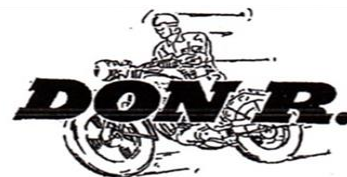




Newsletter of the Toowong RSL Sub-Branch

The Price of Liberty is Eternal Vigilance

Est. 1919



December 2024

Dear Members,

Well done! A very positive year in terms of membership growth, successful dinners and events, and excellent support for initiatives such as the opening of the Friendship Bridge in Amiens, France.

Three highlights stand out for me. Firstly, our inaugural ANZAC poetry competition where Leila Coulter read out her poem at our ANZAC Day Service. Secondly, His Excellency General, the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC attended our 100th Anniversary of the Stone of Remembrance and Cross of Sacrifice. Thirdly, the tour in France by our members.

The meetings and significant events conducted by the sub-branch since the last newsletter:

July

Board Meeting
QLD RSL Conference

August

Board Meeting
Member's Lunch at Regatta Hotel

September

Board Meeting
SED Community Day, Toowong Memorial Park

October

Board Meeting

November

Remembrance Day Service
Board Meeting
Annual Dinner at Regatta Hotel

December

Board Meeting

Tim Robb, Secretary

President's Report

Welcome to my thoughts at the end of another successful year for the sub-branch.

As forecast the last AGM, I have stepped into the role of President in December. Peter Gow stepped down as President earlier this month due to personal reasons and his heavy involvement in a number of other organisations.

On behalf of the sub-branch, I want to acknowledge Peter for his time and work in the chair over the past nearly four years having been elected to the position at the AGM held on 28 March 2021. In particular our branch is a go to sub-branch for South East District (SED) whenever a job needs to be done. In no small part this is due to the cheerful "can do" attitude of Peter (and also the rest of our enthusiastic team).

At the time Peter became President, the sub-branch had struggled to find a replacement for President George Hulse. Peter accepted a nomination from the floor to fill the position. In his time, the sub-branch has continued its growth path both in terms of membership numbers and events undertaken. So well done Peter.

As Deputy President, I have stepped up to fill the position of President until the AGM to be held in March 2025 where it is my intention to nominate to continue as President.

A small bit of my history. I have a Bachelor of Mechanical Engineering and an MBA. I worked a variety of construction and managerial roles before getting involved in rail safety.

I was commissioned into the Royal Australian Engineers in 1983 but spent a year as the Assault Pioneer Platoon Commander with 31 RQR then 3 years as a Troop Commander with 4 FER. As a Major I was commander of an integrated part-time and full-time combat engineer squadron with 2CER. In 2000 I spent the year on CFTS at the Olympics with the Joint Incident Response Unit. I was the 19th CO of QUR in 2003-2004. In 2006/7 I spent a year in Timor Leste with the UN as a Senior Military Observer before retiring.

Our organisation is a volunteer organisation and we need our members to help where and when they can. If people don't help we will eventually fold or have to merge. Two SED sub-branches folded this year by way of example. In the previous year there was one merger.

We currently have a vacancy for a board member. This requires a "commitment" for a couple of hours from 4pm on the third Monday of each month by either physical attendance or via video link. Beyond that it is whatever you are prepared to do and any experience you have.

Badge selling prior to Anzac Day and Remembrance Day are currently our major fundraisers for the year. Beyond that government grants are becoming harder to get. Costs and compliance requirements for those two days are getting more every year. So please consider helping out at these times for even half a day. It is fun talking to members of the public and hearing their stories. If available we will even give you a free polo shirt (limited stocks till we get some more).

The end of year dinner was a great success and thanks to our MC James Mackay for his work in this role. Thanks to my wife for stepping up as the best shirt judge for the night.

I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the work of all the board over the past year and thanking them and all others who helped out.

I wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



Ross Williamson RFD, President

Remembrance Day Service

The sub-branch conducted its annual service at the Cenotaph with an estimated 200 people in attendance. Many thanks to QUR for supporting us and providing the catafalque party as well as the work party.

