

# *Keeping in Touch*

**AUTUMN EDITION 2018**



**217 ACU CATAFALQUE PARTY**

**Mefloquine (Malaria Medication) and its affectects on ADF staff  
Pages 8 to 11**

**The original commencement of the Last Post ~ 20 ~**

**Fish Rot at the Head ~ Pages 22 to 25**



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# *Keeping in Touch*

## *From the president's desk...*

Firstly I would like to apologise for this issue being a month late in print due to ANZAC events and other issues that arose during March.

This years ANZAC services were severely interrupted by the weather. What with the rain starting to fall half way through the Dawn Service and it only got heavier at the end. Then the Lake Macquarie ANZAC Service which commenced at 9.00am at Ryhope started off fine but alas again half way through it started to sprinkle and by the end it was pouring. The Service at Ryhope concluded about 10.00am so I contacted Toronto to check on the weather. It was decided that we would leave that decision until 10.30am to 10.45am when I arrived back in Toronto, as to whether it would go ahead.

On arrival in Toronto we checked the weather forecast and could see it travelling across the lake towards us, and as you looked down the Boulevard across the Lake the rain could be seen approaching at a great rate of knots.

So, it was decided that the service was to be held within the Diggers Club. The club was packed to overflowing for the service however; all appeared to go well.

Due to the amount of people who attended, we are setting up new contingency plans for any future commemoration. It will not be held in the Diggers Club should there be inclement weather. However on this occasion, the situation was forced upon us at very short notice and again I can only but apologise for any situation that arose to the people who attended the club.

I would like to thank Cathy Handcock, CEO of the Toronto Diggers for allowing us to use the club and all who attended and made the best of things.

The 217 Army Cadet Unit were excellent as usual and adapted to the main service. They had already been to the Dawn Service and the one at Lake Macquarie Memorial Gardens and we all managed to get rained on each time.

The main service was Largely run by the senior students from St. Pauls High School, Charlton Christian College and Toronto High School who participated and played a major part in the entire service.

I also have a special mention for Daniel Bainbridge, a Year 12 Student from Toronto High, who read out that beautiful poem written by her Great Grandfather to his wife in WW2. (It was sad to hear that he died in the war and never returned). As this edition is a month late the Poem is published in this edition of Keeping In Touch on pages 27 and 28.

The Moari's were excellent as usual finishing with the Haka. There were quite a lot of wide eyed children sitting on the floor just in front of them whilst this was going on but none of them moved. I would also like to thank the parents for letting the young children participate and also the teachers who attended and kept some of them in check. All in all it went very well. Thanks to Catherine Evans for leading us in song again this year and also Reverend Julie for being her usual self.

### ***The Price of Liberty is Eternal Vigilance***

We can only hope and pray that our Defence Force Personnel can keep up the good work they undertake on behalf of every Australian in aiding others and keeping this country safe, as many before them have done. Some paying the supreme sacrifice. We hope whilst they are serving us in these times of terrorism they are kept safe and able come home to their loved one un-

**A bookseller conducting a market survey asked a woman, "Which book has helped you most in your life?" She replied, "My husband's cheque book."**

**A prospective client in a book store enquired, "Even after 70 years, you still call your wife 'Darling', 'Honey' and 'Love'. What's the secret?" The old man replied, "I've forgotten her bloody name and I'm too scared to ask."**

**A man in hell asked the Devil, "Can I call my wife?" After making the call he asked how much he had to pay. The Devil replied, "Nothing; in-house calls are free."**

**The wife said, "I wish I was a newspaper, so I'd be in your hands each day." The husband replied, "I wish that you were a newspaper too so I would get a new one every day."**



Maihe TAWA ( known as Marsh) was a Ex New Zealand Defence ( Army) and a member of the Toronto RSL for about the past 4 years. He served his country of birth in Borneo, Malaya and 2 tours of Vietnam. He served his country well whilst a member of this sub-Branch representing New Zealand in all commemorations that were run by us.

He had recently moved to Queensland as most of his family are living there including his grand-children. He will be sadly missed, he was a Maori elder and a proud brother from across the sea to us here in Toronto.

