



Newsletter of the Toowong RSL Sub-Branch

The Price of Liberty is Eternal Vigilance

Est. 1919



June 2020

Dear Members,

Welcome to the June newsletter. Winter is now upon us however thankfully we live in one of the best parts of the world so we shouldn't complain too much.

The last three months has been a busy one for the new committee which has a good mix of 'old' experienced heads and a couple of fresh faces. We have been continuing with our monthly committee meetings in the COVID-19 period via 'ZOOM' video conferencing which has proved to be very useful. Despite a few hiccups in the beginning we now have another way of meeting quickly should the need arise in the future so it has been a useful exercise.

The AGM held on 15 March went well and we just got it in before COVID-19 restrictions closed a lot of things down. We decided on a 'casual salute' instead of a handshake as the appropriate greeting to one another although our social distancing skills at that stage probably needed some work!

The Quarterly General Meeting (QGM) which is for all members will be held on 22 June at 5pm at the office immediately after the committee meeting which commences at 4pm. Members are invited to attend the committee meeting if they wish.

Many thanks go to the former committee members who did not seek re-election and 'retired' after many years of dedicated service to the sub-branch.

Finally, congratulations to George Hulse who was named on The Queen's Birthday 2020 Honours List to be awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia. Well deserved George.

Stephen Thornton, Hon. Secretary.

Your 2020-21 Committee is:

- George Hulse OAM - President
- Nigel Meadows - Senior Vice-President
- Ross Williamson - Vice President
- Dr. Stephen Thornton - Hon. Secretary
- Vince Atley - Hon. Treasurer
- Mike Muirhead – Membership Officer
- Peter Gow
- Bruce Tindall
- Janelle Voysey

President's Report

COVID-19 has had a serious impact on the work of the sub-branch since March 2020. We were not permitted to meet in our usual place at



Sylvan Road so we conducted our April and May committee meetings by video conferencing. It was fun but not as good as social contact around a table.

Unfortunately, our ANZAC Day Dawn Service was cancelled and we were all asked to conduct individual ANZAC Day services at the end of our driveways or on our balconies. This was a huge success and underscores the love and support Australians have for this iconic day. I am sure that it's the same for New Zealand.

However, our fund-raising activity for the ANZAC Day period for 2020 was seriously impacted. We could not set up our table with the RSL merchandise in places like the Toowong Village Centre, Bunnings at Indooroopilly or the hotels and hospitals.

Despite these restrictions there were some remarkable acts of generosity by supporters of the RSL.

For example, Vince Atley our Treasurer contacted a number of supporting organisations and arranged for our raffle hampers, merchandise and donation collection tins to be displayed and these generated good returns. Bodytrack, Wests Rugby Football Club, Cr James Mackay and Julian Simmonds MP all recorded videos of the Toowong RSL sub-branch and made appeals to their areas of influence for folk to donate to the sub-branch.

We are grateful to these groups and individuals for their ongoing support and encouragement.

The committee has recently become aware of two iconic personalities who are buried at the Toowong Cemetery. They are:

1. Canon David Garland OBE who is the "Architect of ANZAC Day". It was mainly through this Anglican Minister's work that ANZAC Day became a public holiday. It was he who was the principal organiser of the first ANZAC Day march through Brisbane on 25 April 1916. Canon Garland was responsible for the magnificent Stone of Remembrance and Cross of Sacrifice located at the main gate to the cemetery and is the spot where the initial ANZAC Day services were held in Queensland.
2. Major Charles Heaphy VC who is the first recipient of the Victoria Cross outside the Army of Great Britain. Charles Heaphy was awarded the VC for his courage during the land wars of New Zealand in the 1850s. The award was a hotly contested battle between the parliaments of the UK and New Zealand with the NZ government eventually winning its case. It was this award that pioneered the way forward for the VC to be awarded to British Colonial defence personnel outside the UK. Charles Heaphy VC is buried in the Toowong cemetery.

Potential Future Activity

Dependent upon the outcome of any restrictions in respect of CV-19, the committee is working to deliver the following activities:

- 15 August 2020 at David Garland Place (at the main gate to the Toowong cemetery) commencing at 10:30 am a service celebrating the end of World War Two. At the end of the service we intend to visit the gravesites of a sailor, a soldier, an airman and a nurse and pay our respects in honour of their sacrifice.

You may be interested to know that the Friends of Toowong Cemetery under the leadership of Mr Darcy Maddock has recorded the names of over 4,000 soldiers interred in the cemetery. He has generously given us (Peter Gow) his database for our ongoing research into the background of defence personnel.

- 11 November 2020 we intend to conduct two separate services. These are:
 - a. Commencing at 9:00 am a gravesite service to Major Heaphy VC.
 - b. Commencing at 10:45 am at the Toowong Cenotaph in Sylvan Road we will conduct our full Remembrance Day service.
- 25 April 2021 we intend to conduct two separate services. These are:
 - a. Commencing at 6:30 am at the Toowong Cenotaph in Sylvan Road we will conduct our full ANZAC Day Dawn service;
 - b. Commencing at 1045 am at David Garland Place a short service in honour of Canon David Garland followed by a gravesite visit to his final resting place.

