



Pittwater RSL Sub-Branch Newsletter



July 2022 - Number 32

Pittwater RSL sub-Branch

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The next Newsletter will be
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In this Issue	Page
President's Report	1
Vale Wal Williams OAM	1
RSL Tribute	2
Holsworthy Barracks visit	3
This Day in History	4
Member Profile	5
Member Profile	6
New Members	6
Vale	7
Executive Committee	7
On the Horizon	8
Birthdays	8

President's Report

VALE Walter George Williams OAM

On 14 June 2022, exactly one year after Wal received his OAM, we attended the funeral service for Wal Williams OAM.

The service was a very fitting tribute to an exceptional man that Wal was, starting with Pastor Bob Durbin paying his respect by wearing ceremonial robes. The Eulogies were delivered by The Hon. Rob Stokes MP and Wal's two grandsons, and I read a tribute sent by Brian Strawbridge who was unable to attend.

It was important to me that Wal had the sort of funeral he deserved. It was formal and followed the principals of the RSL Tribute. His family asked me to recount Wal's war history which was both sad and tragic. On a lighter side, I related some of Wal's anecdotes he had shared with me over the years, and I will share two with you now.

1. Wal was invited by the Japanese Government to visit Japan for reparation and the official was talking with Wal about his need for a current passport. With quick wit, Wal retorted back, "I didn't need a passport the first time I went to Japan!"
2. Whilst living in Kokoda Hostel, War Vets, Wal decided that the assistance in nursing (AIN) were not being very well treated by the establishment. At the age of 98 years, he decided to go on a hunger strike in protest! This upset the management greatly, but to Wal's despair after two days of fasting, he'd put on weight!

The two items that were important to Wal as he aged, were to receive his OAM, which was announced in the Queen's Birthday Honours List on 14 June 2021.

The other item was to have a formal commemorative plaque for Australian Prisoners of War lost at sea. This included a seat at Mona Vale Headland facing North and being able to see and hear the ocean, and the plaque to be installed on a plinth beside the seat, so people can sit and remember those who were lost. Four days before Wal died he was advised that this instalment would be completed by 01 July 2022 marking the 80th anniversary of the sinking of Montevideo Rayu. Wal wanted the inscription to read:

"In memory of the 1,800 people who lost their lives at sea due to enemy and Allied action whilst being transported to Japan and islands in the South-West Pacific during World War II, 1942-1945. Those who died include Australian Prisoners of War, Nurses from Singapore, civilian internees from Rabaul, and casualties on hospital ships."



Ray James OAM, President RSL NSW, attended Wal's funeral on 14 June. Deborah delivered the RSL Tribute.

The funeral at the War Vets Memorial Chapel was well attended by approximately 70 mourners including the Williams family, The Hon. Rob Stokes MP, Mr Ray James OAM, President RSL NSW, Mr Bob Lunnon, President of Northern Beaches District Council, Mr Bob Pink OAM, Secretary of the 2nd 19th BTN Association, many sub-Branch members and staff from the village. The Tribute on the next page was given to family members and their friends.

Lest We Forget

Sincerely, Deborah Carter



Pittwater RSL Sub-Branch

Tribute to

Walter 'Wal' George Williams OAM

10 October 1922 - 04 June 2022

Wal Williams was awarded the Order of Australia, OAM, in the Queen's Birthday Honours list 14 June 2021 for services to veterans and their families.

Army NX57223
Battalion: 2/19 Australian Imperial Force.

Order of Australia, OAM
1939-1945 Star;
The Pacific Star;
1939-1945 War Medal;
Australian Service Medal 1939-1945;
Australian Service Medal 1945-1975 S.W; Pacific Clasp

Related by Wal for the Pittwater RSL sub-Branch "Living Treasures" Special Edition Newsletter, 09 October 2016.

"I enlisted in the Permanent Army on 13 January 1940 in Northbridge, NSW, and then joined the AIF 21 November 1941. I served 118 Days in Australia and 1370 days overseas, most of these as a POW (J).

My Battalion fought in the defence of Singapore from 08-15 Feb 1942. Our sector was attacked by 50 barges of Japanese infantry on the West coast near the Murai River. After the fall of Singapore we became POWs and were held in Changi Prison.