***Last Post For***

**The following members & comrades**

**Allen James ANDREWS ~ ARMY ~ 27/01/2018**

**John WATERS ~ ARMY ~ 15/02/2018**

**Harold A WOODWARD ~ MERCHANT NAVY BRITISH 24/02/18**

**James (Jim) HUNSTONE ~ ARMY ~ 28/02/2018**

**Michael John HAINING ~ RAN ~ 05/03/2018**

*Lest we forget*



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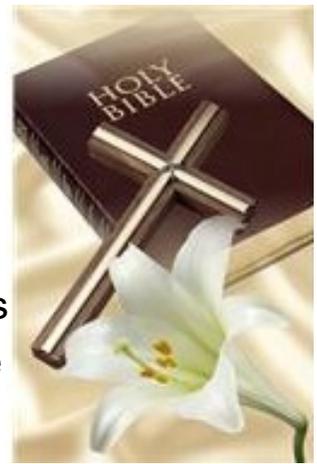
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# CHAPLAINS CORNER

## Keeping in Touch May 2018

As you know, Anzac Day is a public holiday. Did you know that the word **'holiday'** comes from an Old English word *Haligdaeg* meaning, holy+day? So this holiday, Anzac Day, is a holy day; a holy day set aside to solemnly remember those who went to war to fight for freedom.



Did you also know that the word **'holy'** doesn't primarily mean someone or something to good to be true? Rather it means someone or something that has been set aside for God's purposes... So, I'm suggesting that this holiday - Anzac Day - is a day set aside for God's purposes.

Now what might those purpose be? What is it that God requires of us?

In the bible a man named Micah, a prophet, answered that question this way, he wrote:

*What does the Lord require of you? But to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? Micah 6:8*

So how do we translate our commemorations of Anzac Day to meet with God's purposes of justice, kindness and humility?

I would suggest that firstly as we remember all those killed and injured in war; and as we remember the sacrifices of life, health, relationships, peace of mind, livelihood, home and family with gratitude and love, we also reflect on the awfulness, the death, destruction, futility and horror of war. And secondly, as we remember those things, we also reflect on the absence of justice, kindness and humility that brought these awful times to the world.

Yours in Christ's service.

*Rev. Julie*



## JOEL FITZGIBBON MP KEEPING IN TOUCH COLUMN

Throughout 2017 we continued to commemorate the Centenary of ANZAC and the courage, deeds and sacrifices of our troops during WWI.

During 2018 we have continued to commemorate the Centenary of a number of important events including those battles fought in the air, the breaking of the Hindenburg Line, the arrival of the Americans, and of course, the Armistice.

I again enjoyed and was honoured to join our Veterans and Sub Branch Members on ANZAC Day as we solemnly marked these special events in the history of our Nation. As we did so, we will remember those currently serving. Lest We Forget.

My office can assist you with Veterans' Affairs matters and can also provide a free Veterans' Information Kit which contains useful information about payments and services available to Veterans and their families. Please don't hesitate to contact my office on 49911022 to speak with a member of my team or email [joel.fitzgibbon.mp@aph.gov.au](mailto:joel.fitzgibbon.mp@aph.gov.au).

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# MEFLOQUINE

## Concerns have been raised about links between mefloquine and mental health conditions

### *What is mefloquine?*

Mefloquine (also known as the trade name Lariam) is one of three anti malarial medications approved by the Therapeutic Goods Administration for malaria prevention in our region. The ADF uses mefloquine as a third line agent and is only used when members are unable to tolerate the alternatives.

Mefloquine may not be suitable for individuals with particular medical conditions or those taking some other medications. In particular, mefloquine should not be taken for prevention by people who have, or have had, a psychiatric condition, seizures, kidney disease or liver disease.

For these reasons, Defence health policy requires ADF members be properly informed of the potential side-effects of mefloquine and the drug may only be prescribed by a qualified medical practitioner after the member has provided their informed consent.

Mefloquine can cause psychiatric symptoms in some people, including disturbing sleep, anxiety, paranoia, depression, hallucinations and psychosis. Dizziness and loss of balance, have also been reported as side effects from the use of mefloquine. For this reason, the medication is not used in ADF aircrew.

Mefloquine is commonly used in the broader Australian community for the prevention of malaria in travellers. Mefloquine is also included on the World Health Organisation List of Essential Medicines for both the prevention and treatment of malaria.

Further information is available at

[www.defence.gov.au/Health/HealthPortal/Malaria/](http://www.defence.gov.au/Health/HealthPortal/Malaria/)

### *How many people have been given mefloquine?*

The ADF's use of mefloquine is conservative compared to its use in other militaries around the world and in the civilian population.

