



RSL
NSW

Pittwater RSL sub-Branch Newsletter



April 2024 - Number 42

Pittwater RSL sub-Branch

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Current Membership: 107

The next Newsletter will be
published in July 2024.

Pittwater RSL Club Ltd

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President's Report

VALE: Sadly, we have lost two sub-Branch members. Affiliate Sandra Langfield, and Service member, Kosta Coric.

Our new **Trustees** have now had their first meeting on Monday 05 February 2024. At this meeting, Bob Wood handed over the administration to the new team.

Purple Poppy Day on Saturday 24 February was fantastic. Once again, Holsworthy Barracks provided service dogs and their handlers to attend our Service. In the past we've had two dogs; this year they sent 3 dogs and handlers. WO2 Christopher Arp, once again, gave his moving address. See pages 2, 3 and 4.

ZONTA - International Women's Day Breakfast

Sub-Branch members attended the International Women's Day breakfast held at the Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club on Wed 06 March. Hosted by the Zonta Club of Northern Beaches.



Roberta Conroy OAM, Sandra May, Michael Mannington OAM, Deborah Carter, and Rory Amon MP. Dale Cohen also attended, but was MIA for our photo!

Images: Sandra May and Dale Cohen

Previous Pittwater Women of the Year: 2020: Roberta Conroy OAM; 2021: Lynleigh Greig OAM; 2024: Laura Enever, new Pittwater Woman of the Year, world surfing champion and record holding big-wave surfer; 2011: Tamara Sloper-Harding OAM; and 2017: Deborah Carter.

WSO Training On Monday 18 March Pittwater RSL sub-Branch hosted the WSO course.

This was attended by 13 members from various sub-Branches across the Northern Beaches District Council (NBDC).

The WSO course was expertly conducted

by two trainers, Bronte Pollard and Marc Mathews.

Bernie O'Neil and I attended the course, which was very informative and valuable.

Thank you to CEO Jason Manning who made the Audi available at no cost to the sub-Branch or NBDC.

Victory Tree The Victory Tree planted on the site of the Mona Vale Methodist Church in 1920 part of the statewide Methodist Youth program, to honour the supreme sacrifice of Australian servicemen in WW1.

Unfortunately the Victory Tree developed a soil borne fungal disease. The Victory tree's condition has been deteriorating for some time. Council arborist diagnosed "Armillaria Root Rot", commonly known as Oak Root Rot.

It was decided the tree would not survive, and was removed on 21 March 2024.

Pittwater RSL sub-Branch will have a brass plaque made with a Holy Oak Tree pressed on the plaque. This plaque will be added to the Upper Cenotaph. We will hold a commemorative service and consecration.

The General Public will be invited to attend the service.

Commemorative Medallions reference. Please see page 5 for details.



DAYLIGHT SAVING ENDS - CHANGE YOUR CLOCKS

Please remember that Daylight Saving ends on
Sunday 07 April 2024 at 02:00 am
Clocks will be turned **BACK** one hour



Lest We Forget
Regards,

Deborah

Deborah Carter
President

Purple Poppy Day – Saturday 24 February 2024



Ross, Deborah, John, Michael, Faroh, Bernie, Tamara, Sophie

Warrant Officer Class Two (WO2) Christopher Arp



Gary, Steve, Trevor, Michael, Faroh, Bernie, John, Stan

LAYING OF WREATHS and BOOKS

Deborah Carter, President, Pittwater RSL sub-Branch
 Leigh Arnold, President, Pittwater RSL Club
 Jason Manning, CEO, Pittwater RSL Club
 Bernie O'Neill, Vietnam Veteran will lay the Purple Poppy wreath
 Dr Sophie Scamps, MP, Member for Mackellar
 Cr Michael Gencher, Northern Beaches Council, representing Rory Amon MP, Member for Pittwater
 Rob Stokes, former Member for Pittwater, Affiliate Member
 John Fairless, President, Collaroy RSL sub-Branch
 Tamara Sloper-Harding OAM, Vice President, Avalon sub-Branch
 Barry Andrews, President, Sydney Northern Beaches National Servicemen sub-Branch
 Det. Sgt Ross Wagland, North Shore Police Area Command
 Mayor Sue Heins, Northern Beaches Council
 Cr Bianca Crvelin, Northern Beaches Council
 Cr Ruth Robins, Northern Beaches Council, representing Michael Regan MP, Member for Wakehurst
 Cr Karina Page, Northern Beaches Council
 Cr Miranda Korzy, Northern Beaches Council

