

July 2026 - Number 53

Pittwater RSL sub-Branch
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The next Newsletter will be
published in October 2026.



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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The Defence of Sydney, Friday 05 June, was a spectacular day. See page 2 for details and photographs.

Congratulations to Darren Crabb for his outstanding interview with Alison Guesdon, Pittwater Online News, 1-30 June 2026, Issue 655. This was shared with all sub-Branch members, and many members responded positively.

Beryl Clarke and WW2 Veteran Brian Heal were also interviewed by Alison Guesdon for future Profiles of the Week. We will advise everyone of their appearance date.

Lovely Beryl Clarke celebrated her 95th birthday on Sunday 21 June. Please see Sandra's report on page 4 of this newsletter.

On Tuesday 23 June, I delivered the paperwork to Jacqui Scruby's office regarding the 95th birthday card for Beryl Clarke. The card arrived this week.

At our Sunday 02 August general meeting, we will be having a presentation from Occupational Therapist, Johanna Castle. Joh will update members on what home care services and modifications are available.

Sunday 16 August we will be commemorating Vietnam Veterans Day at Palm Beach RSL Club with a march and service, followed by lunch. (See last page of this newsletter.) We would like a photograph of all our Vietnam Veterans in service during Vietnam, and a more recent photo preferably wearing medals to be added to a slide show which will be shown on Sunday 16 August at Palm Beach RSL Club.

Tuesday 18 August is Long Tan Day. It is 60 years since the battle of Long Tan. We will keep you informed with all dates, especially Palm Beach RSL Club.

On Tuesday 18 August, Pittwater RSL sub-Branch will be hosting NBDC. Acting President Vince Williams CSC will be attending. This will be a special occasion as it is Long Tan Day.

Legacy Day is the 31 August and Wendy Ashley, our Legatee, will be bringing in badges at the 02 August and 06 September General Meetings. Please

bring cash only if you wish to purchase. RSL NSW has appointed a new CEO Michael 'Mick' Frewen, GAICD. Mick has a strong military and service background, and has been the CEO of CareFlight since 2018. Please see their email on 01 July at 1:30pm for his profile.

Please also read RSL NSW email of 01 July at 09:00am regarding Veteran's Compensations.

On Wednesday 15 July at 3:00pm, there is an online general meeting with RSL NSW where your Delegate (myself) and Alternate Delegate Chris Dunne OAM will be voting on your behalf. Narrabeen sub-Branch will also be in attendance at the Pittwater RSL sub-Branch (as they no longer have an office).



Earlier this year, I nominated Deborah in the Dr Sophie Scamps Mackellar Volunteer Awards 2026.

The Awards night was held on Tuesday, 19 May 2026 at the Warriewood Community Centre.

A Certificate of Appreciation for Australian Volunteers was presented to Deborah, President, Pittwater RSL sub-Branch. The Certificate thanked Deborah for her commitment and dedication.

Dr Scamps stated that It was wonderful to hear about all of the amazing work happening in the community.

Congratulations, Deborah. Sandra



Lest We Forget
Regards,

Deborah Carter

Deborah Carter
President

84th Anniversary Defence of Sydney Commemorative Service - Friday 05 June 2026

The annual commemoration of the night World War 2 came to Sydney Harbour. HMAS Kuttabul, was sunk while docked at Garden Island during the Japanese Midget Submarine attack on Sydney Harbour at 2:30am on 01 June 1942. Twenty-one sailors died.

The Australia Remembers Committee - Northern Beaches and North Shore - Patron, James Griffin MP and Chairman Colonel John Platt, CSC (Retd). Deborah Carter is also on the Committee. This year, the Special Guest Speaker was Rear Admiral Chris Smith, AM, CSM, RAN Commander Australian Fleet (COMAUSFLT). The service was held at North Head, Manly.



Pittwater sub-Branch members attending this year were Roberta Conroy OAM, Darren Crabb, Sandra May, Gail and Chris Dunne OAM, Terry Jones, Inese and Michael Carrodus, and John Chambers who laid a wreath on behalf of the Submariners Association. Community Photographers were Michael Mannington OAM and Maryan 'Heffie' Heffernan. Dale Cohen, Editor, Northern Beaches Advocate, all are sub-Branch members too.



