RSL NSW

Pittwater RSL sub-Branch Newsletter

LEST WE FORGET

November 2026 - Number 55

Pittwater RSL sub-Branch
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REMEMBRANCE DAY
Wednesday 11 November 2026

Thank you to everyone who attended and assisted with our Remembrance Day Commemorative Service at the Pittwater RSL Club.

Deborah Carter and Sandra May



Deborah Carter, President, Pittwater RSL sub-Branch
Leigh Arnold, President, Pittwater RSL Club and sub-Branch Service Member
Jason Manning, CEO Pittwater RSL Club
WO2 Shane Fender, 7 Bty 9 Regt RAA, representing current Serving Members
Vietnam Veteran SGT Stan Juracich, USMC representing Allied Services
George Carpenter, NASHOS
Wendy Ashley, Legatee, on behalf of Legacy Northern Beaches
The Hon. Bronwyn Bishop AO, Patron, Pittwater RSL sub-Branch
Guy Glenny representing Jacqui Scruby MP, Member for Pittwater
Bronte Forbes representing Dr Sophie Scamps MP, Member for Mackellar
Command Inspector Maree Kiem, Northern Beaches Area
Councillor Rowie Dillon, representing Mayor Sue Heins
Sam Baker, Communities Manager, representing Pittwater RSL Club Staff
Lorraine Loftus, Treasurer, Pittwater Memorial Women's Bowling Club
Arthur McCarroll OAM, Vice President, Pittwater Memorial Men's Bowling Club
Mark O'Connell, President, Warriewood Surf Life Saving Club
Phil Ashworth, Pittwater RSL Club Director,
representing Mona Vale Station, NSW Fire and Rescue

Mona Vale Public School - Students, Junior and Senior Choirs
Sacred Heart Primary School
St Luke's Grammar Junior School (Bayview Campus)
Narrabeen North Public School
Mater Maria Catholic College, Pittwater High School

Special thanks to
WO2 Shane Fender, 7 Bty 9 Regt RAA, Guest Speaker
Jeff Brown, Parade Commander
Bombardier Matthew Hill, Guard Commander and Catafalque Party 7 Bty 9 Regt RAA
SQN LDR Dr Anna Williams, Vocalist, Dr Harriet Channon, Bugler
Chloe, School Captain 2027, Pittwater High School
Pittwater RSL Club Staff
Maryan Heffernan, Community Photographer
Michael Mannington OAM, Community Photographer
Dale Cohen, Northern Beaches Advocate, Photographer

Remembrance Day

















WO2 Shane Fender, 7 Bty 9 Regt RAA, Guest Speaker



Good morning.

Thank you, Deborah, for the introduction, and in particular your work as President of Pittwater RSL sub-Branch, and all you do to support our local veterans.

Veterans, distinguished guests, serving members of the Australian Defence Force, families, and members of our community. Thank you for joining us on this Remembrance Day.

Today, we gather at the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month.

A moment that has become sacred in the Australian story. A moment when we pause. A moment when we reflect. And above all, a moment when we remember.

At this hour in 1918, 108 years ago, the guns of the Western Front fell silent. After more than four years of industrialised warfare, suffering and loss, the Armistice brought an end to the fighting of the First World War. For millions around the world, it was a moment of relief. For many, it was a moment of grief. And for Australia, it marked the conclusion of a conflict that had profoundly shaped a young nation. More than 416,000 Australians enlisted, from a population of just under 5 million at the time.

Over 60,000 never returned. Tens of thousands more carried physical and emotional scars for the rest of their lives. Today, we honour them.

We remember the young Australians who left farms, factories, offices, schools, and communities much like our own. Many had never travelled beyond their local district. Yet they found themselves fighting on distant battlefields, in places with names that would become forever linked to Australia's history.
Gallipoli. Pozieres. Fromelles. Passchendaele. And Villers-Bretonneux.

For Australians, Villers-Bretonneux holds a special place in our national memory. In April 1918, German forces launched a major offensive that threatened the Allied position, the vital city of Amiens and total collapse. The town of Villers-Bretonneux, situated on a highly strategic ridgeline that overlooks Amiens, was captured the morning of the 24th April. Its loss could have changed the course of the war. The British High Command formally said no to a counterattack it deemed suicidal, the Australians said “Right then, let’s get on with it.”