Lieutenant Colonel Scott Revell, Commanding Officer of Queensland University Regiment delivered the Remembrance Day Address with Chaplain Major Jessica Grant leading the prayers.

We were pleased to have the services of bugler Brian Clarke, Thomas MacDonnell on the bagpipes and Lily Zhu as photographer.

A light lunch was served back at the Wests Rugby Club for members and guests. More photos at end of newsletter.



Remembrance Day Service 2024



Tim Robb, Vince Atley, Janelle Jaraminas, Kevin Trimble, Philip Weller & Barry Weller

Vince Atley – 30 years

In December 2024, Vince, our beloved Treasurer since 2016, commemorated 30 years of cumulative service as a member of the RSL.

President, Ross Williamson presented the certificate to Vince at the sub-branch office. Congratulations Vince!



Vince & Ross Williamson



Tim Robb, Mike Muirhead, Bernie Voysey, Janelle Voysey, Steve Thornton, Donna Muirhead & Peter Gow

Member's Lunch at Regatta Hotel

In August, we held a lunch at the Regatta Hotel which was attended by 30 members.

Functions like these are periodically put on as a social get-together which replaced the more formal quarterly general meetings of the past.



Maureen Souter, Dawn & Bob McKernan, Sharon & Ross Williamson

SED Community Event

Following on from a very successful event last year, this year's SED Community Event on 28th September was an outstanding success despite the high winds! The free rides and great displays were enjoyed by over 600 guests.

A huge thank you to Vince Atley for all his work facilitating the day. Special thanks to SED for again funding and coordinating the event, especially Kerry Gallagher, Julia Taunton-Burnet and Maria Becis.



The poster for the SED Community Event features a festive banner at the top with the RSL South Eastern District logo. The main title 'Community Family Day' is in a large, stylized font, with the date and time 'Saturday 28 September from 3pm - 8pm' below it. The event is hosted by the Western Districts Rugby Football Club at Memorial Park, 65 Sylvan Rd, Toowong. A list of activities includes 'FREE show rides', food trucks, military equipment displays, army band performances, and an animal nursery. It also mentions ADF Cadets (Navy, Army, Air Force), RSL Sub-Branch Displays, and Veteran Gaming Australia / Mates 4 Mates. The bottom of the poster shows illustrations of a food truck, a Mates 4 Mates sign, and a farm scene with a cow and pig.



Vince Atley, Gary Smith, Steve Thornton (with 'Captain' Jack), Ross Williamson, Tim Robb, Kerry Gallagher, Philip Weller & Mike Muirhead

Thank You - Bridge of Friendship

As per the last edition, members would be aware of the dedication earlier this year of the Bridge of Friendship in Amiens between Australia and France, is dedicated to every Australian Army engineer unit involved in World War One. This bridge has a "twin" bridge located in ANZAC Park in Toowong. These bridges are monuments that will serve as a perpetual link between Australia and France in recognition of the outstanding achievements of the members of RAE during WWI in every area in which they served.

Thanks to the hard work of George Hulse and the 1st Field Squadron Association in facilitating both bridges.

George presented Peter Gow and Lily Zhu a certificate from the 1st Field Squadron Association thanking Toowong sub-branch for both our financial support and effort in assisting with the bridge dedication. Thirteen members of the Toowong Sub Branch attended the dedication in France.



George Hulse, Lily Zhu & Peter Gow

The National Defence Chaplains' Memorial Grove

On 9th October 2024, The National Defence Chaplains' Memorial Grove was officially opened. Congratulations to Penny Wolff, Councilor for the Walter Taylor Ward and to our own James Mackay for their work in getting this Memorial Grove completed in ANZAC Park.

The National Defence Chaplains' Memorial Grove in Toowong's Anzac Park honours the unsung gallantry, sacrifice, and humble devotion to Australian Defence Force personnel, in times of war and peace, of our military chaplains.

It is the first time — anywhere in Australia — that a portion of a civic park has been set aside for a public memorial dedicated to ADF Chaplains and the incredibly significant role

they have performed — in effect since the First Fleet arrived and “nationally” since the Commonwealth formed in 1901 — for the spiritual and material wellbeing of our fighting men and women.