Our former sub-Branch member, **the Late Gwenyth Sneesby** (1924 - 2025) served in the Australian Navy. After basic training at HMAS Penguin, Gwen spent the next three years at Bradley's Head Degaussing Range. Gwen was Lead Writer, one of eight WRANS who operated the instruments used for the testing of the ship's Magnetic Field; essential for the Electrical Officers to calculate settings required to repel magnetic mines.

Fatefully, Gwen happened to be off duty when HMAS Kuttabul was sunk.

On Friday 31 May 2019, Deborah Carter and WW2 Veteran, Living Treasure, Gwenyth Sneesby attended the Defence of Sydney Commemoration at North Head. At this Commemoration in 2019, Gwenyth was the only Veteran who had actually served on the Kuttabul and, as a result, had her photograph taken with former Prime Minister Tony Abbott.



Dorothy Clark. Congratulations, Life Member of the Pittwater RSL Club.

Earlier this year, Deborah nominated Mrs. Dorothy Yvonne Clark for Life Membership of Pittwater RSL Club Ltd.

Dorothy has been a Club member since 1995, first joining with her husband, Norm (Nobby) Clark.

Since 1997, Dorothy has managed wreath handling to all VIPs at all the sub-Branch's Commemorative Services.

Dorothy was also on the Executive of the Women's Auxiliary until 2007 when it disbanded. The Auxiliary also cooked breakfasts for the ANZAC Day Dawn Service, and the Directors handed out the breakfasts. In her Auxiliary capacity, Dorothy also assisted in patient welfare in the Ryde Mental Health Nursing Home.

Dorothy was a Women's Bowler. Every Wednesday and Friday nights, and Sunday lunch, she would sell tickets

for the Club's Meat Raffle, which raised funds for the Women's Bowling Club.

Recently, Dorothy received an Award from Jacqui Scruby MP from the office of Pittwater in the "Local Senior Volunteer Awards". The celebration was held at Narrabeen Beach Surf Life Saving Club. Dorothy was supported by ten family members and friends for this presentation.

At the Pittwater RSL Club's AGM on Sunday 24 May 2026, it was unanimously voted that Life Membership of the Club be awarded to Dorothy. She was overwhelmed.

Dorothy's name has now been added to the Life Membership Board. This is located just before you enter the sub-Branch office.



New Life Member,
Dorothy Clark, seated.

L-R:
Life Member, Beryl Clarke,
Coral Cicolini, Kerin McCoy,
Deborah Carter

Image: Heffie Heffernan,
Community Photographer

This is a close up of the WW2 Poppy Medallion awarded to a special Pittwater RSL sub-Branch member.
See next page for details.





**Beryl Clarke,
Affiliate Member**

Interviewed by Sandra May

I was born Beryl Byron at Cottage Hospital in Collaroy on 21 June 1931. My first home was at 73 Park Street, Mona Vale for many years. I then moved to around the corner in Kunari Place. I now reside in Darley House.

My father, Richard Paul Byron was born near a fallen tree near Bungenore, as his birth certificate states. Paul, as he was known, was in the Light Horse Regiment in WW1. He met Ida Johnson at a picnic spot west of the Mona Vale Cemetery, known as Dead Horse Hill. Ida was a midwife in the area, and they were married soon after meeting. They had nine children between 1919 and 1931. I was the youngest child.

My four brothers, Frank (AKA Johnny), Neil (Ned), Roy (Tichy), and the youngest Henry, all served and fought in the Australian Army during WW2. My eldest sister, Bernice, was in the Australian Women's Army Service (AWAS) during WW2. They all came home alive, albeit with varying forms of PTSD.

Frank and Roy were prisoners in Changi for about four years, and Roy was also forced to work on the Thai-Burma Railway.

Collectively, my father and my four brothers worked for the Warringah Council for a combined total of 130 years.

My first job at age 16 years was at Barnes Leather factory in Dee Why making the iconic military watch bands with covers for the Forces.

My first husband, Alan Grant, and I had two sons, Paul and Glenn. My second husband was Harold Clarke, and we had one son, Robert. Harold was a member of the Pittwater RSL Club, and was often called 'H'. He coached the RSL junior boys in Cricket and Rugby League.