So, during the night of 24 and 25 April, Australian soldiers mounted their courageous counterattack. The 13th and 15th Brigades on short notice, no artillery and no prior planning had been brought in to plug the gap which was the township of VB. The 13th had to march 13 kilometres from their billets to meet the 10pm deadline and enter directly into the fray. They commenced fighting in darkness, often hand-to-hand, and they succeeded in recapturing the town by dawn of the 25th April, thus halting the German advance.

The victory at Villers-Bretonneux came at a terrible cost, 1464 lives lost to be exact, but it remains one of the Australian Army's most remarkable achievements. It demonstrated courage, determination, leadership and sacrifice in the face of overwhelming challenges.

Today, more than a century later, the people of Villers-Bretonneux continue to remember those Australians who helped secure their freedom. Their gratitude has never faded. Their Village school still bears this sign *"Do not forget Australia."* The message remains simple and powerful. And so today, we honour those who served there, and all those who served in the Great War.

But Remembrance Day is not only about the First World War. It is about every Australian who has worn the uniform of our nation. Every generation. Every conflict. Every operation. Every sacrifice.

We remember those who served in the Second World War, across Europe, the Middle East, North Africa, and the Pacific.

We remember those who served in Korea, Malaya, Borneo, and Vietnam.

We remember those who served in the Gulf War, East Timor, Iraq, and Afghanistan.

We remember all sailors, soldiers, and aviators, who went.

We remember those who returned home.
And those who did not.

Today, we also acknowledge another important chapter in Australia's service to the world. The service of Australian peacekeepers.

For decades, Australians have served not only in war, but in the pursuit of peace.

From Cambodia to Rwanda. From Somalia to Timor-Leste. From the Solomon Islands to countless other missions around the globe.

Australian personnel that have stood between conflict and peace. They have delivered humanitarian assistance. Protected vulnerable communities. Supported democratic institutions. And helped societies rebuild after violence and instability. Their service reminds us that courage is not only found in combat. It is also found in restraint. In compassion. And in the determination to build peace where conflict once existed.

As we remember those who served overseas, we must also remember those whose sacrifice has occurred closer to home. Military service is demanding. It is dangerous. And it carries risks, even in times when our nation is not at war.

This year, Australia has mourned members of the Australian Army who lost their lives during training activities. Their names? WO2 Lachlan Muddle SAS, during parachute training in Nowra, and CPL Brendan Hannam 5/7 RAR from a vehicle rollover during a training Exercise near Darwin. They were preparing themselves to serve their country. Developing the skills required to defend Australia and protect others when called upon.

On those nights, they did not return home to their wife and children. Their deaths remind us that service itself involves sacrifice. Their commitment to duty was absolute. Their dedication to their mates was real. And their loss is felt deeply by families, friends, and the Defence community.

Today, we honour them. And we remember them.

As the years pass, fewer and fewer Australians have a direct connection to those who served in the World Wars. The responsibility of remembrance now rests with us. It rests with our schools.

Our families. Our communities. And with each generation that follows. Because remembrance is more than a ceremony. It is more than a minute's silence. It is a commitment. A commitment to never forget those who gave so much. A commitment to learn their stories. And a commitment to pass those stories on.

We remember because freedom has a cost. We remember because peace cannot be taken for granted. We remember because every name etched on a memorial was a human life filled with hopes, dreams, friendships, and loved ones. And we remember because sacrifice deserves gratitude.

In remembering, we honour values that have long defined Australian service: Courage. Endurance. Mateship. Selflessness. Duty.

These values remain as relevant today as they were in 1918. They guide those who serve our nation now. And they provide an example for all Australians.

As we stand together on this Remembrance Day, let us honour all who have served.

Those who fought.
Those who kept the peace.
Those who trained and prepared.
Those who came home.
Those who did not.
And those who continue to serve today.
May we be worthy of their sacrifice.
May we never forget their service.
And may we always cherish the peace and freedoms they helped secure.