More to follow on these activities as they draw nearer.

Finances

One Volunteer Is Better Than Ten Pressed Men

Our plan of action for 2020 includes the need for fund-raising to keep our sub-branch finances healthy and happy which they are currently.



Our fundraisers are dependent on our members stepping-up-to-the-plate and volunteering their precious time at shopping centres and sausage sizzles.

Despite the COVID-19 disruption to our usual fundraising activities, in the past quarter we raised over \$1800.00 from our ANZAC Day raffle ticket and poppy sales, managed by our hardworking Treasurer Vince Atley.

West's Rugby Club, The Wesley Hospital (which bought a bulk supply of poppies and gave one to each of their patients), Toowong Private Hospital and Bodytrack exercise physiologists (located in our building, see www.bodytrack.com.au) assisted with our activities.

A special mention to 'Boots' who put in another sterling fundraising effort.

Winners of our Anzac Day Raffle 2020 were:

- A61 B. Duffy from Toowong
- B33 R. Parry from Brookfield
- B24 N. Meadows from Toowong

We recently purchased a vacuum cleaner and a 4-drawer metal lockable filing cabinet for the office. Out of necessity, all records had previously been kept at the homes of office bearers due to the sub-branch having no permanent home. That changed a couple of years ago when we secured a long-term lease on our current office.

A lot of sub-branch records were destroyed in the 1974 flood. Fortunately, the new office is high and dry and located in a secure building.

RSL Queensland SED AGM

The Qld RSL South Eastern District Annual General Meeting is hosted by a different sub-branch each year. On 7 March 2020 it was hosted by our sub-branch.

The Saturday dinner was held in marquees with hard flooring on the West's Rugby football field. All agreed it was a success and everyone enjoyed a pleasant evening. More photos at the end of the newsletter.



SED RSL AGM held at West's Rugby Club



Saturday evening dinner held in marquees

ANZAC Discovery Trail Interpretative Panels

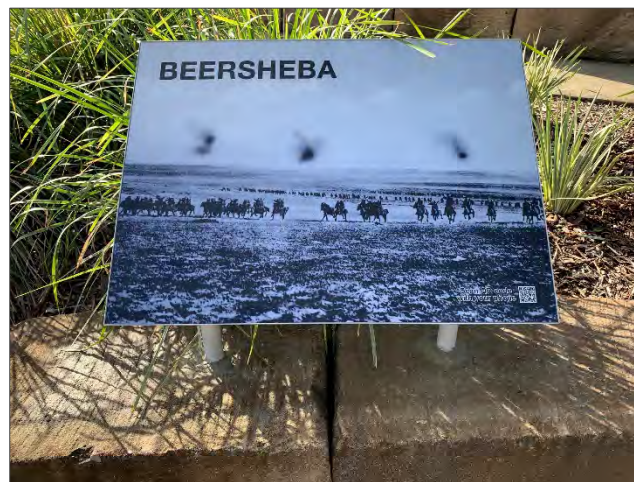
Work on the three 'interpretative panels' for the ANZAC Discovery Trail that leads up to our cenotaph has been completed. Commencing a few years ago under immediate past president Kerry Gallagher, the project has been dutifully managed to completion by Mike Muirhead.

For our newer members, these panels will commemorate major campaigns and battles of the wars in which Australia has fought (often alongside our New Zealand mates).

The first three panels are of World War 1 being Gallipoli, The Western Front and Beersheba. The public is able to scan the bottom right hand corner with their smart phone and this will bring up a description of the campaign/battle from dedicated webpages on our website. These were installed earlier this month.

In the next year or so we plan to start work on the next set of panels which will be of the major campaigns and battles of World War 2.

We have had very good service by the fabricators, Anoprint (www.anoprint.com.au).



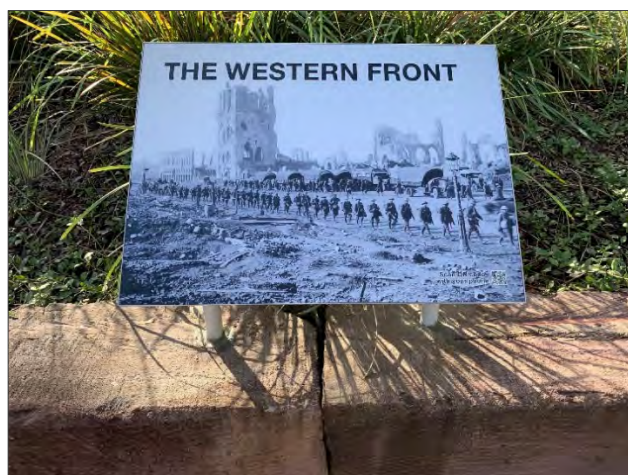
Beersheba



Three panels with Wests Rugby Club in background



Gallipoli



The Western Front

George Hulse's story continued from last Don R (The Australian engineers, Sappers, on 8 August 1918 in Amiens France)

... The Australian advance was a riot. They arrived at their final objective in eight hours. It was supposed to have taken four days. On arrival at Harbonnieres (the final objective) the Australians halted. But, looking out over "no-mans-land", they saw an enormous gun mounted on a railway line. It was about 200 metres to their front and too much of a temptation not to have a go at it.