I have been a member of the Pittwater RSL Club for many years, but only joined the sub-Branch as an Affiliate in December 2017. I volunteered at the Pittwater Day Club from the beginning in 1983; we made all the sandwiches for lunch, and sold raffle tickets.

I was a founding member of the former Women's Auxiliary. The Auxiliary performed shows for the Pittwater RSL Club and we were invited to perform at Legacy House, and the War Vets at Collaroy. In the good ol' days the Women's Auxiliary also prepared all the meals for ANZAC Day. From about 1990, I volunteered at the Mona Vale Hospital kiosk, and because of health reasons, I had to end my service in early 2000.

For years, Wal Williams fought to get the Mona Vale War Memorial restored. I supported Wal quite strongly, and wrote to the Manly Daily in praise of what he was trying to achieve.

This restoration was finally installed at Village Park, corner of Pittwater and Barrenjoey, on ANZAC Day, 25 April 1996.

On Sunday 21 June, Beryl Clarke celebrated her 95th birthday. Deborah Carter, Sandra May, Darren Crabb, Dorothy Clark and Kerin McCoy visited Beryl in Darley House where she now resides.

Beryl was inundated with friends, calls, cards and flowers!



On Tuesday 23 June, Deborah Carter presented Beryl with a WW2 Poppy Medallion recognising her four brothers' service, as well as her sister, Bernice, who was an AWAS.



Beryl received four special birthday cards from the Prime Minister of Australia, Premier of NSW, Dr Sophie Scamps MP and Jacqui Scruby MP.



09 Jul 1941	Damour taken. Damour was the main military base and administrative centre for the Vichy French forces in Syria. The Australian victory at Damour opened the way to Beirut and led the Vichy French to seek an armistice.	04 Aug 1900	Battle of Elands River. Bushmen from five Australian colonies and other British Empire troops became involved in the defence of a staging post in Western Transvaal against a force of between 2,000–3,000 Boers. The siege lasted two weeks before the Boers withdrew in the face of overwhelming British reinforcements.
19 Jul 1940	HMAS Sydney sinks the Bartolomeo Colleoni. HMAS Sydney sinks the Italian cruiser Bartolomeo Colleoni in the battle of Cape Spada off Crete.	09 Aug 1915	Corporal A.S. Burton, VC , 7th Battalion, originally from Kyneton, Victoria, wins the Victoria Cross at Lone Pine, Gallipoli. See his profile below.
23 Jul 1916	Battle of Pozieres begins. Pozieres was the first protracted battle for the Australians on the Western Front. Part of the Somme battlefield Pozières was the scene of several major attacks by the Australians between 23 July and 5 August 1916. More than 12,000 Australians became casualties in the fighting at Pozières.	21 Aug 1915	Last major fighting on Gallipoli takes place at Hill 60. The fighting at Hill 60 on 21 and 27 August was the last major action of the Gallipoli campaign. The operations at Hill 60 were intended to widen and strengthen the corridor that connected the newly landed British force at Suvla Bay with the beach-head at Anzac.
04 Sep 1943	9th Division land at Lae, New Guinea. Lae was the focus of a major land, sea, and air operation by Australian and American forces. Fighting lasted until 16 September, when the enriched Japanese garrison were either killed, captured, or escaped.		
21 Sep 1914	German New Guinea surrenders. The former German New Guinea was placed under a military government until 1921, when Australia received a mandate from the League of Nations to govern the country.		
28 Sep 1950	3rd Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment arrives in Korea. The Battalion was immediately committed to the United Nation forces' northward advance against the retreating North Koreans.		

Alexander Stewart Burton (1893–1915)

Alexander Stewart Burton (1893-1915), soldier, was born on 20 January 1893 at Kyneton, Victoria, son of Alfred Edward Burton, grocer, and his wife Isabella, née Briggs, both Victorian-born. The family moved to Euroa and, after attending the state school, Burton followed his father into the firm of A. Miller & Co., working in the ironmongery department. He was a chorister in the Euroa Presbyterian Church, a member of the town band, and was active in sport. In 1911 he began his period of compulsory military service.