On 15 May 1942 we were transported to Burma as labour on the infamous Burma-Thai railway, where I served with 'A' Force for two years. Initially, I was worked napping stone as road base for Mergui airfield. What followed was over a year of hard labour on the railway construction.

Due to labour shortages, a lot of the fittest POWs, were to be transported as "Number 1 Japan Party" to Japan. We travelled overland by rail through Cambodia, then by small boats to work at Saigon. We were then shipped overland again, back to Singapore, as boats couldn't depart Saigon due to Allied submarine activity.

On 06 Sep 1944, 1300 of us were loaded on the 'Rakuyo Maru' for the journey to Japan. However, on 12 Sep, our ship was torpedoed and sunk by a US Submarine, unaware that POWs were onboard. While in the water we were also depth charged. My Navy mates told me to lie on my back, cross my arms and absorb the shock through my back, which I did. We treaded water for 24 hours after which we made a makeshift life raft that we floated in. This saved us from being machine gunned like a lot of the POWs in the actual Rakuyo lifeboats.

Three days later we were picked up by a Japanese Corvette and ultimately taken to Hanen Island for processing. In addition to a year of barbaric hard labour in Japan, I also survived the firebombing of Tokyo and Yokohama by our Allied bombers.

Collectively, I was a POW at the hands of the Japanese for three and a half years. In 1945, I returned to Australia on my 23rd birthday, 10 October, and was discharged on 05 February 1946."



On Friday 03 June 2022, Shane Fender, Deborah Carter and Sandra May attended Holsworthy Barracks.

We presented our framed A3 Certificate to the Acting C.O. with thanks for allowing CPL Adam Thomlinson and SPR James Hayes and their service dogs, Ben and Mia, to attend our inaugural Purple Poppy Day service on 24 February 2022.

We were offered the opportunity of visiting the Dog Training facilities. The tour was very informative and lasted 30 minutes. It was quite clear that their dogs are very special to them and, accordingly, treated very well, honoured and remembered.

The dog training facility included two dog mannequins where their handlers were taught emergency procedures to treat wounded animals in the field. These two simulators cost USD84,000.

Their training course is respected worldwide and international dog handlers are trained at Holsworthy. This is a Tri-Service Training Facility.

If anyone would like to see more photographs of their facility, please visit the Sub-Branch office on a Monday.

Many thanks to SGT Shane Fender for arranging the visit.



L-R: Sandra, Major Spriggs, Deborah, CPL Adam Thomlinson and his dog, Ben



Memorabilia cabinet in the Training Facility

July

- 04, 1918 **Private H. Dalziel, 15th Battalion**, originally from Irvinebank, Queensland, is awarded the Victoria Cross at Hamel Wood, France.
- 08, 1942 **460 Sqn raid Wilhelmshaven.** 13 Wellingtons of 460 Squadron participated in a night time bombing raid on this major German port severely damaging an armour plate shop and the Deutsche Werke ship building yards.
- 13, 1953 **HMAS Tobruk begins a two-week patrol of the northern part of Korea's east coast.** This was the Tobruk's last patrol before the war in Korea ended in late July 1953.

August

- 03, 1860 **Second Maori War begins.** British troops in Australia were sent to fight the Maoris and the campaign was controlled by the commander of imperial forces in Australia until the New Zealand Command was separated from Australia in 1861. The colony of Victoria sent its ship Victoria, and about 2,500 Australians joined either the Waikato Militia Regiment or the Company of Forest Rangers in the fighting around Waikato.
- 08, 1916 **Battle for Mouquet Farm.** Mouquet Farm, near Pozieres, was the focus of nine separate attacks by Australian troops between 8 August and 3 September 1916. Some 11,000 Australians were killed or wounded in the fighting around Mouquet Farm.
- 09, 1942 **HMAS Canberra sunk.** HMAS Canberra was sunk in the battle of Savo Island. The Canberra was among a fleet of US and Australian warships supporting the US Marines' landings on Guadalcanal.

September

- 01, 1918 **Private W M Currey, VC.** Private W M Currey, 53rd Battalion, originally from Wallsend, New South Wales, wins the Victoria Cross at Péronne.
- 01, 1939 **Germany invades Poland.** The German invasion of Poland led to the declaration of war against Germany by the United Kingdom and France and began the Second World War.
- 11, 1914 **Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force lands at Rabaul.** The Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force landed at Rabaul and went into action at Bitapaka. This was the only major New Guinea action of the First World War.