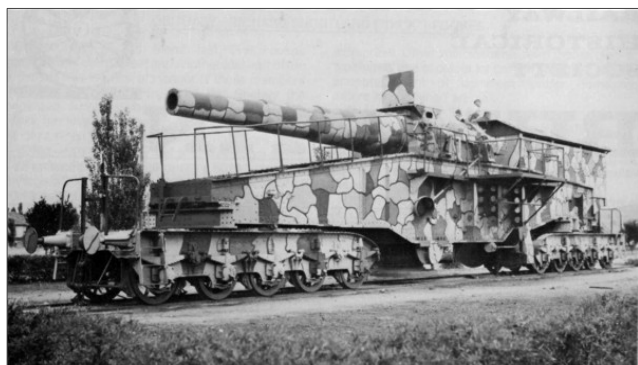
Three engineer soldiers – Lieutenant George Burrows MC, Sapper Les Strahan and Sapper John Palmer decided to go and capture the gun from under the enemy’s noses. There are a couple of versions of what occurred, but the following passage was written three days after it happened and is a Citation.

It reads: “For conspicuous bravery and devotion to duty. In the attack east of Villers-Bretonneux near Amiens on the 8th August, Sapper Strahan and Sapper Palmer were with a Section accompanying the assaulting Battalion. On the final objective being reached east of Harbonnières, a long range 11.5 inch gun (actually 280mm) on railway mounting was seen on a siding 200 yards beyond front line. A locomotive with several ammunition wagons and coaches which were on fire was also on the siding.

Without hesitation, these men volunteered and went forward with their Section Officer (Lieutenant George Burrows MC) and in spite of enemy machine gun and rifle fire, assisted to raise steam in the locomotive, shunt the burning coaches on to another siding, couple up with gun and ammunition wagons and bring them back safely into our own lines.

Their great courage and determination in the face of the enemy resulted in the capture of an extremely valuable gun and locomotive and it is worthy of the very highest recognition”.

This is taken from the records held in the Australian War Memorial in Canberra where you can see the actual gun barrel of this railway gun on display.



The Amiens Gun WW1 in France



The Amiens Gun today in Canberra

Mobile Personal Alarms

We have been provided with the name of a company by RSL SED which sells mobile personal device alarms.



There are a range of such products on the market and we are not recommending this particular one but simply providing the information. You should always make your own enquiries about which product is best for you. For further details call them on 1800 654 079 or visit www.livelifealarms.com.au.

Welfare Assistance

Occasionally we are contacted by sub-branch and non-branch service and ex-service men and women to assist with advocacy regarding the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) and other agencies. In these cases, we are able to direct them to the appropriate contact within the RSL. We assisted two people in the last quarter.



Membership

Membership of the sub-branch continues to increase with six new service members and one non-service (social) member joining since the beginning of the year.



Welcome to Tracey Bryan, Dr. Ross Parry, Harvey Power, Paul Robertson, Evan Wham, Richard Wilson AO and Bruce Woodhouse.

Toowong sub-branch now has 85 service members (67 who are life subscribers) and 23 non-service (social) members being a total of 108 members.

Every member of the sub-branch, both service and non-service members, should have been provided with a name tag to wear at functions. If you weren't provided with a name tag at the time you joined, or if you have misplaced it, please contact our Membership Officer Mike Muirhead for a new one (free of charge). You can email the office or call Mike on 0419 703 334.

Hospital and Home Visits

Due to COVID-19 visitor restrictions, our contact with members and other ex-service persons who were ill was restricted to telephone and electronic communications. These included speaking with a veteran who was in Greenslopes Hospital. One of our members was in the Wesley Hospital however George Hulse was unable to complete his visit being turned away due to the visitor quota having been reached for the day.



Last Post

We are pleased to report none of our sub-branch members have passed in the last 3 months.



However, George Hulse and Vince Atley delivered a poppy service for Signaller Samuel Saint on 9 April 2020 after the funeral home had identified him as an ex-serviceman and contacted the office.

Sub-Branch Contact Details

Our office is located in the magnificent new building of the Western Districts Rugby Football Club (Wests Bulldogs) in Sylvan Road Toowong.

Office: 7/65 Sylvan Road Toowong

Postal: PO Box 1564 Toowong DC 4066

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Email: secretary@rsltoowong.org

Website: www.rsltoowong.org



Toowong Memorial Park

Photos of SED AGM hosted by Toowong Sub-Branch



Committee member and military historian Peter Gow dressed in a reproduction of a Captain of the Australian Engineers of Middle East command of WW1 & President George Hulse OAM at the cenotaph



SED Board Secretary Judy Alterator, SED President Wendy Taylor and RSL Queensland State Vice President Bill Whitburn OAM at the cenotaph



President George Hulse OAM accepting a plaque of appreciation on behalf of Toowong Sub-Branch by SED President Wendy Taylor



Saturday evening dinner enjoyed by all