The vast majority of ADF members have never been prescribed mefloquine. Records show that between July 2000 and January 2018, less than 2,000 ADF personnel were prescribed mefloquine. Most of these prescriptions were as part of the ADF trials in East Timor from 2000-2002 (a total of 1,319 soldiers).

It is far more commonly prescribed across the general community, with an estimated 11,457 civilian prescriptions for mefloquine in 2016 alone.

Statistics are available from the 'Malaria, mefloquine and the ADF' website.

### ***What concerns have been raised?***

Concerns have been raised about the conduct of the ADF trials of mefloquine in East Timor. The Inspector General ADF (IGADF), an independent and impartial statutory authority, examined a number of allegations relating to this matter.

The IGADF report found that the trials were conducted ethically and in compliance with National Health and Medical Research Council Guidelines for the conduct of human research. It also found that the trials were voluntary and participants were informed about possible side effects. This was consistent with relevant product and consumer medicine information available at the time.

Further information is available at

[www.defence.gov.au/Health/HealthPortal/Malaria/AMI/research/](http://www.defence.gov.au/Health/HealthPortal/Malaria/AMI/research/).

Concerns have also been raised that taking mefloquine causes chemically-acquired brain injury.

website, [www.defence.gov.au/HealthPortal/Malaria/](http://www.defence.gov.au/HealthPortal/Malaria/).

## **Repatriation Medical Authority, Statements of Principles and the Spreiacist Medical Review Council.**

### ***What is the Repatriation Medical Authority? (RMA)***

The RMA is an independent statutory authority which is entirely separate from the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA).

The RMA is responsible for determining Statements of Principals (SoPs) for any disease, injury or death that could be related to military service, based on sound medical-scientific evidence.

Further information is available on the RMA website: [www.rma.gov.au](http://www.rma.gov.au)

### ***What are Statements of Principles (SoPs)?***

Serving and ex-serving ADF members can claim compensation at any time for medical conditions they believe are related to their service.

For DVA to accept liability for compensation there has to be a causal link determined between the person's service and their medical condition.

Under the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* and the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004*, the potential link between a medical condition and service is assessed using SoPs.

Together, mefloquine and tafenoquine are included as a potential causal factor in SoPs for 15 conditions. Of these, mefloquine is covered by 14 SoPs and tafenoquine is covered by six SoPs.

Condition	Anti-malarial Medication
Anxiety disorder	Mefloquine
Bipolar disorder	Mefloquine
Depressive disorder	Mefloquine
Heart block	Mefloquine
Myasthenia gravis	Mefloquine
Peripheral neuropathy	Mefloquine
Schizophrenia	Mefloquine
Suicide and attempted sui-	Mefloquine
Trigeminal neuropathy	Mefloquine
Epileptic seizure	Mefloquine and Tafenoquine
Acquired cataract	Mefloquine and Tafenoquine
Sensorineural hearing loss	Mefloquine and Tafenoquine
Tinnitus	Mefloquine and Tafenoquine
Psoriasis	Mefloquine and Tafenoquine
Methaemoglobinaemia	Tafenoquine

### *What did the RMA investigate?*

The RMA investigated whether SoPs may be determined in respect of 'chemically-acquired brain injury caused by mefloquine, tafenoquine or primaquine.'

Mefloquine, tafenoquine and primaquine belong to the chemical class of drugs known as quinolines.

The RMA decided that there is insufficient sound medical scientific evidence that exposure to these pharmaceuticals causes acquired brain injury.

For these reasons, the RMA decided that it does not propose to make SoPs in relation to chemically-acquired brain injury caused by mefloquine, tafenoquine and primaquine.

The report can be accessed at [www.rma.gov.au/assets/Other/RMA-Statement-of-reasons-chemically-acquired-brain-injury-29-August-2017.pdf](http://www.rma.gov.au/assets/Other/RMA-Statement-of-reasons-chemically-acquired-brain-injury-29-August-2017.pdf).

This decision means that DVA will not be able to accept claims for this specific condition, or the same condition described differently. However, it is important to note that DVA claims staff will still investigate to determine whether another diagnosis may be appropriate and whether it is possible to accept the claim in accordance with that diagnosis.

The SMRC is an independent statutory body responsible to the Minister for Veterans' Affairs.

On request from an eligible person or organisation, the SMRC can review decisions of the RMA.

