. The first one was kicked off on Thursday 25th May with many volunteers and their wives attending. We would like to take this opportunity to sincerely apologise to any of the volunteers who were not aware of the drinks and canapes or received late notice. We look forward to seeing you at the next one. The next one will be **Thursday 24th August at 4:30pm**. We hope to see you all there!





HMAS CAIRNS NEWS

Navy Week is coming up and will be running from Friday 14th July- Tuesday 18th July 2017. There will be a multitude of events that the public are welcomed and encouraged to attend:

- **Friday 14 July- Freedom of Entry March**

Commencing at 10am the Parade will start at the intersection of Spence street and the Esplanade. The route will include Spence, into Abbott, up Minnie then down the Esplanade back to the Western Events Lawn. One of the best viewing locations for the public would be at the Cairns City Library, on Abbott Street as this is where the Mayor will Challenge the Commanding Officer HMAS Cairns and the full, traditional Freedom of Entry Dialogue 're-enactment' can be viewed. The parade will therefore be paused in this location for a short time. A Navy B429 helicopter will be doing a fly over of the parade also.

- **Sunday 16 July- Navy Band will perform at the Sound Shell in Fogarty Park**

The band is there in support of the Navy B429 Helicopter which will land in Fogarty

Park at 1200 and depart at 1400. The helicopter will be open to the public and the event will commence at 1130.

- **Tuesday 18 July - Navy B429 helicopter will visit three regional schools**

This will give students the opportunity to look over the aircraft and speak with the pilot and crew of the helicopter. At this stage Innisfail State College, Atherton SHS and Smithfield SHS will be visited.

- **Various dates throughout the week – RAN Band contingent will be conducting work shops with local secondary schools (St Augustine's College, Redlynch State College, Gordonvale SHS, St Andrews Catholic College Redlynch and (TBC) Trinity Anglican School-White Rock Campus)**







HISTORY OF FREEDOM OF ENTRY

The tradition of a town or city granting the Freedom of Entry to a military unit can be traced back to the Middle Ages. In those times, a military unit was permitted to enter a town with the right to 'carry arms, fly colours, sound drums and play bands' if it had developed a relationship of trust and loyalty with the local population.

During medieval times, in Continental Europe and the British Isles, fortress walls afforded cities protection from incursions by outlaw bands and attacks by feudal lords. The citizens of those walled cities wisely refused to allow entry to armed groups, including troops, unless they were absolutely sure that those arms would not be used against them. Bitter experience had taught them that armed men were, as often as not, neither respecters of persons or property and that they were liable to take any and every opportunity to plunder both.

As cities and towns were invariably situated on main roads and at principal road junctions, denial of entry imposed great hardship on troops 'on the march'. Food and arms could not be replenished and it became necessary to take long detours over difficult terrain to reach a given destination or objective. Troops soon saw the merit in establishing good relations with the Corporations and citizens of walled cities and by good conduct earned the privilege of entry and passage. This privilege, not readily won and highly prized, was known as Freedom of Entry.

Hence the granting of permission to a formed body of armed men to enter a city became the mark of trust and confidence in which that body was held by its citizens.

In the case of the Navy, Freedom of the City was more usually conferred in recognition of the defence of sea port cities and towns. However, as many vessels in the contemporary RAN fleet carry the names of land-locked centres, so the honour has been extended to include a number of them.

The granting of Freedom of Entry is the highest accolade a town or city can bestow upon a group or individual and it is no less readily won or lightly given today than it was centuries ago.

The ceremony of granting Freedom of Entry to an RAN unit is centred on a procession that begins at a suitable staging point within the town or city involved. The unit concerned is formed up and marches to the staging point, where it awaits the arrival of the official party and the Lord Mayor.

On arrival of the Lord Mayor the parade is inspected before being addressed by him/her and an ornate scroll authorising the granting of Freedom of Entry read out and presented. On receiving the scroll the commanding officer of the unit involved traditionally delivers a short acceptance address. A scroll party then takes custody of the scroll and the Australian White Ensign is escorted by a Colour Party into the staging area where it is ceremonially uncased. The unit then exercises its right of Freedom of Entry into the town or city, armed, with swords drawn, bayonets fixed, colours flying, drums beating and band playing.

DAY CLUB REPORT

The Day Club started the year very slowly. We had many not return for 2017, due to illness and age. As the year has progressed a few of our regulars and some new ones have joined us, bringing us back up to original numbers which is great to see. Of course none of this is possible without our amazing volunteers and we now have two new members and two volunteers. We have Andrew and Wendy Scott-Bohanna who have joined our team of volunteers and are fitting right in and learning new games. We would also like to welcome their parents Margaret and John who moved up from Mackay, and have moved into RSL Warhaven. We welcome them all into our RSL community and family.

We have had a few great lunches at the newly refurbished Bungalow Hotel. They have hosted us three times in the Plantations restaurant. We have also been to the Avenue of Honour Yungaburra and lunch at the Malanda RSL. We are planning our new trip to the Gordonvale Museum where they will be hosting us for lunch, in June.

We have now started to join together with the War Widows and the Legacy ladies to go on our trips as we love meeting new friends. With our numbers combined it makes sense to share a bus.

We are always looking for new members. We do prefer that you drive to Farnorha hall which is at the end of Lyon's street, just past DFO. We do pickups at the New Horizons and the Parks behind Stockland.

Our care dog Baily is all grown up and thinks he owns the place. We've had members bringing in toys for him which he loves. However, we have had to take the squeaky toys off him as he was too loud. He also visits the residents of Farnorha and he amuses them while they are having their morning tea.

With new members and great volunteers we are looking forward to the next half of the year. We are still forever grateful to our Deputy Coordinator, driver, card playing, dependable Les Bassett and his fantastic wife, cook, raffle selling, cleaning, organising Norma. Without these people we would not have a Day Club, so thanks for all you guys do!

If anyone in the Sub Branch is interested in volunteering and you enjoy playing cards, Rummo, Dominos, Scrabble, a great morning tea and good company please contact Cameron at the Sub Branch and we can get you started.

By Ellen McCallum Day Club Co-Ordinator.



Hi, I'm Karen

Envigor Community Care
Business Partner for our
Cairns community



Do you know someone who deserves more care?

I am looking for people in our community who need help with day to day tasks where their health limits them living life to the fullest.

Envigor has recently joined the Cairns community, and my local team and I are dedicated to make a difference to those who need more care than they are currently receiving. We believe care should be individually tailored and locally delivered; so we have intentionally built a team of carers that live and work in your local area that are dedicated to serving you, in your home or aged care community.