Mona Vale Public School, Pittwater High School
 Sacred Heart School, Narrabeen North Public School
 Pittwater House School



Pittwater High School students



Northern Beaches Councillors: Bianca Crvelin, Michael Gencher, Mayor Sue Heins, Michael, Faroh, Ruth Robins, Miranda Zorsky

WO2 Christopher Arp's speech

Good morning Ladies and gentlemen, I'm Warrant Officer Class Two (WO2) Christopher Arp from the School of Military Engineering at Holsworthy Barracks. My job is the Explosive Detection Dog Manager for Army.

With me today is also:

SPR Michael Sorokovsky and Faroh
SPR Bradley Miller and Ness and
SPR Scott Writer and Eddie

Firstly, I'd like to thank you all for giving me the opportunity to speak today and share what Purple Poppy Day means to me as an Explosive Detection Dog handler.

We're here today to remember a special type of Australian Soldier. One who has fought in every conflict where Australian forces have been present. They have worked tirelessly, providing not just capability but companionship. Often, even if they made it through the war, they were unable to return home. We're here of course to remember the service of military working animals.

Australia has deployed horses, mules, donkeys, camels, pigeons, cats and dogs along with its human soldiers.

These animals were used for their incredible ability to tackle tasks that were difficult or impossible for a human to undertake. Often animals were selected for tasks that utilised their natural abilities and physical traits such as the camels in the Imperial Camel corps who were used to carry supplies and equipment long distances in arid terrain; or the pigeon with their incredibly strong homing instinct who were used to carry vital information between positions.

It is estimated that approximately 400,000 horses have left Australia's shores to serve in various wars, with only one ever making the return trip home. The Cavalry charge at Beersheba by the 4th Australian Light Horse is remembered as the last great Cavalry charge of the First World War. During the Second World War the North Australian Observer Unit was tasked to watch for invaders in the North, using horses to move through the tough terrain of the outback. Many years later their successor, NORFORCE proved to be the last mounted unit in the Australian Army, ending in 2008.

It is unknown how many mules and donkeys have served with the Australian Army as records were not accurately kept. Most famous of these was Simpson and his donkey. Simpson landed on the Gallipoli Peninsula on April 25 1915 with the 3rd Field Ambulance. He and his donkeys became a familiar sight to the Anzacs. In the words of General Monash 'Private Simpson and his little beast earned the admiration of everyone at the upper end of the valley. They worked all day and night throughout the whole period since the landing and the help rendered to the wounded was invaluable. Simpson knew no fear and moved unconcernedly amid shrapnel and rifle fire, steadily carrying out his self-imposed task day by day.

As equipment and technology has progressed and the way we fight wars has changed the need for animals in conflict has all but disappeared. While planes, helicopters and trucks have replaced the horse, camel, mules and donkeys with radios replacing the pigeon. But there's one animal whose loyalty, courage and willingness to work is yet to be matched by a modern solution, I'm referring of course to the Military Working Dog.

The world of canine capabilities in support of national defence has been evolving in Australia since the early 1950s; however Military Working Dogs have been proving their worth since 1914 at the outbreak of war on the western front. It is estimated that approximately 50,000 dogs were used by all combatants in WW1.

Post WW1 and leading into WW2 the use of dogs in military applications increased worldwide with the US alone deploying over 10,000 trained Military Working Dogs.

In more recent times Australia has deployed tracker dogs to Malaya and tracker and mine dogs to Vietnam. After making the switch from the ground scenting mine dog to the air scenting Explosive Detection Dog (EDD) in 1981 the training of which was heavily influenced by the conflict in Northern Ireland. EDDs saw success in Somalia, Bougainville and East Timor before they really came into their own in Afghanistan.