The SMRC is conducting an independent review into the RMA's decision not to issue SoPs for chemically-acquired brain injury. Submissions to the SMRC review closed on 9 February 2018. The SMRC will review the submissions and the materials that were considered by the RMA, to determine whether the sound medical-scientific evidence supports or does not support developing SoPs for this condition.

Further information on the SMRC is available from [www.smrc.gov.au](http://www.smrc.gov.au). Information on the SMRC's review process is available at [www.smrc.gov.au/sites/default/files/files/documents/handbook.pdf](http://www.smrc.gov.au/sites/default/files/files/documents/handbook.pdf).

### ***What has been or is being done?***

DVA and Defence provide information and support to those who are concerned about mefloquine use.

Defence has established a dedicated email address ([adf.malaria@defence.gov.au](mailto:adf.malaria@defence.gov.au)) and the 'Malaria, mefloquine and the ADF' information portal, [www.defence.gov.au/Health/HealthPortal/Malaria/](http://www.defence.gov.au/Health/HealthPortal/Malaria/).

Defence has released specific clinical guidelines to assist Defence health practitioners and these have been published on the Defence website.

DVA has established a dedicated support team to help with mefloquine-related claims, and provides information about health and support services and how to access them on its website.

DVA, in collaboration with the RMA and the Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service (VVCS), ran an outreach program in Townsville in December 2016. The program provided serving and ex-serving ADF members who were prescribed mefloquine with easy access to information and face-to-face assistance. Information sessions covered DVA services, non-liability health care, claims processing, VVCS, and mental health resources. The material presented at the Townsville outreach program is available on the DVA website, [www.dva.gov.au/mefloquine](http://www.dva.gov.au/mefloquine).

DVA's Principal Medical Adviser wrote to general practitioners to bring their attention to information that may assist their patients who have taken mefloquine. DVA and Defence are currently considering whether there is scope for research that will build on the body of evidence already established in relation to the effects of anti-malarial medications.

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# **DATES TO REMEMBER**

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**Monday ~ 14/05/18 ~ Monthly Meeting at 10.00am**

**Monday ~ 18/06/18 ~ Monthly Meeting at 10.00am**

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# KOOKIES MORSELS

## *Beef Fillet with Warm Roasted Vegetable and Nut Salad*

- 1 bunch baby carrots trimmed and peeled (250g).
- 1 parsnip trimmed and peeled, cut into lengths (200g)
- 2 baby beetroot, (250g) scrubbed, peeled and cut into wedges.
- ½ cup roughly chopped macadamia nuts.
- ½ cup roughly chopped peeled chestnuts.
- ¼ cup roughly chopped dried figs
- 4 lean beef fillet steaks, trimmed (160g to 200g each)
- 100g baby spinach leaves.
- 1 tablespoon sherry vinegar.

Preheat oven to 180C.

Place the vegetables in a baking tray lined with non-stick baking paper and spray with cooking oil. Bake for 20 minutes then add nuts and figs. Continue cooking for 10 minutes until tender and golden. Remove from oven and keep warm.

Grill steaks on a stove top or pan fry to your liking. Toss the warm vegetables with spinach leaves and vinegar and serve with the steak.

**SERVES 4 ~ CUT EVERYTHING IN HALF FOR TWO PEOPLE**

*Bon appetit*

\* \* \* \* \*

## *Shakshuka*

*Middle Eastern typical eggs brekky or you could serve it for lunch or dinner*

- Olive or Canola oil spray.
- Medium onion. peeled and chopped.
- 2 cloves garlic, peeled and chopped.
- 200g mushrooms, sliced. 1 medium red capsicum, seeded and diced.
- 440g can salt reduced baked beans.



# 60 years together

Their three kids, all successful, agreed to a Sunday dinner in their parents honour.

"Happy Anniversary Mom and Dad," gushed Son No. 1.

'Sorry I'm running late. I had an emergency at the hospital

with a patient, you know how it is, and I didn't have time

to get you a gift." "Not to worry," said the father. "Important thing is we're all together today."

Son No. 2 arrived. "You and Mom look great. Dad, I just

flew in from Montreal between depositions and didn't

have time to shop for you." "It's nothing," said the father. "We're glad you were able to come."

Just then the daughter arrived "Hello and happy anniversary!

Sorry, but my boss is sending me out of town and I was really

busy packing so I didn't have time to get you anything."

After they had finished dessert, the father said, "There's something your mother and I have wanted to tell you for a long time.

