



Pittwater RSL sub-Branch Newsletter



October 2024 - Number 45

Pittwater RSL sub-Branch

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Current Membership: 105

The next Newsletter will be
published in January 2025.

Pittwater RSL Club Ltd

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President's Report

VALE Brian Strawbridge, sub-Branch
Member passed on 14 July 2024.

Brian had been a valued member since May 1999, 25 years. During this time, he served in various capacities on the committee as Vice President/Senior Vice President, Trustee and Assistant Secretary for 15 years under three presidents. In 2018, he was awarded a Life Membership of the RSL NSW.

Brian's funeral was held on Thursday 08 August 2024 in the North Chapel, Northern Suburbs Memorial Gardens and Crematorium, 199 Delhi Road, North Ryde.

I conducted the RSL Tribute and the sub-Branch provided the Bugler, Adelaide Channon. We contributed \$300 towards the Wake, which was held at the All Saints Anglican Church, North Epping.

We prepared a Funeral Tribute, and this was given to everyone who attended on the day. A copy of this was emailed to all members on 12 August.

VALE John Roxburgh, sub-Branch
Member passed on 06 September 2024.

I conducted the RSL Tribute for John's funeral on Friday 20 September. The sub-Branch provided the Bugler, Harriet Channon, and we contributed \$300 towards the Wake.

Our Funeral Tribute was given to everyone who attended on the day. A copy was emailed to all members on 24 September.

We have received "thank you" notes from the Strawbridge and Roxburgh families.

VALE Ted Samojlowicz. Ted was a friend, Member and Treasurer of Forestville RSL Sub-Branch. He sadly passed away on 05 July in the United States. His funeral was held on 02 September at Martin de Porres Church, Davidson. The service was well attended and a wake followed at Forestville RSL Club.

City to Surf - Sunday 11 August

I managed to walk, not run, 14 km from Hyde Park to Bondi Beach in 2:40hrs!

Vietnam Veterans Day - 18 August

See page 2 for details.

Pittwater House 52nd Annual Ceremonial Parade and Unit Prize giving - 20 August

I had the privilege to attend Pittwater House, and I have thanked Dr Hillier for an excellent service.

NBDC 20 August Meeting

Pittwater hosted the August meeting. Our guest speakers were from the Wellbeing Centre, Dee Why.

Dee Why RSL Bowling Club - Sunday 25 August

This was a social day hosted by Dee Why RSL sub-Branch which was lots of fun, and I hope to have other members join me next year.

RSL Headquarters SafeTALK - Tuesday 24 September

Scott Johnston, Jenny Oliphant and I attended this preliminary course for ASSIST (suicide prevention course).

Tash Woolley - "Yourside".

At our 13 October meeting, Tash will present the up to date information on Aged Care sector.

RSL NSW State Congress is to be held in Newcastle from 27-29 October. Congress delegates, Deborah Carter and Bob Wood will attend.

At our 03 November meeting we will be holding a special presentation for our Vietnam Veterans. As usual, we will have lunch in the Glasshouse following the meeting, and we invite the Vietnam Veterans partners to be our guests for lunch. For catering purposes, please advise if attending.



Daylight Saving Starts
Clocks go FORWARD
one hour on Sunday
06 October 02:00AM

President's Report continued

Remembrance Day - Monday 11 November 2024

We will form up at 10:10am in the lower car park. Our Service will commence at 10:20am. Everyone attending will be given a Remembrance Poppy. We look forward to seeing many members at our Service.

Royal Commission Report

We now have a full copy of the Royal Commission Report on Veterans Suicide. This is in the Sub-Branch office for anyone to read. Thank you to Zamri Burns for organising this copy.

New Service Members. Welcome to **Jason Becker** (profile on page 3) and **Ryan Ockerby**. Ryan joined the Army in June 2024. We look forward to welcoming Ryan, possibly at our next meeting on Sunday 13 October.



Lest We Forget

Regards,

Deborah Carter

Deborah Carter
President

Due to a special "Bluey" family fun day at the Pittwater RSL Club on Sunday 06 October, we decided to change our meeting date.