Our emphasis on dignified service extends to every level, including our 10% administration and case management fees. This ensures that clients know their money is going to the people providing them with care, and ensure they are receiving the highest quality of care possible for their money.

With no lock-in contracts, Envigor services can change as your individual needs change.

**Please get in contact with me
to find out how I can help:**

Karen Gerrard – Cairns

Mobile 0409 471 600 | Email kgerrard@envigor.com.au



1300 368 446

envigor.com.au

LEGACY REPORT

Cairns Legacy has been fortunate to have had wonderful support throughout this year. Anzac Day has been one example of such generosity of volunteers supporting the cause to raise funds for Legacy. Special mention needs to be extended to HMAS Cairns, 51st FNQR, TPI Association, Legatee's, War Widows, and Civilians, who gave up many hours for Legacy. We are eternally grateful for your support.

The Anzac Day Service was a special moment for many and later that morning President Alan Picone marched closely behind our Legacy vehicle driven by newly inducted Legatee Ian Butler. Seated proudly in that vehicle were three Cairns & District Ex-Servicewomen's Sub-Branch RSL ladies.

On the 29th May 2017, Cairns Legacy had its Annual General Meeting the following Board was appointed:

President	Alan Picone
Vice-President	Rick Schmidt
Treasurer	David Smith
Secretary/EO	Paula Buckman
Appeals (Interim)	Paula Buckman
Widow Liaison Officer	Les Bassett
Housing	Helen Atfield

Laurel Club had their Annual General Meeting recently and the following Board was appointed:

Executive Board

President	Helen Atfield
Secretary/Treasurer	Lorraine Watt

General Committee

Alema Mazlin
Joy Lafoo
Norma Willis
Jean Moore
Daisy Peevers

War Widows Guild Board of Management now consist of the following:

President	Rona Shute
Secretary	Lorraine Watts
Treasurer/Senior	
Vice-President	Helen Atfield
Junior-Vice Pres	June Fisher

General Committee

Julie Jones
Jan Kersnovske
Rope Miles

Legacy would like to thank Cairns RSL Sub Branch for their ongoing support given towards the welfare and pension work being done to help our widows.

We would like to thank the public for all their generosity in their donations toward our widows. These funds will be kept here in the North and put toward helping our widows go on outings and bus trips throughout this year.





MATES4MATES

Mates4mates will be running an Equine Therapy program in June/ July.

Participants in the Equine Therapy Program interact and engage with horses through an educational and emotional experience, in a safe and calm environment, learning basic natural horsemanship while developing a trusting relationship.

Equine Therapy can help people with anxiety, depression and other emotional challenges to build trust and confidence, improve physical wellbeing, and enhance social skills. The bond between horse and human has proven highly therapeutic for many people who may otherwise find it difficult to communicate with others.

FREE FOR MATES4MATES MEMBERS

Please contact Rob Lee on
rob.lee@mates4mates.org for further details.



DINE WITH A DIGGER

The Cairns Southside Rotary Club and Cairns Sunrise Rotary Club hosted the annual Dine with a Digger on Monday 24th April. The event was a great success with over 30 Veterans in attendance partnered up with a Rotarian for the evening. Rob Lee from Mates4Mates was the guest speaker and gave an entertaining and insightful presentation from the perspective of a modern soldier.



MEDAL WORKSHOP

On Saturday 22nd April 2017 we held a medal workshop run by Maree Penhaligon from Glendinnings Menswear in the Kokoda Hall at the Cairns RSL Sub Branch. Maree has worked at Glendinnings for the past 16 years and is very passionate about helping people to understand the correct way of wearing medals, how medals should be stored and how to clean them. During the workshop Maree gave the guest some insightful tips on how to clean your medals.

"When cleaning your medals I have found Mothers Fine Car Polish is the best as it doesn't scratch the medals. You do however have to be careful of the WW2 stars and the Nato medals as the polish will stick to them but there is a trick."

For those of you who aren't aware, Glendenning's Menswear has now closed down. However, Maree will still be available for all your medal needs and is now located at the Cairns Create It shop inside the Cairns Showground shopping centre under her new business name **Marees Medal Mounting and Alterations**. You can contact Maree on 0408 747 856.





ANZAC DAY

By Rebecca Milliner

On Tuesday 25th April 2017 a large crowd of some four thousand odd people gathered around the Cenotaph on the Cairns Esplanade to pay their respects and remember those who gave up their lives and volunteered to defend our country and our way of life. This year marked the 100th Anniversary of the Light Horse mounted charge at the Battle of Beersheba. Our Master of Ceremonies was David Price who began the dawn service with the following recap on the Battle of Beersheba.

"The year 2017 is the 100th Anniversary of the Light Horse mounted charge at the Battle of Beersheba during the First World War desert campaigns in what was then Palestine. A charge that has gone down in military history as one of the finest examples of Australian courage and daring in the face of adversity.

As part of the Desert Mounted Corp, Commanded by Lt Gen. Harry Chauvel, the Fourth Light Horse Brigade began their journey to the battlefield with an overnight march of some 30 kilometres. They endured horrendous conditions of sandstorms and strong winds to arrive at the frontline on the 30th October 1917. To their horror much of their water supplies had not kept up with them, a perennial problem in desert warfare.

The men did their best to scrounge what they could to tend to their mounts. But for many men and beasts it would be a long time between drinks as the nearest wells in Beersheba were in Turkish hands.

On the morning of the 31st of October 1917, the battle commenced with British Infantry and Artillery engaging the Turkish defenders. Gains were made but not enough to dislodge the enemy who were well prepared. It soon became clear that drastic action would need to be taken in order to end this stalemate and take Beersheba before nightfall.

In the late afternoon, Chauvel ordered the Light Horse Brigade to mount a frontal assault



against the Turkish trenches. By 5:00pm they had formed up and were ready to attack. With the rallying cry from their commanding officer that 'Men, you are fighting for water' and to 'Use your bayonets as swords'. This was to be a cavalry charge in the grand old style.

Let us pause for a moment of silence and imagine if you can, the scene on that fateful afternoon- men whispering to each other words of encouragement, some deep in thought perhaps thinking of loved ones at home, some saying a silent prayer as they awaited the order to move, horses snorting and restless, some half crazed with thirst. They probably sensed the water beyond the enemy lines.

The charge began, slowly at first as the country was rough, but soon flatter ground appeared and they increased to a gallop. As the Turkish trenches came into sight, the Light Horse thundered on at full tilt. Bullets and shell shrapnel began flying thick and fast taking its toll on riders and mounts. Some horses were riderless but still galloped on. Here and there men who had lost their mounts took cover behind dead steeds for there was little other cover. But still the charged pressed on. Upon reaching the trenches some riders dismounted to do battle with the defenders whilst others soared straight over the top and raced headlong for the town and it's precious water supply.