Cr. Penny Wolff assisting with the unveiling of the memorial



The Memorial Grove consists of a circular polished and engraved concrete circle, flanked by dainty flowerbeds set inside a grand guard of eight magnificent, mature pine trees. At the ends of the east-west arms of a "Maltese Cross" motif, outlined on the ground in ochre-coloured, decomposed granite, is a backless, monolithic "seat" of Brisbane tuff sandstone, that entices visitors to pause awhile and contemplate the simple proposition advanced in the Memorial Centrepiece inscription:

*THE NATIONAL DEFENCE CHAPLAINS'
MEMORIAL GROVE*

*Dedicated to Australian Defence Force
Chaplains who have
humbly served this nation in times of war and
peace.*

LEST WE FORGET

Basic IT Training for Older People

Recently, Ross and Sharon Williamson attended the IT4retirees training organised and paid for by SED. It was conducted over two Wednesdays and included refreshments and a light lunch.

The course covered:

Day 1

- Scams – Staying Safe Online presentation
- MS Outlook – Accessing & Managing email

- MS Calendar – Accessing & Managing an electronic calendar

Day 2

- Microsoft Teams – The Basics
- Microsoft Word – The Basics
- Microsoft Excel – The Basics
- Setting up a new smartphone &/or tablet

The smartphone/tablet was based on the iPhone/iPad but the presenter was able to speak for android (Samsung) phones, but they did not stay to see how impactful it was. You do need to bring or have access to a laptop for the MS sections and an extension cord is highly recommended.

The sessions were worth the time. Even with previous training and experience they picked up a few points from features added in the latest versions.

If they have one criticism, Ross says, it was that there were no notes provided so you do need to make notes for yourself whilst keeping up with the practical exercises. So next time SED is able to provide this training we recommend it to you all.

Congratulations to 'Dr Dr' Zhu

No, it's not a typo. Not content with drilling into teeth, board member Lily Zhu, a qualified and experienced dentist, has just completed her university studies to become a medical practitioner. Well done Lily!



Dr. Lily Zhu

Coffee Catchups

We have conducted these all on a monthly Sunday morning basis at Chatterbox, Level 1 of Toowong Village. These will continue in 2025.

Please come and enjoy a free coffee and get to know some of your fellow Toowong members.



Sub-branch members at Chatterbox

Hospital & Home Visits

Toowong sub-branch conducted 18 hospital visits this year and two visits to the St John's Home for Men in Toowong. Our sub-branch continues to develop strong relationships with the Wesley, The Mater and the St Andrews War Memorial Hospital. Special thanks has been given from the Cairns and Gympie RSL sub-branches for our assistance in visiting their members.



Thanks again to all those who have volunteered to visit our members and those from regional Sub Branches when they have been in our local hospitals.

Tash Winters, Tim Robb, Janelle Voysey, Bernie Voysey and Laurie Smith have recently visited RSL members in hospital.

Remember - if you are doing it tough and require assistance, or just need a friendly ear, please get in contact with us as we are not always aware of members' situations.



Tim Robb making hospital visits

Membership

We currently have 102 Service members and 35 non-Service (social) members being a total of 137 members. This is up from 133 last year.



Welcome to the following new members:

- Mitch Beck
- Kerri-Lee Beck
- Kevin Trimble
- Katrina Trevethan
- Cate Walker
- John White
- Leigh Chamberlain
- Sarah Harper
- Bob McKernan
- Dawn McKernan

- Kevin Brown
- Trevor de Carterat
- James Hartridge
- Peter Hallinan
- Justin King
- Martin Drew
- Troy Doig



Peter Gow presenting Kevin Trimble with his membership kit



Leigh Chamberlain with Peter Gow



Peter Gow presenting John White DSC MID with his membership kit



Bob & Dawn McKernan with Peter Gow



Peter Gow presenting Cate Walker with her membership kit

Finances

Our 2025 social plan includes the need for fundraising to help reduce the costs to members.