Our next General Meeting is Sunday 13 October in the new Mainsail Room. Enter via the Club's Deck, located next to the Memorabilia Cabinet.

Vietnam Veterans Day - Sunday 18 August



Mark Ferguson OAM, President of Palm Beach RSL sub-Branch, and Brian Webster, President of Palm Beach RSL Club Ltd, hosted another successful Vietnam Veterans Northern Group commemorative service.

The service was well attended by Vietnam Veterans from the following RSL sub-Branches - Palm Beach, Pittwater, Narrabeen and Forestville.

This event was also supported by non-Vietnam members from the above Clubs, local VIPs, school children and members of the general public. Lunch followed in the Club.



JASON BECKER - NEW MEMBER



My name is Jason Becker, and I joined the sub-Branch in July 2024.

My service career spanned 15 years as an Air Engineering Officer in the RAN (mainly out of HMAS Albatross). I then moved to the UK and initially worked for QinetiQ as a Helicopter Structural Integrity Advisor. I then joined a team of ex-Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm Air Engineers in becoming a Director at Aviation Requirements Ltd, in Dorset.

I was born in Nowra, and currently have a home in Warriewood, NSW where I spend part of the year working remotely on Helicopter Structural Integrity tasks for the UK MOD.

My brief profile:

My British wife Sharon works in the IT industry in the UK, and is now an Australian permanent resident. We live in Emsworth Hampshire (when in the UK) and have four children between us (2 based in the UK and two based in Perth) which makes Christmas challenging! My brother is still serving as a PO ATA at Albatross, and our parents are both ex-RAN and live in Tasmania.

My passion is aviation, and I hold CAA and CASA helicopter PPL(H) licenses with ratings on Bell 206 Jet Ranger/Longranger and Cabri G2. I spend most of my time flying out of Goodwood in the UK and Bankstown when in Australia.

I am delighted to have the opportunity to join the Pittwater RSL sub-Branch and am looking forward to meeting you all during general meetings (when back in Australia).

October November December			
Sandra May-Crabb			
			
			
OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER	
Oliver Ford 08	Tom Kelsey 02	Joseph Chase-Berry 01	John Thorby 11
Joseph Tiernan 13	Carolyn Noble 08	David Rossiter 02	Brian Sargeson 15
Peter Williams 15	Aldo Sirotic 17	Janelle Strawbridge 05	Dennis De Silva 15
Marta Onslow 16		John Faul 05	Guy Bryant 21
James Roche 19		Scott Johnston 07	Dale Cohen 22
Ed Koeppen 26		Robert Wood 10	Stan Juracich 25
Zamri Burns 27		Andy Perry 11	



Deborah Carter, Chris Ballantyne and Phil Cardew at Dee Why RSL Bowling Club, Sunday 25 Aug



Deborah Carter and Stuart Hablethwaite (Forestville RSL sub-Branch) City to Surf, Sunday 11 Aug

VALE

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

Brian Strawbridge
Citizens Military Forces (CMF)
Service No. 2/107835
25 September 1931 - 14 July 2024

John Roxburgh
Army, National Service
Service No. 2749176
08 October 1936 - 06 September 2024

Ted Samojlowicz
Treasurer, Forestville RSL Sub-Branch
05 Jul 2024

LEST WE FORGET

**October
3 - 8, 1915**

Battle of Maryang-San, Korea. The 3rd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, made a successful assault against Chinese positions on Hill 317 (Maryang-San) and held the important feature in the face of fierce counter-attacks.

4, 1917

Sergeant Lewis McGee, VC (1888-1917), 40th Battalion, originally from Campbelltown, Tasmania, was awarded the Victoria Cross near Ypres, Belgium. McGee was killed in the futile attack on Passchendaele. It was a posthumous award.

18, 1944

HMAS Geelong sunk. HMAS Geelong was one of four corvettes lost during the Second World War. It collided with an American merchant ship off New Guinea.