Lest we forget

Thank you


























































































L-R: John West, Deborah Carter, Garry Maurer, Governor of NSW Margaret Beazley AC KC, Gail Dunne OAM and Chris Dunne OAM

RSL NSW State Congress

23 - 25 October 2026, Tamworth NSW

NSW State Congress on Sunday 25 October at Tamworth was a huge success and well attended, including Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley AC KC Governor of New South Wales.

Vince Williams, CSC has been elected unopposed as President of RSL NSW for a three-year term, providing continuity of leadership as the League prepares to celebrate its 110th anniversary in 2027.

Seven Service Members have also been elected to the RSL NSW Board:
Louise Kirkwood, three-year term, first-time elected director
Michael King, three-year term, first-time elected director
Lachlan Stevens, two-year term, first-time elected director
Phillip Bridie, two-year term, re-elected
Glen Babington, one-year term, re-elected
Louise Sullivan, one-year term, re-elected, Chair
Gary Bigg, one-year term, first-time elected director

Australian War Memorial, Canberra

Julie Emerson OAM and Sandra May



Our sub-Branch members, Julie Emerson OAM and Roberta Conroy OAM recently attended The RSL and Services Clubs Association conference in Canberra. Julie is a Board Member.

Also, Julie is Senior Vice President and Roberta is a Director of the Pittwater RSL Club.

At our General Meeting on 04 October 2026, Julie gave a short, but very interesting, talk about their visit to the newly renovated Australian War Memorial. I asked Julie to provide a few words and photos for the Newsletter. *Editor.*

We were lucky enough to be present and formally welcomed to the Last Post Ceremony at the Australian War Memorial. Thanks to the financial assistance provided to the War Memorial by the RSL & Services Clubs Association.

This Ceremony takes place every day at 4.30pm, is open to the public, and is live-streamed on their website. Each daily ceremony highlights one name that appears on the Wall of Remembrance. For every veteran on the wall to be a part of this, it would take a very sobering 286 years to complete!! Sadly, the youngest member on the wall was just 14 years, 9 months old, with the average age being just 23 years! Thankfully over 100,000 school children witness the ceremony every year.

This was followed by the Welcome Cocktail reception in the new Anzac Atrium. A fantastic space which houses a full sized F-111, a tank, a Chinook helicopter and the gun emplacement from HMAS Brisbane. What a fantastic space!

Julie.

The following is part of a speech by Matt Anderson, Director and CEO, AWM.

Story Telling

The AWM do not collect and display objects, they collect and display stories.

Everything in the gallery tells a story. Over 1,000,000 visitors a year.

The Memorial, Museum and Archive has been voted as 9th in the world for the "best things in the world to do".

It all began with Charles EW Bean, who wanted somewhere that friends and families can remember.

A slogan said of Pozières "More densely sown with Australian Sacrifice than any other place on earth".

Dioramas were designed by Charles for inclusion to allow those who "were never there and couldn't possibly imagine" what it was like.

Don't forget to remember the humans who made the story. There are 15 stained glass windows overlooking the tomb of the unknown soldier, emphasising the personal characteristics observed of Australian service men and women.

The new wing of the AWM is made with the same sandstone, from the same quarry as the original building.

It is designed to help us understand the true nature of what we sent our people to do.

"We have lost what they might have become".

The Great Ocean Road is the biggest War Memorial in the world, as it was built by veterans to honour them.

The Great Ocean Road in Victoria was built by approximately 3,000 returned World War I soldiers between 1919 and 1932. It was conceived both as a practical job-creation scheme for veterans and as a dedicated, living war memorial to honour those who served and died in the First World War. *Editor. For more information, control click*

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Ocean_Road









Images: Julie Emerson OAM

General Information

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.

General links: RSL NSW Member Portal is Live! Australian War Memorial; Vet Affairs News; Scamwatch; Australian Dictionary of Biography

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, 0414 470 913 or email pittwaterrslsubbranch@gmail.com

RSL Funeral Tribute: If you know of any service member, regardless of RSL affiliation, our sub-Branch will provide a Tribute for Commonwealth Nations and our Allies.