Thank you to all those that assisted with fundraising this year as part of our Remembrance Day appeal. \$4926 was raised this year.

Thanks to local businesses such as QSCAN Radiology, Bodytrack and The Regatta Hotel for their fundraising. Thank you to the following members who assisted with fundraising. Apologies for any names missed:

- Vince Atley
- Tim Robb
- Kerri-Lee Beck
- Bill Beach
- Garry Collins
- Bruce Davis
- Mike Muirhead
- John Hamilton
- Jim Kidd
- Denis Luttrell
- George Hulse
- Kevin Brown
- Barry Weller
- Maureen Souter
- Steve Thornton
- Brian Venz
- Phil Weller
- Tez Anderson
- Peta Haynes-Lovell
- Ross Williamson
- Sharon Williamson



Garry Collins & Bruce Davis at Toowong Village

Happy Birthday

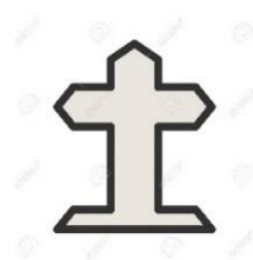
Happy 101st birthday to Pearl Loosemore. Pearl has been an RSL member since 1990 and served in the Army from 1942 to 1946.



Ethel Hemming will celebrate her 101st birthday on 25th January 2025. Ethel has been an RSL member since 2008 and served in the Army from 1943 to 1946.

Last Post

The following members passed away in the previous six months. We offer our condolences to their families and friends.



- Gary Bennedick – Gary was an enthusiastic member of the sub-branch who attended most of our events including coffee mornings.



Gary Bennedick

A reminder that the sub-branch will conduct a poppy service for any person who has served in the Australian Defence Force. They do not have to have been a member of the RSL. They are free of charge.

An RSL representative will:

- deliver a eulogy, detailing the veteran's service
- recite *The Ode*
- sound *The Last Post* and *Rouse*
- provide poppies for mourners to place on the coffin in recognition of service.

Unfortunately, we are often advised of the passing of a member by family sometime after the funeral so please make your family aware of the poppy service if it is something you would like to be part of your service.

RSL Queensland Advocates

RSL Queensland employs about 90 paid and some unpaid advocates to support veterans in Queensland and the Northern Territory. The number of paid advocates is increasing as the accreditation requirements increases.

They operate a triage system to support the more urgent cases first. Currently there is a wait of between 30-90 days to get an interview with an advocate. Outside of that, urgent support for homelessness or financial support, etc. is available.

Open Arms provides mental health support for Navy, Army and Air Force personnel, veterans & their families.

They have a 24hr crisis support line as well as free and confidential counselling to partners and children of those who have served. You can call 24/7 on 1800 011 046. More information at www.openarms.gov.au.

Mates 4 Mates supports their members with psychological, physical, and social barriers services.

To find out more about joining Mates4Mates, accessing services or supporting our cause, fill out the form or call 1300 4 MATES (62 837) during business hours. More information at www.mates4mates.org.

If you feel the need for an advocate to make an initial contact for advocacy support, contact RSL Queensland in 134 775 and choose option 2 to go through to a staff member. They will interview you and get your details. You will then receive an email to read and agree to the Client Services Agreement.

Once you accept this you will receive a second email to complete your:

- Profile Information,
- Living Conditions, and
- Personal Wellbeing Index

Based on your answers you will get another email with useful links such as Open Arms, Mates for Mates, etc.

We encourage all members who may have current or future needs to consider an early approach as the DVA assessment process can be drawn out. Your Regimental Number and/or PMKeys number will be required so have it handy.

Even better your DVA White Card is useful as this has your DVA reference number even if you have only the basic services on it.

Welfare Assistance

Occasionally we are contacted by other sub-branches and ex-service men and women to assist with advocacy regarding the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) and other agencies. In these cases, we can direct them to the appropriate contact within the RSL.



