



# SITREP



## RSL Hornsby (Sub-Branch)

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



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### President's Message

Hi Everyone,

I hope this Newsletter finds you all safe and well.

This year with the lifting of COVID restrictions, Anzac Day was strongly supported by the local community. Over a thousand community members attended our Sunday March and approximately 4-5,000 attending our Dawn Service. Several hundred marched including Veterans, Air Cadets, Army Cadets, Scouts and RFS members.

Once again, the Hornsby RSL Club provided a free Gunfire Breakfast for approximately 600 guests with volunteers serving meals. I'd like to offer a big thank you to the Club and all the volunteers.



I'd also want to say a special thank you to the sub-Branch Committee for their hard work in organising the Anzac Day ceremonies and the great effort raising over \$10,000 through our fund-raising activities.

I would especially like to thank Ray Davis for his hard work and dedication in planning, organising and running both Anzac Day ceremonies. Ray has decided to stand down from his position as Vice President of the sub-Branch after years of service to the sub-Branch.

Our next Coffee & Chat meeting will be held on the 13 July 2022.

The Hornsby RSL sub-Branch in conjunction with the Veterans Well Being Centre-Hornsby will be conducting Mental Health First Aid courses this year. The venue will be the Anzac War Memorial, Hyde Park and Open Arms will be providing the instructor.

The Veterans Well Being Centre-Hornsby has applied for two DVA grants. The first grant application was to fund a part time Advocate - Welfare Officer for both the sub-Branch and the Veteran's Centre. Unfortunately, that application was unsuccessful. The second grant application was to fund the production of two videos which will provide information to assist young Veterans and their families transitioning from the Military. This grant application was successful and work on the information videos will commence in June 2022.

The Hornsby War Memorial has been assessed by the International Conversation Services. The company provided a detailed report for the Department of Veterans Affairs NSW and the Hornsby Council. The report determined that repairs were required. Funding for the assessment was provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs NSW.

We have submitted a Grant application to the Department of Veterans Affairs NSW to carry out the repairs and await the outcome of that application.

The Gordon branch of Lifeline now provides a service especially designed to assist Veterans and their families in need. **"Veterans Mental Health and Wellbeing Service"**. The Lifeline office is located at 4 Park Avenue Gordon. Call **9498 8805** during business hours, or if you are experiencing a personal crisis call **13 11 14**.

Once again all the best and keep safe.

Regards

George Main

## Welcome

Since the March edition of SITREP, the sub-Branch has welcomed four new service members:

- Carolyn Parish. Carolyn served in the Army with the 1st Commando Regiment including a deployment to Bougainville.
- Colin Christie. Colin served in the Army with 1st Field Ambulance.
- Paul Gow. Paul served in the Army Ordinance Corps including a deployment to South Vietnam.
- Kerry Vivian. Kerry is an affiliate member who has transferred from ANZAC House.
- Matthew Machado. Michael is currently serving with 2/17 RNSWR.

## News and Activities

### Issues and Activities.

#### ANZAC Day 2022

This year, we returned to our usual ANZAC commemorations with a March on the Sunday preceding ANZAC Day and the traditional Dawn Service on the 25<sup>th</sup>. As George has noted, both services were well attended with Emergency Services, Volunteer Organisations, Hornsby RSL Pipe Band, 226 Regional Cadet Unit providing the catafalque party, air cadets and youth groups as well as local schools joining veterans to remember service and sacrifice during conflicts past. The address at both services was given by our Secretary, Neil Turner. Ray Davis and his team set up and dismantled the necessary infrastructure as well as supporting the conduct of both service.

As George has also noted, fund raising associated with ANZAC Day was particularly successful with over \$10,000 being raised to support veteran services locally and further afield. A special thank you to John Zeller and his team together with Pennant Hills Rotary (through sub-Branch member Kaye Carter) for their efforts.



The photos on the two following pages provide an impression of both services. Unfortunately, a light drizzle towards the end of the Dawn Service played havoc with the camera flash.





REMEMBRANCE

SERVICE

LOYALTY





## Our Centenarians

In the last issue of SITREP we offered congratulations to Stan Yeaman on reaching “the Ton”. However, we need to recognise that we have two other members who have also achieved that milestone, Marsden Horden and Michael Hynes. We also have three members who will, hopefully, get there in the next 12 months, Barbara Coward, Jim Horton and Herbert Norris. The photo opposite shows Barbara with her daughter preparing for the ANZAC Day March in Sydney this year.



## Welfare Notes – The Veterans Well Being Centre - Hornsby

While our sub-Branch provides significant financial support to the RSL NSW Veteran Support Fund, the Veterans Well Being Centre – Hornsby is becoming the sub-Branch’s primary means of local veteran support. However, unlike some other veteran well being centres, our one does not have a ‘bricks and mortar’ location. Rather, it exists as a registered charity run out of our sub-Branch office but with a primary focus of providing conduits between veterans in need and appropriate existing service providers. The Welfare Centre has already linked several veterans with the appropriate service providers. It is also offering mental health first aid courses free for current and former serving ADF members and their families. If you need assistance, the best way to contact the Centre is via the website <http://veteranswellbeingcentre-hornsby.org/contact-us/> . If you do not have access to the internet, contact can be facilitated through a family member or your doctor.