You see, we were really poor, but we managed to send each of you to college.

That's why we are so poor. Through the years your mother and I knew we loved each other very much, but we just never found the time to get married."



The three children gasped and said, "WHAT? You mean we're bast\*\*ds?"

"Yep," said the father, "Cheap ones, too. ... ."

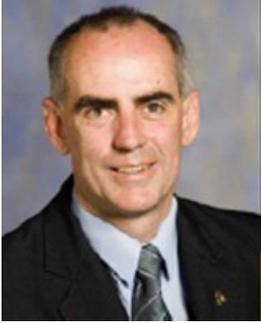
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## PRICELINE PHARMACY

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# Greg Piper MP

## Member for Lake Macquarie



I'm pleased to advise that applications for grants from the Community War Memorials Fund (CWMF) are now open.

These grants are worth up to \$10,000 and can be used for the conservation, repair or protection of a community war memorial. This grants program commemorates the Anzac Legacy and ensures that people have a place to commemorate the service and sacrifice of our service men and women in their local area.

Applicants have until Anzac Day to apply for a grant, and I encourage all local sub-branches to do so. More information, including application forms and funding criteria, can be found at [www.veterans.nsw.gov.au](http://www.veterans.nsw.gov.au)

As ANZAC Day approaches, my staff and I will endeavour to attend many functions and commemorations throughout the electorate. I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible.

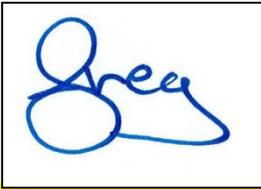
We will remember them.

In other local news, applications for [Community Building Partnership](#) (CBP) grants for sporting, community and cultural groups in Lake Macquarie will open earlier than usual this year. Online applications will open on May 7 and close on June 15. If your group is thinking about applying this year, start making preparations now. I'm expecting that the total amount available in Lake Macquarie this year will again be \$300,000. CBP grants are designed to assist in the building or renewal of community infrastructure.

You might also be aware that new bus timetables are causing concern in some quarters, but after a number of meetings with senior transport officials and the Minister, I'm pleased to say that the route changes causing most concern are now under review. The new timetables contain a lot of improvements to the overall system, but clearly they were deficient in some areas, particularly in the Cardiff South, Macquarie Hills and Glendale areas. I'm pleased the Minister and transport managers have listened to us, and hopefully they can have these problems ironed out soon.

Don't forget, if you have concerns about any State issue please don't hesitate to contact me or my Toronto office.

Regards



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## **PENSIONS REPORT**

There is an indepth report to do with Mefloquine (Malarie Medicine) on pages 8 through to 11 submitted by our advocate.

However, if it is felt that you have a case for the claim from the Department of Veteran Affairs (DVA) over any injury physical or mental to do with your service or that of a War Widow/widower Pension, feel free to contact one of our Pension Officers/Advocates who will be more then happy to assist you with your claim.

Pension Officers are on duty in these sub-Branch office's Tuesday and Wednesday between the hours of 9.30am and 12 midday. Other times by

## **HAVE YOU EVER CONSIDERED MAKING A BEQUEST OR INCLUDING THIS SUB BRANCH IN YOUR WILL**

May we encourage you to think of us when making a bequest or when you are making your will. Your memorial gift will help us towards our goal; to look after the welfare needs of veterans, their widows and their dependants on a continuing basis at no cost to them.

Murphy said to Paddy "Do you know that Christmas day falls on a Friday, this Year." Paddy says, "Gee's I hope it's not the 13th"

## **“THE LAST POST”**

If you have ever been to a military funeral in which The Last Post was played this brings out a new meaning of it.

Here is something everyone should know. Until I read this, I didn't know,

We have all heard the haunting song, 'The Last Post.'

It's the song that gives us the lump in our throats and usually tears in our eyes but, do you know the story behind the song?

If not, I think you will be interested to find out about its humble beginnings.

Reportedly, it all began in 1862 during the American Civil War, when Union Army Captain Robert Ellicombe was with his men near Harrison's Landing in Virginia. The Confederate Army was on the other side of the narrow strip of land.

During the night, Captain Ellicombe heard the moans of a soldier who lay severely wounded on the field. Not knowing if it was a Union or Confederate soldier, the Captain decided to risk his life and bring the stricken man back for medical attention. Crawling on his stomach through the gunfire, the Captain reached the stricken soldier and began pulling him toward his encampment.