RSL South Eastern District offers free services for veterans & families:

- Wellbeing support, visits & bereavement assistance
- Medical & allied health referrals
- PTSD & mental health support
- Advocacy & research for compensation & welfare
- Career transition assistance

Located at Greenslopes Private Hospital
Tuesday–Thursday | 10am–2pm or by appointment.

Email: wellbeing@rslsouthqueensland.org
Ph. (07) 3394 7235 www.rslsouthqueensland.org

There are also professional services like Australian Veteran Health Services which is run by Dr Andrew Cronin. 1300 766 206. Services offered included DVA Claims, ADF Transition Medicals & Permanent Impairment Assessments.

DVA Telephone Number

DVA's telephone number is 1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372) for veterans and their families.

2024-2025 Sub Branch Board

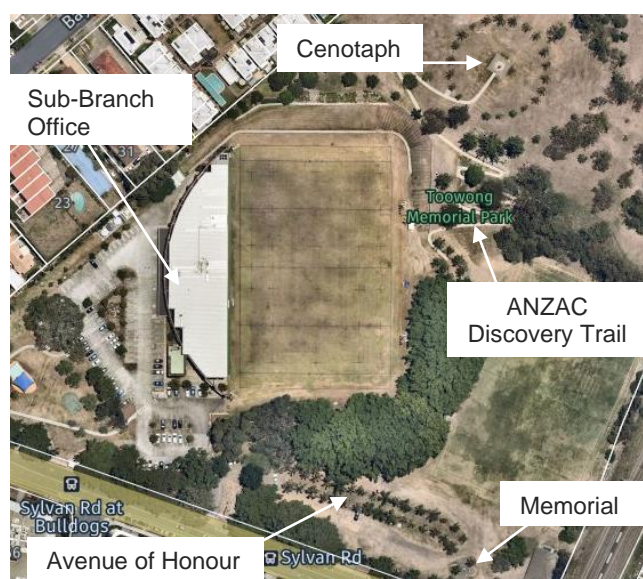
- Ross Williamson RFD – President
- Peter Gow – Deputy President
- Chris Mallcott – Vice President
- Tim Robb – Secretary
- Vince Atley – Treasurer
- James Mackay
- Mike Muirhead
- Dr. Stephen Thornton
- Dr. Lily Zhu

Contact Us

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Postal: PO Box 1564 Toowong DC 4066
Phone: 0455 655 766
Email secretary@toowong.rslqld.net.au
Website: www.rsltoowong.org

The office is in the Western Districts Rugby Football Club (Wests Bulldogs) building.

Please note the office is only open at certain times so contact us to make a time to meet.



Toowong Memorial Park

Remembrance Day 2024















End of Year Dinner at Regatta Hotel









MC James Mackay



Outgoing President Peter Gow



Incoming President Ross Williamson



Chris Mallcott, Cate Walker & James Mackay



Vince Atley and Sharon Williamson



Ann Beach, Bill Beach, Nick Dubravcic & Hannah Neuendorf



Neville Pearce – Our Best Dressed Winner!



Kerri Lee Beck, Mitch Beck, Brian Venz, Garry Collins & Neville Pearce



Vince Atley, Clare Jenkinson, Maggie Forrest, James Mackay & Tim Robb



Sandy Svensen, Marion Smith, Ben Muirhead, Donna Muirhead & Maureen Souter



Dianna Meadows, Gary Smith, Mike Muirhead, Nigel Meadows & Kim Morgan-Short



Dr. Lily Zhu and Cr. Seal Chong-Wah



Beth Davis, Bruce Davis, Julie Luttrell, Denis Luttrell, Robyn Luttrell & Trevor Luttrell



Sharon Williamson, Peta Haynes-Lovell & Tez Anderson



Elaine Ho, Janelle Jaraminas, Ross Williamson, Beverley Hulse & George Hulse



Barry Weller and Philip Weller



Janelle Jaraminas and Vince Atley



George Hulse



Garry Collins, Gary Smith, Mike Muirhead, Maureen Souter, Marion Smith, Bill Beach, Donna Muirhead & Ann Beach



Leigh Chamberlain, Charles Jenkinson & Clare Jenkinson