**November
12, 1940**

HMAS Sydney [II] in action at Strait of Otranto. HMAS Sydney in action at the Strait of Otranto in a diversion for the British attack on Taranto. The Australian cruiser became the most celebrated ship in the RAN after its performance in the Mediterranean against the Italian navy in 1940.

23, 1948

Formation of the Australian Regiment. Formation of the Australian Regiment, which became the Royal Australian Regiment (RAR) in March 1949. The Royal Australian Regiment has taken a prominent role in Australia's wars and peacekeeping operations since its formation.

24, 1943

Sergeant T. C. Derrick, VC, DCM. Sergeant T.C. Derrick DCM, 2/48th Battalion, is awarded the Victoria Cross at Sattelberg, New Guinea. Derrick, one of the great Australian soldiers of the Second World War, seized the summit of Sattelberg virtually single-handedly, leading the way for the Australian occupation of the dominating feature. *See profile below.*

**December
06, 1951**

HMAS Sydney begins its second patrol off Korea. Sydney's aircraft were used to protect South Korean-held islands on Korea's north-west coast.

13, 1915

Light Horse fight at Um Rakham. The Light Horse was deployed against pro-Turkish Arabs of an Islamic sect known as the Senussi, in Egypt's western desert.

18, 1944

'Arty' Hill, Bougainville, captured. 'Arty Hill', as it was known, was captured by the Queensland 9th Battalion, and was a major Japanese position on the Numa Numa Trail leading across Bougainville.

ADF Personnel Profile - Lieutenant Thomas Currie Derrick, 1914 - 1945

Sandra



Thomas Derrick was born on 20 March 1914 in Adelaide. He was the eldest son of David Derrick, a labourer, and his wife Ada. The Derricks were not well off and Tom often walked barefoot to attend primary school. He left school at 14, by which time he had developed a keen interest in sports. During the depression he subsisted on the proceeds of odd jobs; fixing bicycles, selling newspapers and working in a bakery. In 1931 he travelled to Berri, on the Murray River, looking for work which he eventually found in a vineyard at Winkie. He remained there for the next nine years.

He married Beryl Violet Leslie in 1939. He enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force on 5 July 1940. Derrick embarked for the Middle East with the 2/48th Battalion and soon proved himself to be an excellent soldier, gaining promotion to corporal while his unit was in Tobruk. In July 1942 he was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal for his bravery and leadership at Tel el Eisa. At the end of that month Derrick was promoted to sergeant. By October his unit was in action at El Alamein, where he again served with distinction.

Derrick's unit returned to Australia in February 1943, training in north Queensland and Papua before helping to capture Lae in September. In November the 2/48th were in action at Sattelberg, overlooking Finschafen. Fighting amidst rugged terrain and under heavy fire from Japanese machine guns, Derrick performed the feat that earned him the Victoria Cross. Scaling steep cliffs, under fire, hurling grenades and using his rifle he cleared ten machine gun posts, making possible the capture of Sattelberg.

The 2/48th returned to Australia in February 1944 and in August Derrick was posted to an officer training unit. He was commissioned as a lieutenant in November. On 1 May 1945 he took part in the landing at Tarakan, Borneo. Later that month he led his platoon against a heavily defended position code-named Freda, gaining all but the highest knoll. That night a Japanese machine gun fired into the Australian lines. As he sat up to check that his men were all right, Derrick was hit by five bullets from the gun's second burst. He had been lightly wounded before, but recognised that this time his wounds were mortal. He died on 24 May 1945 and was buried in Labuan War Cemetery. A superb soldier, Derrick has also been described as a sensitive and reflective man - widely respected in the AIF he remains one of its better-known figures. *Image and profile obtained from Australian War Memorial. Read [Wikipedia](#) for more information.*

Mona Vale: 25 Pounder Mark II on Carriage 25 Pounder Mark I/L (Trail No.2)

The Gun needed restoring. The approximate costs for renovations would be well over 10k, and could even reach 40k, dependent on the amount of work required and availability of parts.