When the Captain finally reached his own lines, he discovered it was actually a Confederate soldier, but the soldier was dead.

The Captain lit a lantern and suddenly caught his breath and went numb with shock. In the dim light, he saw the face of the soldier.. It was his own son. The boy had been studying music in the South when the war broke out. Without telling his father, the boy enlisted in the Confederate Army. The following morning, heartbroken, the father asked permission of his superiors to give his son a full military burial, despite his enemy status. His request was only partially granted.

The Captain had asked if he could have a group of Army band members play a funeral dirge for his son at the funeral.

The request was turned down since the soldier was a Confederate. But, out of respect for the father, they did say they could give him only one musician.

The Captain chose a bugler. He asked the bugler to play a series of musical notes he had found on a piece of paper in the pocket of the dead youth's uniform. This wish was granted.

The haunting melody, we now know as 'The Last Post' used at military funerals was born.

The words are:

Day is done.  
Gone the sun..  
From the lakes  
From the hills.  
From the sky.  
All is well.  
Safely rest.  
God is nigh.

Fading light.  
Dims the sight.  
And a star.  
Gems the sky.  
Gleaming bright.  
From afar..  
Drawing nigh.  
Falls the night..

Thanks and praise.  
For our days.  
Neath the sun  
Neath the stars.  
Neath the sky  
As we go.  
This we know.  
God is nigh

I too have felt the chills while listening to 'The Last Post' but I have never seen all the words to the song until now.

I didn't even know there was more than one verse .I also never knew the story behind the song and I didn't know if you had either so I thought I'd pass it along.

I now have an even deeper respect for the song than I did before.  
Remember Those Lost and Harmed While Serving Their Country.

**Also Remember Those Who Have Served And Returned;  
And for those presently serving in the Armed Forces**

# FISH ROT – FROM THE HEAD FIRST

## Challenges Facing The RSL

“Fish rot from the head first!” Not an original quote but one that encapsulate the challenge the RSL is facing at present.

Since its formation in 1916 the RSL has gone through a number of iterations. Post WW1 it agreed to be an association for veterans only and so set the scene for the ongoing discrimination and neglect of the issues of ‘non returned men’. After WW2 it was obliged to accommodate the veterans of that war and again failed to allow for membership of those who did not go overseas. After WW2 came the Korean War, Malaya, Borneo and Vietnam which was followed by 20 years of peace when Australia had no major overseas operational commitments.

In recent times we have the creation of web based Ex-Service Organisations (ESO’s) and simply veterans organisations that do not identify as ESO’s but which strive through social media to improve the lot of particular cohorts. During this time the RSL has struggled, yet leadership failed to realise that unless it changed its membership criteria and accepted non-veterans it would devolve into a small, increasingly irrelevant organisation.

Many of the veterans of these later operational commitments and those without overseas service [i.e. non veterans] struggled to find a place in the world War’s centric RSL. This was particularly the case for many Vietnam era veterans and that category of non-veterans i.e. those who had not served overseas, that the RSL had amended its rules for in the 1980’s. This move was not successful as the expected influx of members did not occur.

**Focus on the Future:** The RSL and other ESO’s that seek to represent the members of the Australian Defence Community (ADC) must be focussed on the future. If they are honestly committed to the ideals or aims of their respective organisations they should not allow ego’s and the turf wars of the past be impediments that hinder a cooperative approach to the common good. The RSL as the largest oldest and most recently recognised ESO must accept its prominence not by virtue of these characteristics but because it is expected to do so. It is expected to;

- Display leadership at a time when it does not.
- Be a partner and work collaboratively and not go its own way thus highlighting a disunity in the ADC thus negating the advocacy efforts of so many.
- Promote the interests and concerns of the ADC in a collaborative manner. It cannot continue to deny the voice of other ESO’s who have taken the lead on issues, developed the case and are fighting the fight.

- Work in partnership with the Alliance of ESO's that has taken on the leadership role within the ADC that has been vacated by the RSL.

It is disappointing to realise that there are still many in the leadership of the RSL that continue to be suspicious of veterans who have chosen to form and or join other ESO's. What the leadership fails to realise is that a great number of these same individuals are also members of their local RSL sub-branch. Many indeed hold leadership positions in sub-branches and on state executives. The reasons for this are for another time but to deny a collaborative approach on an issue means that the leadership of the RSL is denying many of its own membership and failing to live up to the Aims and Ideals of the League.