Through the Afghanistan and Iraq conflicts our Military Working Dogs proved their worth time and time again but none more so than Kuga. Serving with the SASR, he received the Dickin medal for his actions in Afghanistan, the Dickin medal is the equivalent to the Victoria Cross. He was the first Australian animal to receive this award since World War Two. Whilst on patrol he discovered an insurgent positioned set to ambush Australian Forces. He charged forward, diverting attention from the soldiers. Once the insurgents fled, Kuga managed to make it back to his handler, despite being shot five times and suffering from shrapnel wounds.

We all know that animals play a vital role whilst deployed; however, they've played an equally important role at home, helping our veterans living with trauma.

All of these animals, and many more, have earned the right to be called Australian Soldiers. From beasts of burden carrying equipment to dogs searching for IED's and caches, they have served beside their human counterparts in every conflict that we have been involved in. Recently, several memorials and awards have been dedicated to Australia's war animals. This includes the Canine Operational Service Medal, recognising Military working Dogs service overseas and toady; the National Day for War Animals.

However, one of the most powerful monuments to animals is located in London. It has two inscriptions. The first reads 'This monument is dedicated to all the animals that served and died alongside British and Allied forces in wars and campaigns throughout time'. The second inscription simply says 'They had no choice.'

Purple Poppy Day continued



Kate, Chris, Sandra, Roberta, Michael, Faroh, Deborah, Inese, Scott and Sue



Mona Vale Public School students



Narrabeen North Public student



Jeff, John, Michael, Faroh, Ross, Joe, Matthew



Mona Vale School student, Indi, read the poem, I Spoke to You in Whispers by Neil Andrew



Image credits: Michael Mannington OAM, Maryan Heffernan, Community Photography. Dale Cohen, Northern Beaches Advocate. Darren Crabb, Sandra May

April

- 09, 1942** **HMAS Vampire sunk.** The destroyer HMAS Vampire and the aircraft carrier HMS Hermes were sunk by Japanese bombers off Colombo in the Bay of Bengal.
- 13, 1916** **Jifjaffa.** A squadron of the 9th Light Horse Regiment captured this Turkish outpost in the Sinai, about 60 kilometres from the Suez. The encounter, the first engagement for the Light Horse in the Sinai, demonstrated their potential for fighting in the Middle East.
- 20, 1915** **First half-flight, Australian Flying Corps, sailed for the Baghdad expedition** This was the first use of Australian aircraft and aircrew in war.

May

- 08, 1945** **Separate surrender of Germany to the Soviet Union.** At the end of the war in Europe, Stalin refused to accept the German surrender, signed at Reims, as valid and demanded another, which took place at 11.30 pm on 8 May. 9 May became the Soviet Victory in Europe day.
- 19, 1915** **Turkish counter-attack on Gallipoli.** The Turkish counter-attack sought to drive the Australians and New Zealanders from Anzac Cove. The attack failed and over 10,000 Turks were killed or wounded in their greatest disaster of the entire campaign.

June

- 10, 1945** **Landings at Brunei, Labuan and Muar, Borneo.** Codenamed Oboe 6, the 9th Division's landings at Brunei, Labuan and Muar, were designed to secure the Brunei Bay area north of Borneo, to permit the establishment of an advanced fleet base to protect Brunei's oil and rubber resources.
- 15, 1951** **HMAS Bataan bombards Chongjin, Korea.** After the war in Korea had ended, the Chinese leader, Chairman Mao Tse Tung, admitted that one of the principal factors in denying the Chinese and North Korean victory was the superiority of UN naval power. Australia's contribution to the naval war in Korea was significant.
- 20, 1864** **Australians in action at Te Ranga, New Zealand.** More than 2,500 men from the Australian colonies crossed the Tasman to fight in the New Zealand wars. Most joined the Waikato militia regiments and became involved in patrolling and garrison duties.

9th Light Horse Regiment, 1916



ANZAC Day Dawn Service - Thursday 25 April 2024

This year our Service will commence at 05:30 am at the Lower Cenotaph at the Pittwater RSL Club.

In the event of rain, the Service will take place in the undercover car park. If you are coming, and staying for breakfast too, and haven't yet responded, please do before 08 April. We need to provide numbers to the Club.

For those who wish to participate in the bigger march with Avalon sub-Branch, this will take place at approximately 11:00 am on 25 April. Specific details will follow. Anyone can march.