The attack was a resounding success. A testament to the bravery and courage of the Australian Light Horse and today we pay homage to them. Out of the 800 men that took part in the charge regrettably some 31 light horsemen were killed and a similar number wounded. About 70 horses were killed and many had to be put down.

After the Battle one of the reasons for the lighter than expected casualties suffered by the light horse was given by captured Turkish and German Officers who said that the courageous charge had so surprised the defenders that they forgot to lower their sights which resulted in them firing too high to be effective. Most of the casualties happened in the trench fighting.





SIT-REP

Whatever the cause the Light Horse were victorious and hastened the end of the Turkish dominance in the Middle East.

Since that day we can undoubtedly say that the Australian Servicemen and their mounts have done Australia Proud."

This is what we celebrate on ANZAC Day- the courage, the determination, the tenacity, the lack of hesitation to act when there was a threat to our country. Lt Col Tim Rutherford, CO 51 Bn, Far North Queensland Regiment went on to elucidate this ANZAC Spirit in a very compelling and moving official address.

"The sun will be upon us soon. The sun that rises here this morning will be the same sun that waded beyond the horizon of Gallipoli, 102 years ago, as the soldiers of the newly formed Australian and New Zealand Army Corp waited for the order to come over the shore and attempt the impossible.

The sun that rises here this morning will be the same sun that sat high over the sands of Gaza 100 years ago. While the men and women of the desert mounted corp sweltered before charging head long into Turkish defence at the small but important post at Beersheba.

And this sun is also the same sun that shone on the paddocks of Gordonvale when Harry Doyle decided to enlist. Harry Doyle was 16, he was an orphan, he was Indigenous. I don't know why he decided to lie about his age to join the war effort. But after all the publicity surrounding the casualties at the Gallipoli and Gaza campaign I can only assume he knew what he was getting in for.

Harry was to become what Historians later titled one of the fair dinkums. In mid-1917 after his basic training Harry joined the 11th Light Horse regiment in Jordan. Fresh from Beersheba and following years of battle the 11th Light Horse was battle hardened. This was certainly no place for a boy. Harry had to grow up fast and in his first few months he participated in every major Battle that followed Beersheba. He was at the raid of Es Salt, the defence of Jordan River and the charge of Semakh.



The fighting that he encountered was hot, physical and confronting. The risk of death was constant and the challenges he faced infinite. This was an apprenticeship like no other and one that I can thankfully say that he survived.

There is no flamboyance in Harry's tale; there is no iconic name or event that has been singled out by history. He was just a local boy from Cairns who felt that he had something more to offer and for me that's exactly what makes Harry's story so important. Harry Doyle is the ANZAC. He typifies the average everyday person who volunteered to serve despite the risk. Like so many others he stood side by side with Australians of all backgrounds to forge a legacy for our young nation. More soberingly he sacrificed his childhood innocence on the promise of peace for future generations. It's this gift; it's this sacrifice that we commemorate here today.

The sun will be upon us soon as we congregate this morning standing side by side with people from all backgrounds. We should reflect on the extraordinary deeds of the everyday people like Harry Doyle. They have built this country into what it is today and passed the responsibility of its future on to us. It's this spirit of the ANZAC that we shouldn't ever forget."

ANZAC Day 2017 was a great success and a special mention must be given to the following people whom without their assistance the day would not have been possible.

- Mayor Bob Manning and Cairns Regional Council staff
- Lt Col Tim Rutherford and members of 51st FNQR
- Lt CMDR Carl Capper and members of HMAS Cairns
- All the people who kindly volunteered to assist us on the day in various ways- there are far too many to name. We are very blessed to have continued support of these people and the wider community.





SIT-REP



ANIMALS IN WAR AT OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIANS PRIMARY SCHOOL

During ANZAC week at Our Lady Help of Christians, the students and staff were introduced to Animals in War. A visual display in our school library covered many aspects of animals in war and the roles they played together with the jobs they performed.

The display was complimented with stuffed animals and story books from both the school library and the Cairns Regional library. Thanks to Bob Browne, Cameron, Rebecca and Lara from the Cairns RSL Sub Branch and John Hardy OAM from Tolga together with Santina Lizzio from South Johnstone for their support and help in providing many of the items for the display.

Following ANZAC day invited guests came to our school to visit the display and enjoy a morning tea.

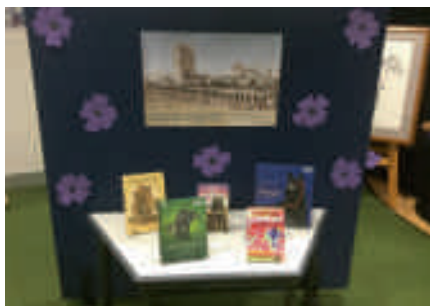
Some students from OLHOC are currently creating some animals from weaving products (horse, dog and pigeon) and one the year 6 classes is preparing art work, all to be sent to the Mayor of Pozieres for the opening of the Australian War Animals Memorial in July. Also, following a recent disco at school, \$550 was raised as a donation toward the Australian War Animals Memorial Organisation.

**By Heather Cochrane,
Library Aide at Our Lady Help of Christians**





SIT-REP



THE SPIRIT LIVES ON AT ST ANDREW'S

With ANZAC Day fast approaching, students at St Andrew's Catholic College and the surrounding community are beginning to reflect on the true meaning of ANZAC and its significant ties between people and places.

Like the poppies that bloom in Flanders Fields, respect and acknowledgement for ANZAC Day are ever in bloom within the St Andrew's Community. Through the engagement of the College in ANZAC Day events, a sense of pride for everything 'Australian' blossoms within each student. Every student, every wreath, every poppy sold, reflects generations of Australian warfare and the heaviness it still carries.

The ANZAC spirit shines through the eyes of the students at our College. This spirit is evident when our students create wreaths that are placed at the foot of the Australian flag with the utmost compassion and respect. It is evident in the array of special community guests that attend our College services. It is evident when students watch their peers standing tall and proud as cadets playing their part at the memorial services.

Just as the students have addressed and supported the Australian Defence community through various "I'm proud of you" and "Merry Christmas" cards and postcards to our troops, none of this would be possible without the College Defence School Transition Aide/Mentor Mrs Joanne Lawson, who for many of the students is dedicated to caring and supporting the Defence Force families here at the College.

As ANZAC day draws closer, and the entirety of Australia shares a minute silence, every member of the St Andrew's Community will also pay their respects. We will take a moment to reflect on being a part of something much bigger, a community that would not be here today without our ANZACS.

Lest we forget.