As it had to be removed from the Club premises, and we do not own the land, and no other storage solutions were available, the sub-Branch had no options. We contacted Kevin Browning from Artillery Guns, and he suggested we contact Shane Mitchell and his Grandfather Les Bell In Willmot NSW. They are passionate collectors and restorers, and the gun would be going to a good home.

After due consideration, the Executive decided this option was the best way forward. I contacted Shane and collection of the gun was arranged for the following Monday, 29 July. The sub-Branch gifted the Gun to Shane and Les. The gun was removed in a most efficient manner, and Shane advised he expects the renovation will take about 2 years. He will keep us informed of their restoration progress with photos and narrative.

Once the renovations are completed and the gun is roadworthy, Shane has promised to bring the gun, on loan, to one of our ceremonies.

History provided by Kevin Browning, Artillery Guns, Collections Manager for the Royal Australian Artillery Company, on 05 Aug 2024

Location: Pittwater RSL Club, 82 Mona Vale Road, Mona Vale NSW 2103					
Serial No.	Manufactured	Manufacturer	Calibre	Weight of projectile	Range
6529	1942	General Motors Holden Australia	40mm	N/A	m yards



No record of service for this gun exists. The 1975 surplus ballot lists Pittwater as a recipient of one of the surplus 25 pounders which indicates the gun arrived at the RSL Club that year. Whether it was placed in the position it held near the junction of Mona Vale Road and Foley Street is not known but likely to have been around this time.

In October 2018 it had to be relocated due to the widening of Foley Street. It was placed on the upper car park opposite the RSL sub-Branch office.

In mid-2024 the Pittwater RSL Club management advised the sub-Branch that the gun had to be moved within a short time frame, or it would be removed. The sub-Branch sought advice from the Royal Australian Artillery Historical Company who put them in touch with a possible solution. Agreement was met and within days the gun was moved.

The gun was made by General Motors Holden (Australia). The serial number is 6529, this number is stamped on the barrel receiver. Components of 25 pounders were made by several manufacturers and assembled at the GMH at Pagewood. On this gun the carriage was manufactured by GMH, the breech by Chubb and the barrel receiver by the Commonwealth Sugar Refinery in 1942.

The assistance of Terry Jones, Pittwater RSL sub-Branch, in preparing this record is appreciated.

Photographic timeline



Jan 2008



Jan 2015



The gun being moved from the Mona Vale Road/Foley Street site, Oct 2018



The gun on the upper car park Pittwater RSL Club, 2021



The gun on the upper car park Pittwater RSL Club, 29 Jul 2024



The gun being removed from the Pittwater RSL Club, 29 Jul 2024

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

Helpful website links and telephone numbers:

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

[Open Arms](#) - 1800 011 046 (24/7)

[Beyond Blue](#) - 1300 224 636 (24/7)

[Women's Resilience Centre](#) - 1300 895 991

Previous Newsletters, Jan 2022 - Jul 2024, can be viewed on our web page on the Pittwater RSL Club's website. [Sub-Branch Newsletters](#) and scroll to the bottom.

Editions from Jan 2014 to Oct 2021, can be provided. Please contact me on 0417 944 244 or email. Sandra.

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.

General links:

[RSL NSW](#) - RSL NSW Member Portal is Live!

[Australian War Memorial](#)

[Vet Affairs News](#)

[Scamwatch](#)

ON THE HORIZON **October - December 2024** (Subject to change)
All monthly General Meetings are now held in the new Mainsail Room (enter via The Deck)



Sunday 13 October	10:30 am	General Meeting, 2025 Diary Orders
Sunday 03 November	10:30 am	General Meeting
Monday 11 November	10:10 am	Remembrance Day Service. Form up lower car park
Sunday 01 December	10:30 am	General Meeting
Sunday 01 December	12:00 noon	Christmas Lunch
Monday 16 December	5:00 pm	The office closes for the Christmas break

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
Joan Wood	Assistant Treasurer	0407 931 987

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.