Harry Dalziel (1893 -1965) was born in Queensland.

Dalziel received the second of two Victoria Crosses awarded for the battle of Hamel.

After the war, although troubled by his injuries, he served in the militia and was also a songwriter.



William Currey (1895 -1948) was born in Wallsend, New South Wales.

Currey would go on to earn a Victoria Cross and the King George VI Coronation Medal for his service.

After the war Currey served in politics and in 1941 became the first Victoria Cross recipient in the New South Wales parliament, retaining his seat until his death in 1948.



HMAS Canberra at Kings Wharf, Wellington, New Zealand, c.1930s



460 Squadron, RAAF, was equipped with 13 Vickers Wellington aircraft.

Affectionately named the "Wimpy" after a cartoon character.

Reference material above is on the Australian War Memorial website - <https://www.awm.gov.au/>

Roberta Conroy - Affiliate Member Profile



The natural world has featured strongly throughout my life, living in National Parks, bushwalking, education, caring for sick and injured wildlife and contributing to environmental organisations and government planning.

In 2020 I was honored to be named Pittwater Woman of the Year and Northern Beaches Council Australia Day Award for Outstanding Community Service, in recognition of many years dedicated to our natural and cultural heritage, and community. Currently, I am a Director Arrdent Environmental Consulting, Pittwater Environmental Foundation and Katandra Bushland Sanctuary.

My career spans working for the Vice Chancellor, New England University Armidale, to many happy years with a great team in publishing at Australian Geographic, managing media for Dick Smith's 'impossible' balloon flight E-W across the Tasman; and organizing the 'Spirit of Arnhem Land' Indigenous photographic exhibition, Sydney 2000 Olympics. Living in leafy Turramurra was one of the fullest and richest times of my life, working, young children, study, community. And now Bayview, our home for 30 years surrounded by bushland, wildlife and wonderful Pittwater.

As President Bayview Church Point Residents Association, I achieved exceptional results, leading change in complex, long-standing issues, facilitating an inaugural alliance between onshore/offshore communities, as a member of the Design group on the award-winning Church Point redevelopment 2015 - 2022. Benefits include a new carpark, boardwalk, commuter pontoon, environmentally sensitive landscaping.

I increased funding by \$1 million for the current deck extension, and was the driving force behind resolving the Church Point Pasadena refurbishment. I made significant contributions to Council's Strategic Planning Statement, Climate Change, Bushfire etc and committees - Special Rate Advisory, Environment, Safety, NSW Government Ingleside development. Gaining a grant in 2019, I led a construction project linking Bayview to Church Point - climbing the steep stairs is quite an achievement!



Art also featured in my career e.g. Manly Art Gallery installing high profile exhibitions, aligning with many years exhibiting, teaching and selling my work. I also assisted at Manly International Eco Conference, and created Ocean Care artworks. The environment called again when I returned to Macquarie University to do Post Graduate Environmental Studies 2010. Another rewarding experience was running the IT desk for the World Parks Congress Sydney 2014, engaging with delegates from global parks.

To end, I am humbled by a quote from The Hon. Rob Stokes, "I continue to admire your ongoing, passionate commitment to our Pittwater community, your innovative, forward-thinking, determined approach and contribution, reflected in the wonderful esteem in which you are held".

I became an Affiliate member to honour the service of my father Raymond Lawrence, British Navy WWII, Burma and the Pacific; my Uncles Michael and Peter Nicoll, Australian Army, New Guinea, and my Great Uncle Leonard Nicoll WWI, buried in France.



Derek Savage - Member Profile



Derek Carl Savage S125737

I joined the Royal Australian Navy 29 June 1979, from Perth Western Australia, as an apprentice Marine technical hull.

I trained for 2.5 years at HMAS NIRIMA, Quakers Hill Sydney.

My apprenticeship covered:

Basic training, Firefighting, Boat

building, Ships husbandry, Welding, Fitting, Fibre glass, Steam turbines and boilers, Gas turbines, Diesels, Motor boats, Distillation plant, Air conditioning and refrigeration, and Plumbing.