By Kiara Kenney and Kalea Chan





2017 SAINT MONICA'S AND SAINT AUGUSTINE'S HISTORY TOUR

Boarding our Qantas flight in Cairns, we emerged shattered shells eighteen hours later in London only to be whisked away on a guided tour of Hampton Court Palace and the London Eye. It was to be symptomatic of the hectic and full schedule that was to follow.

In short order we were to visit Westminster Abbey, the Tower of London and St Paul's Cathedral. David Kershaw, our tour manager, was at pains to point out the Apse of the Cathedral, informing us that although dedicated to the American forces stationed in Britain during World War II, the memorial nevertheless reflected the deep debt and gratitude felt by the "Brits" to all countries who had supported them during both world wars. It was, he assured us, something that would never be forgotten.

All too soon we departed London catching the "chunnel" train to Calais where we then transited to Ypres and the impressive Flanders

Fields Museum – itself a testimony to the human spirit. Still in awe, the party then gathered later that evening for the remembrance service at Menin Gate where prefects Sophie McManus and Brendan O'Sullivan presented a memorial wreath on behalf of the two Colleges.

Thursday saw visits to Passchendaele, Fromelles, the Pheasant Wood Military Cemetery, Australian Digger Memorial, Australian Corps Memorial Park, the Australian War Memorial at Le Hamel and the haunting Thiepval Memorial, the final resting place of over 72,000 souls.

After a brief visit to the Abris Museum in Albert, the party then moved on to Villers-Bretonneux and one of the undoubted highlights of the tour. One hundred years on, Villiers-Bretonneux still retains affection for Australia and is twinned with Cairns. After an exchange of gifts, the party was treated by the mayor and local officials to a



tour of the local school – built by donations from Victorian school-children – a “sneak peek” at a soon to be opened museum, and a first-class lunch. A visit to the breath-taking Australian War Memorial followed.

Saturday saw the party travel to the Normandy landing beaches of Sword, Juno and Gold with the American Cemetery at Omaha Beach a standout. Students were also impressed with what remained of the artificial harbour at Arromanches and Pointe du Hoc with its monument in honour of the American Second Ranger Battalion. The day finished with a step back in time to Bayeux where we were treated to a viewing of the Tapestry and spectacular cathedral.

After three days in Paris we bid farewell to France and embarked upon the final leg of our journey – a two-day stopover in Singapore. Whisked away by Bernard, our local guide, we experienced a whirlwind tour of the notorious Changi Prison and Battle Box at Fort Canning before a visit to several local temples and a street-market. Interestingly, Bernard was careful to stress that although it was important to remember and honour the past, reconciliation and moving forward was the key to future growth. Bernard contributed the miracle of Singapore’s post-war economic success to this pragmatic attitude.





Saint Augustine's College would like to acknowledge and thank the Cairns RSL Sub Branch for their generous support of the tour. Our trip was educational, enlightening, and enjoyable but at the same time we returned with a greater understanding of the enormous hardships endured by those brave men and women in two world wars. To witness their sacrifices on our behalf was a sobering and humbling experience.

Gratifying too, was the conduct of the students. Time and again, we had compliments from our guides and drivers, who host tour groups from schools on a weekly if not daily basis, commenting on the interest, politeness and enthusiasm the boys demonstrated during the site visits. Yet one anecdote I think best encapsulates our point. During our farewell at Charles de Gaulle Airport, David complimented the party on the exemplary way they had conducted themselves, both in their interactions with the wider public and with each other. He particularly noted the dignity with which students delivered their eulogies and the support provided by others in doing so. In thanking them for their whole approach to touring, he rightly noted that the young men and women were a credit to their country, colleges, themselves and by extension the RSL whose sponsorship they displayed.

By Larry Bellshaw & Andrew Dorahy
Supervising Teachers – St Augustine's College



STUDENT REFLECTIONS

The History Tour throughout London, Belgium, France and Singapore was an adventure full of new experiences and life lessons. Meeting new people, developing lifelong friendships, experiencing different cultures and seeing many iconic sights were just some of the many highlights that the history tour will be remembered for. However, within the fun and excitement, there was also a time to honour the soldiers who fell for our country. With many war memorial sights visited, particularly throughout France, the number of soldiers who sacrificed their life soon began to hit home for us students who had not seen such a number in anything but digits. The endless rows of names and headstones made us step back and really think about the immensity of the war. In addition, the delivery of eulogies from fellow students made us realise the lives they had lived and left behind for the freedom of our country. We are thankful for the experience, the friendships made, the sights seen and the journey that we will remember for the rest of our lives.

By Mackenzie Duffy

During the Easter holidays, I was lucky enough to have the privilege to travel to Europe with St. Monica's and Saint Augustine's College on our history tour. Over two and a half weeks we visited London, Paris, France and Singapore, taking in the rich and diverse history of each amazing destination. A particularly important and emotional part of the trip was visiting the Western Front where so many innocent Australian soldiers lost their lives fighting for our freedom. It was an honour to present and listen to eulogies that each student wrote as we remembered individual soldiers and the lives they led before their passing in the war. I would like to sincerely thank the Cairns RSL Sub Branch for providing us with caps and jackets that were worn every single day throughout the duration of the trip. Not only did the jackets and caps help us to bear the cold weather but were also very useful in spotting our group in the massive crowds! Overall, I believe the trip to have been a huge success and am very grateful to have been given such an amazing opportunity.

By Evie O'Reilly





SIT-REP



EULOGIES

Eulogy for Bernard Peter Hickey, 2017 **By Jack Hislam**

My great, great uncle Bernard Peter Hickey (Peter to his mates) was born in Toowoomba on 30 August, 1913; the sixth child of Patrick and Marcella Hickey. Peter and his three brothers (Vince, Eugene and Fleming) attended St Mary's Christian Brothers' School in Toowoomba where he showed high levels of promise in football, cricket, athletics and golf. He then boarded at Nudgee College in Brisbane and was captain of the rugby and cricket teams, also winning a gold medal in high-jump.

After leaving Nudgee in 1933, Peter made his way back to Toowoomba to work for his uncle, Michael Hickey, as a cabinet maker. Peter gave up cabinet making and pursued his rugby dream, where he played forward for Toowoomba in the Bulimba Cup from 1933 to 1935 and was selected to play for Queensland.

In 1934, the Hickey family moved to Brisbane, as Patrick had bought the licence for the York Hotel in Queen Street, now known as the Myer

Centre. Peter worked at the York Hotel with his family and joined the Brisbane Brothers rugby league team, earning a place in the Australian side to play England in the 1936 Ashes.