On 18 August 1914 Burton enlisted in the 7th Battalion, Australian Imperial Force, and embarked for Egypt in October. On 4 April 1915 his battalion embarked for Lemnos and on the 25th took part in the landing at Anzac. Burton, who was ill with a throat infection, watched the landing from a hospital ship but a week later he was in the trenches. The 7th Battalion was then fighting near 400 Plateau. On 5 May it left Anzac beach to participate in the attack on Krithia, then returned to serve at Monash Valley and Steele's Post. Burton was slightly wounded in action. In July he was promoted lance corporal for having volunteered for and taken part in a dangerous operation; he was later promoted corporal.

Burton was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross for conspicuous bravery in the trenches at Lone Pine on 9 August 1915. Early that morning the Turks launched a

strong counter-attack on a newly captured trench held by Burton, a personal friend Lieutenant F. H. Tubb, [Corporal W. Dunstan](#) and a few others. The Turks advanced up a gap and blew in the sandbag barricade but Burton, Tubb and Dunstan repulsed them and rebuilt it. Supported by strong bombing parties, the enemy twice more destroyed the barricade but were driven off and the barricade was rebuilt. Burton was killed by a bomb while building up the parapet. Tubb and Dunstan were also awarded the Victoria Cross. Burton's award was gazetted on 15 October and on 28 January 1916 he was mentioned in dispatches.

His kind and manly nature had won him many friends; even before Lone Pine he was frequently mentioned in soldiers' letters for various daring acts. He has no known grave, but his name is commemorated on the Lone Pine Memorial, Gallipoli, and by an oak tree and bridge at Euroa. In 1967 his family presented his V.C. to the Australian War Memorial. He was unmarried.

<https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/burton-alexander-stewart-5437>



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.

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

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.

General links: [RSL NSW](#) - Member Portal is Live! [Australian War Memorial](#); [Vet Affairs News](#); [Scamwatch](#)



Best wishes to all Members celebrating a Birthday!

JULY

Tom Loricco	08
Andrew Thomson-Ko	09
Dorothy Clark	20
Jim Colbeck	21
Deborah Carter	23
John Kaye	25

AUGUST

Sam Steel	05
Walter Nicholls	14
Brian Heal	16
Geoffrey Jones	16
Kim Brownlie	26
Jason Becker	27
Bernard O'Neill	27
Chris Dunne OAM	31

SEPTEMBER

Cliff Gravenor	02
Michael Mannington OAM	16
Darren Crabb	17
Robert Crowe	18
Gail Dunne OAM	21
Ryan Ockerby	21
Roberta Conroy OAM	22

ON THE HORIZON July, August, September (Subject to change)

Sunday 05 July	10:30 am	General Meeting	Mainsail Room
Sunday 02 August	10:30 am	General Meeting	Mainsail Room
Sunday 16 August	11:00 am	Vietnam Veteran's Day	Palm Beach RSL Club
Sunday 06 September	10:30 am	General Meeting	Mainsail Room
<i>Following to be confirmed...</i>			
Sunday 13 September	11:00 am	Submariners Association	AE1 Sub-Base Playtup



Executive Committee

Deborah Carter	President, Welfare Officer	0414 470 913
Terry Jones	Vice President	0466 892 771
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.



RSL NSW
Northern Beaches District Council

**VIETNAM
VETERANS' DAY**

60th Anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan

You are warmly invited to join us

Where

Club Palm Beach
1087 Barrenjoey Road, Palm Beach

Date

Sunday 16 August 2026

Time

10:45am March - Form up at Palm Beach Cellars
11:00am Service
12:00pm Drinks
12:30pm Sit down Lunch

Cost

\$35 per person *includes meal, selected beer, wine and soft drinks
(Generously subsidised by Narrabeen RSL sub-Branch)

RSVP

Sharon Green
subbranch@clubpalmbeach.com.au
By 2 August 2026

Please include dietary requirements and advise if you are laying a wreath or book.
*We thank Narrabeen RSL sub-Branch for subsidising \$50 per person.

Payment

Palm Beach RSL sub-Branch
BSB: 062108
Acct: 10205791
Reference: Your name