On completion of my training at Nirimba, I was posted to HMAS Cerberus for sea preparation training for another 3 months.

From there I was posted to my first ship – HMAS Perth DDG 38 guided missile destroyer. My first deployment was an Indian Ocean trip for 6 months in conjunction with the U.S. 7th fleet. We mainly operated around the Persian Gulf, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Seychelles, Kenya, Oman, Singapore, Diego Garcia and Christmas Island, with stops in ports from the above countries to re fuel etc.

The majority of time at sea was spent conducting war games, chasing Russian subs around the Indian Ocean. On Anzac Day 1982, we received a signal from a Russian sub saying they would keep their distance today as they knew we could be rather intoxicated on this day playing two up, etc!

We were conducting exercises in the Persian Gulf when the Falklands war broke out. For a while we thought we may be sent through the Gulf down the Atlantic Ocean.

The majority of my time on this deployment, I spent “down the hole ” in the boiler and engine rooms, watch keeping, 4 hours on, 8 hours off.

As this was a steam turbine ship, conditions were extreme, especially in the tropics. Our 8 hours off also incorporated other duties depending on what sort of exercises we were conducting at the time. Looking back at this trip at the time, I thought it was the worst place to be, but now I realise I learned a lot, and also had some good runs ashore!

Beer issue at sea when not conducting exercises, was 2 cans per day per man, perhaps! 50c each. Crossing the line ceremonies, and other activities, made it bearable at times, coupled with comradery, got us through.

Our final port, Fremantle, was my home port then, so I took 2 weeks off and re-joined the ship later in Sydney.

After my 2.5 years on Perth, I was transferred to HMAS Kuttabul via a 3 week driver training course at HMAS Albatross. Here I learnt how to drive 8 tonne trucks, 42 seater buses, 4WD ambulance etc. I spent about 18 months working transport from Zetland stores, including one trip to pick up a new Volvo bus from Adelaide. They flew me and a Petty officer to Adelaide, then gave us 4 days to drive the new bus back to Sydney. This incorporated a detour through the Barossa Valley to pick up supplies!

My next posting was to HMAS Penguin, working in the shipwright's workshop. This was my favourite posting in the RAN, repairing work boats and base maintenance etc. Then I was sent to RMIT in Melbourne for 4 months full time training on what was known as the advanced refrigeration course.

I was then posted to HMAS Adelaide, 01, Frigate (now a dive site off the central coast). Here I was a leading seaman in charge of all refrigeration and air conditioning on board. Various deployments in the South Pacific, also PNG. Once, we arrived in Fiji when the second Coup had just started. We spent 3 weeks off the coast waiting to see what would eventuate and if we were needed to help evacuate ex-pats etc.

After just over 2 years on the Adelaide, I was promoted to Petty Officer, then posted to HMAS Watson, in charge of the shipwright's workshop until I paid off after 10 years' service.

My time in the Navy gave me two trades, Air Conditioning and Shipwright. I saw and learnt a great deal whilst in the Navy and often reflect on my time there.

I now own an Air Conditioning Company based locally and believe my training and work ethic has stood me in good stead for my working life.

My wife, Amanda, and son, Tom, work with me, and we also have a son who has been working in London for the past 3 years.

Pittwater RSL Club Ltd

Congratulations to:

Leigh Arnold, new Club President,
Darren Crabb, new Senior Vice President,
Jim Colbeck, new Junior Vice President.

Thanks to:

Julie Emerson, retiring Club President.
Aldo Sirotic, who has stepped down as a Director.
We thank Aldo for his service as a past President.

NEW MEMBERS

The new method of member application to join the RSL is very efficient and easy for people to apply.

Welcome to the
Pittwater RSL sub-Branch

Mitch Harmer, 7 Bty 9 Regt RAA
Zane Wilcox, 7 Bty 9 Regt RAA

We hope to see you soon.

General

Mission

Providing for the well-being, care, compensation and commemoration of all Service personnel, especially those who paid the supreme sacrifice.

We engage with the general community promoting the patriotic spirit of ANZAC, providing information on our activities, and encouraging membership of, and interaction with, the Sub-Branch and their families.

We Would Like Your Profile

Many members have already provided their profiles. 300-350 words about your career would make your Editor very happy! Please email your copy to Sandra.

smay44@bigpond.net.au Thank you.