Peter enlisted himself into the Royal Australian Air Force on 15 August, 1940, at age 26. Peter initially attended flight school in Sydney before heading to Narromine for training in Tiger Moths. After ninety hours of flying, Peter received his "wings" in May, 1940. Peter headed home to spend two weeks with his close-knit family for Christmas before leaving for Canada by ship on 28 December, 1940. This would be the last time that his family saw him.

Peter spent some time undertaking further flight training in Saskatoon before departing Halifax for England in June, 1941. On 15 September of that year, Peter was posted to the 458 Squadron, flying Wellington bombers. The squadron had only been formed on 1 September at Holme-on-Spalding Moor, an airfield in East Yorkshire.

Between October and early January of 1941, Peter's squadron flew on many missions to





Belgium, Holland and France and in one instance his aircraft was hit and the crew bailed out over southern England. The Queensland newspapers were full of news of Peter's survival, parachuting to safety! In November Peter flew as captain of the squadron for the first time.

At 0435 hours on 9 January 1942, 458 Squadron took off from Holme-on-Spalding to join thirty other bombers to attack the port of Cherbourg. This small group was to mount a diversion for a larger group of 131 bombers who would be dispatched to the French harbour of Brest to find and destroy the German pocket battleships, the Scharnhorst and the Gneisenau.

Weather conditions over the Normandy Peninsula that January morning were appalling – snow was falling, visibility was poor and the Germans' attack was particularly active. Only three of the thirty-one aircraft were able to drop their bombs and many were forced to turn back. Of the three Wellingtons from 458 Squadron that left Yorkshire, only one returned. Peter's plane R1785 did not – he and the crew had disappeared completely.

For more than sixty-six years no one knew what had happened to Peter and his crew and they were simply listed as "missing in action". It wasn't until 2008 (less than 10 years ago!) that their final fate became known, largely thanks to the efforts of an Air France pilot by the name of Georges Denneboouy. Georges grew up on a farm near Cherbourg and decided to search his family farm for plane wreckage, having grown up hearing stories about the many aircraft shot down in the area during the war. Eventually, Georges and three other historians found the wreckage of a plane and a ring with initials engraved on it. The initials were "WWF" – William Wallace Forgan, known as Wally, a South Australian member of Peter's crew. By cross-referencing records, Georges and his friends were able to identify the plane and the crew.

It turned out that Peter and his crew were buried by the Germans in a grave near Cherbourg but no one back home would have known this. A memorial has since been built on the site believed to be the crash zone on the border of two villages, Golleville and Colomby. The unveiling of this memorial in October 2008 was attended by almost the entire population of the villages, school children, relatives of the crew, RAF representatives and past and present mayors, all paying their respects to these young men who gave their lives for the freedom of others.

Today, I stand here to pay my respects to these brave men of R1785, 458 Squadron:

Co-pilot Vic Johnstone from Lockington, Victoria; aged twenty-four;

Front Gunner William Wallace (Wally) Forgan from Crystal Brook, South Australia; aged twenty-two;

Bomb Aimer and Observer Robert (Bob) Birnie from Auckland, New Zealand; aged twenty-four;

Rear Gunner Fred Hinton from Leicester, England;

Wireless Operator Albert Austin from Birmingham, England;

And most of all, to Flying Officer Bernard Peter Hickey, from Brisbane Australia; aged twenty-eight: my great, great uncle.

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Eulogy for Henry Marinus Atherton, By Mike

I did not know him personally, but I wish that I had. On July 31st, 1921 a boy was born named Henry Atherton. He was the second son of Ernest and Honoria Atherton. The Atherton's were an important pioneering family and the Atherton Tablelands was named after Henry's grandfather John Atherton. Henry's own father was a politician who represented Chillagoe in the State Parliament, holding the position of Minister for Mines.

Henry's early life took place in Cairns. He first attended school in Toowoomba before returning to Cairns. He continued his schooling at St. Augustine's College in 1936 and started year 10 that year. He was an academic, achieving A's in his state's junior exams in Algebra and Arithmetic. He also found a passion for the French language. Despite his academic achievements, Henry left St. Augustine's in 1939 to accept a position as a bank clerk in the Commonwealth Bank, while continuing his schooling by taking up a correspondence course in accountancy. Later that year in September, he enlisted as a private in the Australian army's 51st Battalion. He was part of that battalion until his discharge in August 1941 enabled a transfer to the Royal Australian Air Force.

Henry enlisted in the RAAF on the 16th of August 1941. He undertook flight training in Australia at Sandgate and Archerfield in Queensland followed by further training at Narromine and Bradfield Park in New South Wales. In November 1942, he disembarked for Bournemouth, England.

On April 19th 1943, Henry was posted to RAF Longtown. Four days later, on the 23rd April, while on a training flight his RAF Hurricane fighter plane crashed. Henry suffered third degree burns from the resultant fire. He died without suffering.

Although he may not be physically with us, his legacy will live on; as will his mark on this Earth.



Although I cannot tell you if he was a good or bad person, I can tell you this. When he enlisted for the war effort, the conflict had already been raging on for about two years. Henry had had two years of news stories and reports of the tragedies that occurred overseas to his fellow Australians. He enlisted knowing the risks and danger involved in joining this cause. To me, this tells of his courage and determination to support his people and his country: the same ideal as many others of his generation.

Henry was never "overlooked" or "unrecognised" in the city of Cairns. Henry Marinus Atherton was a normal person. But he decided he wanted to change this, hence he joined the army. But nevertheless, Henry was brave. And he knew it. He knew the potential he had and the potential in others. The potential to do good.

The way I see it, Henry had hope: the hope that men are still good. Despite everything that was happening at the time, Henry held onto hope. We can learn from this. Despite this, we fight. We kill. We betray one another. But we can't let that be our legacy as a race. We need to learn that there is always hope, even in the darkest of times. Remember, we can rebuild. We can do better. We will. We have to.