## Upcoming Dates

Members are reminded of the following dates:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| • Sunday 11.00am 26 <sup>th</sup> June, | General Meeting and Luncheon                      |
| • Wednesday 10am 14 July,               | Coffee Club, bookings are necessary.              |
| • Sunday 11.00am 24th July,             | General Meeting and Luncheon                      |
| • August                                | Stand Down Month – No General Meeting or Luncheon |

## Heritage

### Snippets from the Past.

We continue the theme of remembering the events of 1942, this time looking at the losses sustained by the Royal Australian Navy in that year. In terms of shipping losses, 1942 was by far the worst year for the Navy with seven vessels sunk although it lost more men in 1941 because of the sinking of HMAS Sydney with all hands. A further five ships were damaged, four of these during the bombing of Darwin on 19 Feb 1942.

The following page provides more detail on the circumstances surrounding the loss of each of the ships in 1942.





**HMAS Perth.** 28 Feb-1 Mar 1942. Perth was lost together with USS Houston during the Battle of Sunda Strait. 353 sailors were killed during the sinking, a further five died from wounds shortly after reaching shore, 106 died during captivity including 38 killed by Allied attacks on Japanese shipping. 218 were eventually repatriated back to Australia in 1945.



**HMAS Yarra.** On 4 March 1942, Yarra was attacked and sunk by a force of Japanese cruisers and destroyers while attempting to protect ships withdrawing to Australia. It was sunk with the loss of 138 sailors. In 2013, the ship was retrospectively awarded a Unit Citation for Gallantry.



**HMAS Vampire.** HMAS Vampire together with HMS Hermes, was sunk on 9 April 1942 by Japanese aircraft while sailing from Trincomalee Ceylon (Sri Lanka). Incredibly, only nine of her crew were killed during her final engagement.



**HMAS Kuttabul.** During the Japanese midgeet submarine attack on Sydney Harbour on 31 May 1942, Kuttabul was sunk by a torpedo intended for the USS Chicago, with the loss of 21 naval personnel and a further 10 wounded.



**HMAS Nestor.** Nestor sailed as part of the Operation Vigorous escort force, protecting a supply convoy to Malta. On the evening of 15 June, the ship was heavily damaged by air attack. Despite attempts to tow the ship to base, Nestor was abandoned and scuttled off Crete the next morning. Four sailors died during its final battle.



**HMAS Canberra.** On 9 August 1942, Canberra was struck by the opening Japanese shots of the Battle of Savo Island, and was quickly damaged. Unable to propel herself, the cruiser was evacuated and sunk in Ironbottom Sound by two American destroyers. 84 crewmen were lost.

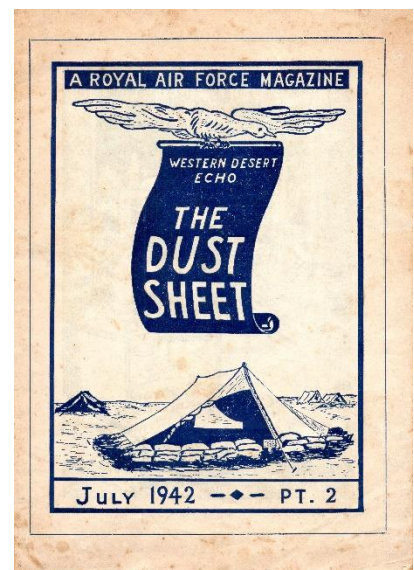


**HMAS Armidale.** The corvette was attacked and sunk off Betano Bay, on the south coast of Portuguese Timor, (now East Timor) by 13 Japanese aircraft on 1 December 1942, while attempting to evacuate Australian and Dutch soldiers and deliver a relief contingent. 100 sailors were lost. As a result of his actions during the sinking, Teddy Sheean was retrospectively awarded the Victoria Cross.

## Memorabilia Collection.

Our Memorabilia Collection is quite diverse and at times, some items do not have the visibility which other items such as uniforms, medals and weapons enjoy. However, they are mementos that recall aspects of an individual's service and which that person has valued sufficiently to retain.

As we have been focusing on 1942, one such item is this magazine published during the North African campaign. The magazine was donated from the papers of Keith Giles who, in 1942, as a member of the RAAF, was posted to RAF Air HQ Western Desert. It was published in July 1942 at a time when Rommel's advance was being halted at the first Battle of El Alamein, until the stalemate was broken in the more widely known second Battle of El Alamein in October 1942. Many of its readers would have been involved in or supporting the Desert Air Force's operations to achieve air superiority over the Axis forces.



In reading the magazine, one needs to remember that it reflects attitudes and views of the 1940s. The humour is dated, the content focused on day-to-day activities as well as dreams of home. Some content may cause offence to a more blinkered modern reader but it is a small piece of our history.

Any reader interested in looking at the magazine in more detail should contact Tony Mills or myself.

## Editor's Note

As always, any feedback is appreciated. Please take care and thanks for reading.

Phil