Welfare

Our Welfare and Membership Officer can assist you with enquiries regarding war pensions, obtaining service records, membership eligibility and any other queries you may have.

Please contact Deborah Carter on 8401 0785, or send an email to: pittwaterrslsubbranch@gmail.com

If you know of any Commonwealth service member, regardless of RSL affiliation, the Sub-Branch can arrange an RSL tribute.

50 Year Certificate

If you have been a Sub-Branch Member, continuously of any Branch, for longer than 50 years, please contact Deborah as soon as possible. Thank you.

VALE

With great sadness, we report the passing of former sub-Branch Members

Donald Victor Newport

Service No. NX169148
18 February 1925 - 11 April 2022

John Evan Williams

Service No. RNZN15826
26 September 1938 - 23 April 2022

Walter 'Wal' George Williams OAM

Service No. NX57223
10 October 1922 - 04 June 2022

James Peter Whipp

Service No. NX162145
31 July 1924 - 09 June 2022

LEST WE FORGET

Some helpful website links...

If you are feeling stressed and need someone to talk to, we highly recommend:

<https://www.openarms.gov.au/get-support/suicide-intervention>

<https://www.beyondblue.org.au/>

<https://www.ruok.org.au/>

Honour Our Fallen - Mona Vale Cemetery

Honour Our Fallen is conducted twice a year, prior to Anzac and Remembrance Days. We place Australian flags at graves of all War Veterans.

We look forward to increased participation by other members prior to Remembrance Day 2022.

The scheduled date for placement of flags is Tuesday 08 November 2022. We will meet at their office, near the car park at 09:00am. Nadine Phipps is the Cemetery Team Leader.

If you can assist, please advise Deborah or Sandra.

VALE Bruce Loudon 1933 - 2022. Rest in Peace

The Secretary of the Northern Beaches National Servicemen Association sadly, but peacefully passed away on Sunday 12 June 2022. Bruce was a good friend of our Sub-Branch, and was considered the godfather of the Warringah Cricket Club.

Executive Committee - Contact Numbers

Deborah Carter	President	0414 470 913
Terry Jones	Vice President	0466 892 771
Graeme Lee	Secretary	0490 014 693
Bob Wood	Treasurer	0409 712 349

Support Team

Sandra May-Crabb	Newsletter Editor, Office Manager	0417 944 244
Inese Carrodus	Office Assistant	0449 525 316





Update - all scheduled meetings for the remainder of the year.

Sunday 10 July	10:30am	General Meeting	The Meeting Place
Sunday 14 August	10:30am	General Meeting	The Meeting Place
Sunday 14 August	11:00am	Vietnam Veteran's Day (Northern)	Palm Beach RSL Club
Thursday 18 August	10:30am	Nashos Vietnam Veteran's Day (TBC)	Manly Cenotaph
Sunday 11 September	10:30am	General Meeting (Christmas Lunch tickets on sale) (Order your 2023 Diary)	The Meeting Place
Sunday 09 October	10:30am	General Meeting	The Meeting Place
Tuesday 08 November	09:00am	Honour Our Fallen	Mona Vale Cemetery
Friday 11 November	10:15am	Remembrance Day Service Service in undercover car park	Form up at entrance of car park
Friday 11 November	12:00pm	Lunch	Distillery
Sunday 13 November	10:30am	General Meeting	The Meeting Place
Sunday 11 December	10:30am	General Meeting	The Meeting Place
Sunday 11 December	12:00pm	Christmas Lunch	Rock Lilly Auditorium



July - August - September

Sandra May-Crabb



JULY

Christopher Bedwell	07
Shane Fender	07
Don Tierney	08
Mitch Harmer	13
Dorothy Clark	20
Jim Colbeck	21
Deborah Carter	23
Rory Amon	25
Julian Vanslambrouck	27

AUGUST

Sam Steel	05
Cecil Capon	06
Walter Nicholls	14
Brett Mace	15
Brian Heal	16
Geoffrey Jones	16
Kim Brownlie	26
Bernard O'Neill	27

SEPTEMBER

Cliff Gravenor	02
Barry McFarland	08
Michael Mannington	16
Darren Crabb	17
Robert Crowe	18
Roberta Conroy	22
Brian Strawbridge	25