VOLUNTEER PROFILE *Phil Watson*

- 1. What was your role in the Military?** *Initially a motor mechanic then aircraft engine and airframe fitter.*
- 2. What do you now?** *Senior compensation Advocate at Cairns Sub Branch and Mentor for 3 trainees, one at Cairns, one at Atherton and one at Innisfail.*
- 3. Best part about your job?** *Satisfaction of receiving a decision letter from DVA granting a client compensation for a service caused disability.*
- 4. How do you stay involved with the Cairns RSL Sub Branch?** *Working as a compensation advocate 2 days a week and interacting with all Sub Branch staff in many diverse ways.*
- 5. What is your best advice to someone who has just left the service?** *Come to the RSL and discuss future options regarding compensation for injuries, types of pensions available and other services that the RSL can provide.*
- 6. Why did you enlist?** *I had always wanted to be in the Army and when I found out that I could learn a trade as well, I was in!*
- 7. Which was your favourite posting? And Why?** *183 Squadron Workshops in PNG. The lifestyle was tremendous; the social life was great and the work very rewarding and not particularly arduous.*



- 8. What was the biggest challenge you faced in the Military?** *Staying in Army Aviation after crashing 3 times in military aircraft.*
- 9. Of the three services which is the best and why?** *I worked in all 3 services over my working life and Army is the best. They look after their people much better than the other 2 services.*
- 10. If you could invent one thing what would it be?** *Someone in DVA who knew all the answers.*

VOLUNTEER PROFILE

Murray O'Neill

1. **What is the essence of good leadership?** *Strength, honesty and knowledge.*
2. **What is your greatest life achievement? And how did you achieve this?** - *Having two fantastic children, and we all know how that is achieved.*
3. **What do you think is the greatest challenge facing veterans today?** *Fitting back into society following the highs and lows of service and knowing that their contribution is appreciated.*
4. **How do you stay involved with the Cairns RSL Sub Branch?** *Volunteer with displaying memorabilia. "Lest we forget".*
5. **Who is your hero / mentor?** *All VC recipients.*
6. **What is your best advice to give someone under 30?** *Go for it. You will get out of life what you put into it.*
7. **Where is your favourite place in Australia? And Why?** *On the Green Island jetty at dusk. Because you have a night on the Island to look forward to.*
8. **If there were no rules in your life for one day, what would you do?** *Rob a bank, then rob another bank, then exterminate Kim Jong-un.*



9. **If you met someone who was recently moved to Cairns what are the first three things you would recommend they do?** *Slip up and spend at least one night at Port Douglas. On the way back call into Thala Beach Resort for lunch and then visit Hartley Creek crocodile park.*
10. **What is your philosophy or value that you hold dearest in life?** *Ask not what your Country can do for you, ask what you can do for your Country.*



BORNEO

This article is dedicated to one of our generous and kind members Syd Gregory. We hope you enjoy reading this Sit Rep Syd.

Borneo Oboe campaign – Second World War Historical Backgrounder

By Bill Maconachie

In 1945, Australia's armed forces took part in a series of landings on the island of Borneo, including the largest amphibious landing undertaken by Australian forces in the Second World War.

The Borneo campaign included the final major operations of the Second World War for Australian forces. More than 75 000 Australians served in or supported the landings and more than 590 lost their lives in this campaign.

General Douglas MacArthur, the Allied supreme commander in the South-West Pacific Area, ordered Australian forces to undertake landings in Borneo, before beginning operations on Java. Originally six landings were planned, but only three took place. The landings were codenamed 'Oboe' and were undertaken from May to July 1945.

Months before the first landings, the Services Reconnaissance Department, a codename for Special Operations Australia, dropped teams behind enemy lines. Commonly known as Z Special Unit, its men trained indigenous people from the Borneo interior in guerrilla warfare and reported on Japanese activities on the island.



Australian forces assembled on Morotai Island, in the Netherlands East Indies (now Indonesia) in preparation for the landings. The forces included airmen of the 1st Tactical Air Force, troops of 1st Australian Corps – including men of the 7th and 9th Divisions, some of whom had fought in the Middle East and New Guinea – and sailors in Australian warships and beach landing units.



The main landing of Oboe 1, on Tarakan on 1st May was preceded by a massive naval and air bombardment. A small landing on tiny Sadau

Island the day before enabled artillerymen to shell the Japanese while engineers cleared the beach defences. The 26th Brigade Group landed and for several weeks fought on Tarakan, as airfield construction personnel struggled to repair the captured airfield. More than 250 Australians lost their lives on Tarakan.

The Oboe 6 landings on Labuan Island and around Brunei Bay, began on 10 June. Preceded by naval and air bombardments. Landings were

made on Labuan Island, on the Borneo mainland at Brunei and on Muara Island. In some places Australian troops overcame pockets of fierce resistance. Labuan was developed as a base while the Australians liberated much of British North Borneo. Some 115 Australians lost their lives during this second Oboe operation. Oboe 2, the third and final landing, took place at Balikpapan and was the largest amphibious landing by Australian forces in the Second





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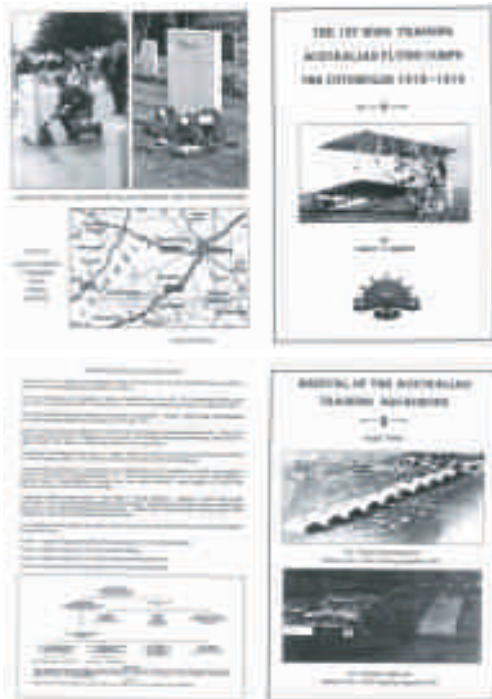
World War. Warships opened fire ahead of the landing by the 7th Division and supporting units on 1 July 1945. The landing area through which the Australians advanced was devastated, darkened by plumes of smoke from burning oil tanks. By war's end, some 230 Australians had lost their lives in the Balikpapan fighting.

After the news of Victory in the Pacific on 15 August 1945, Australian forces accepted the surrender of the Japanese in Borneo. More than 590 Australians had lost their lives in the Oboe operations.



MEMBERS ABROAD- MALCOM WALKER

Back in the long misty days of time, Leighterton a quite farming village set in the beautiful rolling hills of the Cotswolds. Until one cold wet afternoon Australian, and New Zealand and crews arrived at Tetbury a central town for the area. In the next few days dispersed to villages in the area, setting up training schools, building airfields, service hangers. For the training of local air service crews and pilots in tactical operations. Set out below a summary of the first wing Australian Flying Corps. 1917-18 and 1919 as summarised by Mr.Barry K Barnes.



Since Anzac Day 1931 a remembrance service has been held in the village, organised by the Gloucestershire County of the Royal British Legion. To conclude a very stirring service a gentle touch to a solemn ambiance as the

names of the fallen air personnel were read by senior pupils of the Leighterton Primary School.