Commemorative Medallions. Pittwater RSL sub-Branch have recently received some Poppy Medallions from DVA. They were originally made available to eligible veterans in 2020 who applied for them online.

"On the 75th anniversary of the end of WW2, this medallion is presented by the Australian Government, on behalf of the Australian people, to those who served our nation and her allies during WW2. The design shows the Commonwealth Coat of Arms and displays a poppy, the flower of Remembrance".

DVA has requested that one poppy should be retained and displayed in our memorabilia cabinet. We already have one on display, which was donated to us by the Late Bert Brownlie (WW2).

I have already distributed 2 medallions to eligible veterans. Please contact me if you know of any WW2 living veterans who did not receive one previously. *Deborah Carter*.



David Rossiter, new Affiliate Member, was welcomed by Deborah and members at our February 2024 meeting.



April - May - June

Sandra May



April

Lavinia Waller	02
Todd Vail	03
Sandra May-Crabb	04
David Schwebel	05
Frances Watkins	08
Gaye Kaye	12
Joan Wood	15
Kate O'Neill	16
John Chambers	21
Noala De Silva	30
Emma Woods	30

May

Raymond Cicolini	11
Kerry Poha	16
Sue Everitt	21
Leigh Arnold	25
Brad Lewis	27
Derek Savage	29

June

Leslie Beers	02
John Cicolini	03
Graeme Keats	05
Jeff Brown	06
Lindsay Jordan	09
Terry Jones	11
Matthew Hill	13
Gwenyth Sneesby	17
Graeme Lee	17
Peter Icely	19
Beryl Clarke	21

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.

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 email pittwaterrslsubbranch@gmail.com

RSL Tribute

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 Carter as soon as possible. Thank you.

Cyber Crime: Report to 1800 595 160.

Or call Snr Constable Matt Cain at Dee Why Police Station, 02 9971 3399.

VALE - LEST WE FORGET

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

Sandra Langfield

04 December 1946 - 16 January 2024

Kosta Coric

1959 - 1961 National Service
Royal Yugoslav Air Force
19 February 1937 - 13 February 2024

Helpful website links and telephone numbers:

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

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

1800 011 046 (24/7)

<https://www.beyondblue.org.au/> 1300 224 636 (24/7)

<https://www.womensresiliencecentre.com.au> 1300 895 991

General links:

RSL NSW: <https://www.rslnsw.org.au>

Australian War Memorial: <https://www.awm.gov.au>

Vet Affairs News: <https://www.dva.gov.au/newsroom>

Scamwatch: <https://www.scamwatch.gov.au/report-a-scam>

RSL NSW have advised the new **Member Portal** is now Live!

<https://rslnsw.org.au/member-portal/>

ON THE HORIZON April, May and June 2024

Until future notice, all monthly General Meetings will be held in The Distillery, Pittwater RSL Club

Sun 07 Apr	10:30 am	General Meeting	The Distillery
Thu 25 Apr	05:20 am	ANZAC Day Dawn	Lower Cenotaph, Pittwater RSL Club
Thu 25 Apr	06:30 am	Breakfast	Glasshouse Grill
Thu 25 Apr	11:00 am*	ANZAC March	Avalon (*Timing and details to be confirmed)
Sun 05 May	10:30 am	General Meeting	The Distillery
Sun 19 May	11:00 am	Pittwater RSL Club AGM	The Auditorium
Sun 02 Jun	10:30 am	General Meeting	The Distillery
Fri 07 Jun	10:00 am	Defence of Sydney Commemoration	Hosts: John Platt CSC and NBDC (details follow)

Executive Committee and sub-Branch Office

Deborah Carter	President, Welfare Officer	0414 470 913
Terry Jones	Vice President	0466 892 771
Sandra May	Secretary, Newsletter Editor	0417 944 244
Bob Wood	Treasurer	0409 712 349

Support Team

Inese Carrodus	Office Assistant	0449 525 316
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Office: Monday (10:30 - 16:30) 02 8401 0785

Email: pittwaterrslsubbranch@gmail.com

Website: <https://www.pittwaterrsl.com.au/sub-branch>

If urgent, please call any member of the Executive.