LEGACY

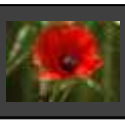
Legacy supports the families of those who gave their life or health for their country. Wendy Ashley is the Legatee for Pittwater. Wendy is happy to speak with anyone or answer any questions about matters involving Legacy.

To contact Wendy, please email: pittwaterrslsubbranch@gmail.com and your email will be directed to her office.



The 'Grateful Nation' Certificate was awarded posthumously to Peter Carrodus who served in the Vietnam War. Peter passed on 26 July 2018.

Peter's brother, Michael, accepted this award on 06 September 2026, with Inese.



VALE

LEST WE FORGET

We sadly report the passing of our sub-Branch Members

George Parsons
Service No. 39618, Army

B: 23 May 1949
D: 08 September 2026
Funeral: 22 September 2026

Cliff Gravenor
Service No. 2/729938, Army

B: 02 September 1935
D: 22 October 2026
Funeral: 11 November 2026

George's funeral was well attended in the War Vets Chapel.

Your sub-Branch put $400 over the bar for the Wake.

George's grandson, Kai Cogan, was the Bugler for The Last Post and Rouse.

The sub-Branch Funeral Tribute was prepared by Deborah and Sandra.

George's family were very appreciative of the sub-Branch's involvement.



Join us as our guest at the next **Coffee Catch-Up Club** for sub-Branch members.
We will meet on **Monday 16 November** at 10:30am in Potter's Café, in the Club.

ON THE HORIZON **December** (Subject to change)

Sunday 06 December	10:30 am	General Meeting	Mainsail Room
Sunday 06 December	12:00 pm	Christmas Lunch	Glasshouse



Executive Committee

Deborah Carter	President, Welfare Officer	0414 470 913
Terry Jones	Vice President	0466 892 771
Wayne Simmons	Vice President	0449 921 360
Sandra May	Secretary, Newsletter Editor	0417 944 244
Gail Dunne OAM	Treasurer	0439 491 155

Office: Monday (10:00 - 16:30)
Email: pittwaterrslsubbranch@gmail.com
Website: https://www.pittwaterrsl.com.au/sub-branch

The sub-Branch office is located in the RSL Club, near reception.
If urgent, please call any member of the Executive.



Pittwater RSL sub-Branch

Tribute to

George Lindsay Parsons

23 May 1949 - 08 September 2026
Funeral 22 September 2026

Service No. 39618
Australian Regular Army Supplement (0)
11 September 1967 - 10 September 1988
Clerk Administration
Warrant Officer Class Two
Royal Australian Army Medical Corps

Honours and Medals:
Australian Active Service Medal 1945-75 with Clasp 'Vietnam'
Vietnam Medal
Defence Force Service Medal with First Clasp
Australian Defence Medal
The Centenary Medal (2001)
Returned from Active Service Badge (RAS)

After 21 years of Military Service in the Australian Regular Army, I have many memorable moments.

In 1971, I was posted from 1st Australian Field Hospital Vietnam as a Corporal, then posted to 10 Field Ambulance in Hobart and promoted to Sgt.

During 5 years in Tasmania I was Treasurer of the Sgt's Mess and did tours on the HMAS Bass and the USS Enterprise – which was spectacular.

I attended the first Military Tattoo performed outside of Edinburgh, in Hobart. The rehearsals were held immediately next door to our Married Quarters (absolute bliss)!

In later years I moved to Sydney as a Warrant Officer Class 2, and was invited onboard the HMY Britannia for cocktails and a tour of the yacht, which was amazing.

I was also invited to a garden party at Government House Sydney (which is another story!) and spent a day onboard an Oberon Class Submarine.

The biggest highlight of my career was being chosen to be the Sergeant At Arms for the Cenotaph at Martin Place. I found the weeks of preparation, training the troops, to be very rewarding.

George joined the Pittwater RSL sub-Branch on 08 April 2008. He served our sub-Branch as Vice President 23 April 2013 - 12 February 2015. He was President 12 February 2015 - 16 December 2015. Sadly, George chose to resign due to ill health.

Lest We Forget



Recruit Training Battalion
1967 at Kapooka, NSW



In 2015, President,
Pittwater, RSL sub-Branch

George's Tribute compiled by Deborah Carter, President, and Sandra May, Hon. Secretary