- Ernest Howard Jefferys
- Charles Clarence Frederick
- Jack Henry Weingarth
- Henri Louis Buland
- Edgar Thomas Filmer
- Roy Nelson Victor McGuffie
- Thomas Llewellyn Keen
- Lindsay Gordon Cubbins
- Sydney Charles Fry
- Charles William Scott
- Keith William Stronach - buried in Lasborough Cemetery but remembered on our memorial in this cemetery
- William Parkes
- Geoffrey Dunster Allen
- Francis Gordon Davis
- George Francis Jack Needham
- Thomas Clutterbuck
- George Robert Thompson
- Cecil Charles Lewis
- Sydney Harold Banks-Smith
- Oscar Dudley Shepherd
- Roy Nelson Pillow
- Roy Lytton Cummings
- Robert Alexander Dunn
- Patrick George Walsh • Edward Baron Broomhall - left England for Australia in 1920 where he was discharged and returned to the UK until his death in 1930 and then buried with his fellow countrymen here in Leighterton.

The younger pupils laid a sprig of Rosemary before each head stone. England does not have a public holiday as in Australia. Due to this the service is held on the Sunday nearest to the 25th April. These Souls laid to rest in the peaceful Cemetery will always be remembered 'Lest We Forget'.

By Malcolm Walker.



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THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE KOKODA HALL MUSEUMS ARMOURY AND INTERPRETIVE BUNKER

On Monday 24th April in the late afternoon, just prior to the annual Rotary Club sponsored “Dine with a Digger Dinner” The Kokoda Hall Museums Armoury and Interpretive Bunker were officially opened.

Cairns RSL Sub Branch President Buster Todd was the Master of Ceremonies for the opening. Commander Carl Capper from HMAS Cairns gave a short speech and then dignified the opening by reaching forward and opening the Armoury doors.

On the day of the opening ceremony and in order to have things ready, finishing touches were still being applied well into the afternoon. During his speech Buster praised the efforts of the Volunteers and Sub Branch staff and briefly covered the history of the development of the Museum, the Armoury and the Bunker.

Now that these two major exhibits are officially open I would like to take the opportunity to tell our members and the Rotary Club visitors who attended the Ceremony something of the work effort and the planning effort that went into making it all possible.

Prior to the opening ceremony the Armoury and Bunker project has been in the making since the

commencement of the Kokoda Hall Museum project in January 2015. During the initial meeting it was agreed that the proposed Museum should be in essence an “Interpretive Centre”. We also needed to ensure that our large collection of weapons was once again prominently displayed as it was before the major building renovation project commenced.

These ideas were put forward by David Clifton. David had recently visited several other RSL Sub Branch Military Museums and as a result he had a vision for what needed to be accomplished to



create a quality Museum in the Cairns RSL Sub Branch complex. In short we needed to set up a themed display that in itself, told a story and had additional interpretive attributes. The idea of an "Interpretive bunker" evolved. The end product is perhaps somewhat different from the original idea however; the concept has been met.

Over the next several months more planning meetings were held and as a result the basic layout of the Museum unfolded. Initially the "Interpretive Bunker" was to be much larger but doing this would have restricted the space needed to effectively display the many weapons that needed to be exhibited.

The concept to have the Armoury as a single repository for the Sub Branches weapons collection can be attributed to volunteer Murray O'Neill. Murray put forward this concept at a planning meeting and once consensus was established he went ahead and designed the layout and completed construction plans for the Armoury and the Interpretive Bunker as two separate units. Over time a hired carpenter fabricated the basic structure. Murray supervised these works and liaised with J & R Electrics to ensure that they made provision for power and lighting to be installed.

For a time, work on the Armoury was postponed however volunteer Murray O'Neill set about

"fitting out" the Bunker. Initially Murray created a "Bill of Materials" and then purchased and or acquired the materials that were needed. His excellent work on the fit out was accomplished over a period of time using innovative and creative ideas, using both new and recycled materials. The recycled materials were generously donated by Anton's Demolitions & Recycle.

The authentic looking sandbags which partially cover the north wall of the bunker were created using hessian bags filled with polystyrene blocks that were skilfully hand shaped to suit. This was messy work. The bags were then cut in half and adhered to a plywood backing giving the desired effect. The remainder of the wall was lined with recycled galvanized corrugated steel.



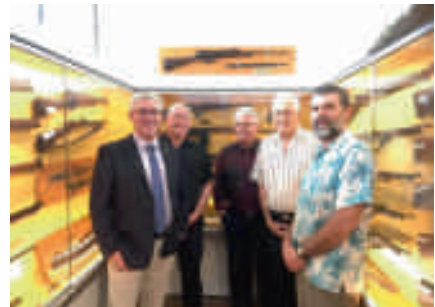
Fake Bullet holes were added randomly to the wall. The ceiling has large recycled timber beams fitted, it is lined with acoustic material and has a camouflage net draped over it.

The rear brick wall and the south side wall have been painted with camouflage paint. Murray hand painted a version of a WW2 “Kilroy was Here” motif on the brick surface. Once again fake bullet holes were added for effect. Murray also fabricated a typical military style table and a chair which is also painted in drab military colours.

In line with the original Interpretive Centre concept a 50” smart video screen was installed on the rear wall and a special industrial 19” touch screen was purchased. These two items are interfaced via a standard desktop computer. This system enables electronic images, DVD’s, Youtubes, digital photos and the like to be shown on the 50” screen adding to the interpretive potential. In order to enable easy access to the “touch screen” Murray fabricated a “Pedestal style kiosk” which houses the PC and has the Touch Screen fixed into the top surface. This unit is semi portable and is mounted at the entrance to the Bunker for client access.

Several items of suitable military paraphernalia were placed at random within the bunker for visual effect.

With the basic Armoury structure completed the contract carpenter installed the Armoury doors. This was accomplished by recycling a set of timber/glass doors with brass fittings that had previously been fitted downstairs in the club before renovations. These doors greatly enhance the visual theme of the Armoury entrance. This feature was included in Murray’s



design criteria and Murray took pride in refurbishing the timber work, polishing and renovating the brass items and doing the final fit to make them operational.

In parallel with these works Murray designed the weapons cabinets and met with the glaziers to discuss the design and the standards for the sliding glass weapons cabinet doors. It was intended to use the contract carpenter to fabricate the cabinets however he was not available. Volunteer Craig Maher took on the project and completed the cabinet shells in his home workshop. He was assisted by volunteer Joel Montiford.

Subsequent to this the cabinet shells were installed and the interior surfaces painted. The weapons were recovered from storage and most of them were installed. The .303 rifle collections are mounted on the south side cabinet and the foreign rifles on the north side. In order to give a shadow effect, the rifles were installed using standoff pads. Prior to installation each rifle was meticulously cleaned by Roy Hartman.

The collection of swords is provisionally set up on the bottom surface of the cabinets pending a final fitment decision. They will most likely be permanently installed on the surfaces above the cabinets.

In preparation for installing the automatic weapons and in line with weapons licensing regulations Murray fitted a strong ring bolt to be used to lock the wire lanyard that secure the automatic weapons in place. With this task done Gerry Webb was able to recover the automatic weapons from the secure storage. Murray O'Neill and Gerry Webb then installed them in the rear cabinet, fitted the security wire lanyard and locked it in place on the ring bolt.

In parallel to this work the glaziers installed the sliding doors, the electricians completed the cabinet lighting and installed two Hurricane Lanterns modified with LED lights in the Bunker.

In conclusion we would like to thank all those volunteers that contributed to these projects, in particular volunteer Murray O'Neill who did the layout & design, and the bulk of the work, and volunteer Craig Maher for taking over and completing the fabrication of the weapons cabinets on short notice. We would also like to thank the Sub Branch President Buster Todd and the Sub Branch Board of Directors for approving the project and providing the funding. We would also like to thank the Sub Branch staff for their support.

Bob Browne - Curator Memorabilia for the Memorabilia Volunteer Group.



ARMOURY AND ARTILLERY MUSEUM

If you are heading out to visit the Armoury and Artillery museum here are SGT John Lay's Top 4 picks of must view.

1. AC-1 SENTINEL- (*This is the "What the hell were they thinking tank"*)

Developed in 1941 under the program for Australian cruiser tanks. There were plans to produce 2000 vehicles, but from 1942 through to 1943, only 65 vehicles, with serial numbers from 8001 to 8065, were manufactured. In July, it was decided to stop development and cancel the program. The vehicles never saw combat and were used only for training purposes. In 1946, the tanks were removed from service.

2. SA-2 GUIDLINE (S-75 DVINA) MISSILE ON TRAILER (COLD WAR KILLER)

The S-75 Dvina is a Soviet-designed, high altitude air defence system, built around a surface-to-air missile with command guidance. Since its first deployment in 1975 it has become the most widely deployed air defence system in history. It scored the first destruction of an enemy aircraft by a surface-to-air missile, shooting down a Taiwanese Martin RB-57D Canberra over China, on 7th October 1959, hitting it with three V-750 (1D) missiles at an altitude of 20km. This success was attributed to Chinese fighter aircraft at the time in order to keep the S-75 program secret. This system first gained international fame when an S-75 battery, was deployed in the 1960 U-2 incident, when it shot down the U-2 of Francis Gary Powers overflying the Soviet Union on May 1, 1960. The system was also deployed in Cuba during the Cuban Missile Crisis, when it shot down another U-2 (piloted by Rudolf Anderson) overflying Cuba on October 27th 1962, almost precipitating a nuclear war.

3. T-72 MBT (MUSORIAN ARMED FORCES WORK HORSE)

This is one for the DFSW tank killers in the group 1973. The T-72 was accepted for service and over 25 000 units were built, but the production lines never really shut down. The T-72, in its modernized form, now represents the bulk of the Russian armoured forces, and was adopted by the best armoured units in all Eastern Europe forces. It was widely exported despite its price-double of that of a T-55 because it represented a good compromise, not complicated to operate and maintain, with many commonalities with previous models. It was a real upgrade in firepower, protection, speed and even fire accuracy compared to previous models, and even contemporary Western MBTs. Unlike the T-62, the T-72 became an instant hit, was well-modernized over decades and is still frontline today, in thirty-six armies.

4. SOVIET AT-T (Is it a Tank or a Truck?)

Artilleriyskiy Tyagach Tyazholiy, or AT-T (meaning heavy artillery tractor) was a Soviet Cold War era artillery tractor. The AT-T is based on the Chassis and drive system from the T-54 Tank. However, the tub has been rotated through 180°. Engine, clutch, gearbox, steering gear and the drive wheels are in the front of the vehicle. The crew cabin is also located in the front part of the vehicle. The cab is from the ZIS-150 and ZIL-164 truck. Vehicles based on AT-T include: BAT-M obstacle removing vehicle, BTM-3 high speed trench digging vehicle, MDK-2M pits digging vehicle and the P-40 radar.



HISTORY OF HMAS CAIRNS

HMAS Cairns was named after an Australian World War II Bathurst Class Corvette of the same name which began its sea service in 1942, serving in the Indian Ocean, Eastern Africa, the Mediterranean and in Australian waters.

The Royal Australian Navy has been a regular visitor to the port of Cairns for many decades stretching well back before the Second World War. Many ships, both military and merchant, made Cairns their principal port of call when travelling up the east coast of Australia during World War II for re-supply and refit prior to heading to New Guinea, Java, the Solomon Islands and many other destinations throughout the Pacific.

A permanent Navy presence in Cairns did not begin however, until the new Patrol Boat Facility opened up at Grafton Street on the 29 January 1971 under the Command of LEUT H.P Shaw RAN. Starting with a complement of only one officer and fifteen sailors, the facility was to provide general repair and maintenance facilities for the newly formed Second Australian Patrol Boat Squadron. From mid-1971 the first Patrol

Boats commenced refitting in Cairns with the work being carried out by private contractors.

On the 1 February 1974, the Grafton Street Establishment was then given the title HMAS Cairns and Commissioned under the command of CMDR J.M Yates RAN. By then the complement had grown to four officers and 30 sailors, as well as becoming the homeport for the three Attack Class Patrol Boats, HMA Ships Barbette, Barricade and Bayonet, as well as a single Hydrographic Survey Ship, HMAS Flinders.

HMAS Cairns now sits on the site of a former Navy ship repair facility originally built by Navy at the outbreak of World War II. Re-construction of the new establishment began in 1979 and the base was relocated and formally re-commissioned at Draper Street on 28 May 1982 under the command of Commander A.H Brecht RAN, with an expanded complement of 13 Officers and 100 sailors. The base expanded until a major redevelopment was undertaken in 2008-9 and transformed it into the modern complex that exists today.



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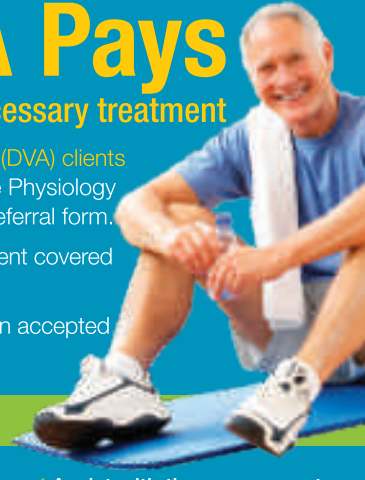
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