The RSL has to stand above the pettiness of ego's and personal agenda and work cooperatively with all in the ADC. That is what leadership is all about!

## **Where Change Must Begin**

After 102 years the RSL had settled into a period of contentment with its assumed position as the 'go to organisation' for veterans issues. However in the post Vietnam era it failed to live up to the expectations and aspirations of a new generation of veterans. Also it has not adjusted its systems and structures to cope with what is expected of a representative organisation in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The void presented by the RSL vacating the field is increasingly being filled by more vocal, determined, skilled, politically savvy and strategic and operational managers. These are well experienced in corporate governance within the broader community and are translating these skills to the Alliance of the Defence Organisations (ADSO) and other ex-service organisations that have captured the imagination and the membership of an increasing number of veterans from the many recent conflicts and service in the ADF.

## **To Move Ahead**

Change in an organisation such as the RSL will take some time and for it to be of lasting value it must be well considered. To be effective and long lasting it must start with:

- a) The development of a governance model that represents best practice in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Continuing with its existing structure is increasingly seen as a major hindrance to maintaining national prominence as it lacks the agility demanded in the present era.
- b) Collaborative leadership within the broader ESO community.
- c) Commit to effective lobbying for the ADC in collaboration with the ADSO and other ESOs.

**Governance: The RSL lacks a clear vision of what and where it wants to be in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.**

It has a Mission Statement and its Constitution nominates a range of Objects which are identified as being in support of it. However there is no clear direction of where the RSL is envisioned to be in five or ten year's time. This needs rectifying if the issue of governance is to be resolved. Governance should deal with the structure, the organisation, control, the direction, monitoring and responsibility within the National Headquarters. The Board of the RSL i.e. the National Executive, should be free of the management responsibilities and issues that they presently deal with because of the absence of appropriate funding and staffing.

The RSL Vision Statement could be as simple as, "to be an ESO of choice within the defence family". These ten words say much by way of a future direction and breath of the reach. A vision is just that, it gives a heading only. What should follow is the substance. This is the Statement of Strategic Objectives which are an expansion of the vision. Falling out of this should be the Strategic Plan and the Corporate Plan.

This should lead to a clear definition of the role of the National President, the National Executive and the direction for the various committees that provide the necessary support and intellectual grunt required to position the RSL where it wants to be.

### **Leadership and the ESO Community**

There are too many ESO's in Australia! The reasons for this are many and varied however that should not mean an absence of collaboration between and within the ESO community.

The nature of the relationship between the RSL, ADSO and other ESOs' bear serious consideration. There are many within the leadership of the RSL who are yet to grasp the changes that have occurred in recent years and hold dear to a memory of the past. The view many in leadership positions of the RSL have of other ESO's is coloured by their personal lack of experience with those very same ESOs'. They gauge the worth of an ESO based on the actions of one or two individuals who may be outspoken and yes, critically abusive when good manners demand better.

The RSL should take on a collaborative role in its relations with the other ADSO and other veterans organisations. This does not mean giving away independence nor 'Its own voice' but developing a pragmatic approach in its dealings with other ESOs' and individuals who have much to offer as they collectively seek to live up to the aim and ideas of their respective organisations.

### **Lobbying**

For much of its existence the RSL has been torn between the use of direct and indirect political action. Many confuse attempts to influence government with being 'party political' as opposed to advocating in a non-partisan manner.

With so few members of parliament or bureaucrats with any military experience the ESO community must work that much harder to get its message across and accepted.

The RSL must take on a more proactive role in promoting the issues that are important to the broad defence community. Again this is an issue of finance and skill set but the 21<sup>st</sup> Century practice demands that the RSL seriously consider how it is to operate in this changed environment.

## Conclusion

No one with a real understanding of the veteran and ex-service community would deny that the RSL will remain serving veterans and ex-service personnel for a while longer yet. The challenge that the RSL must ponder is will it remain one of the many ESOs' or will be an ESO of choice in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century?

## Kel Ryan

This article was taken directly from the latest issue of the **Defence Force Welfare Association magazine, Camaraderie, Vol.49 No.1, written by their newly appointed President.** I believe the article was directed at RSL National and most of the points raised in the article are direct to the point. Interestingly in his own editorial he writes that for them themselves to survive they have to change the way they do business and do it quickly. Seems a little ironic they have time to be critical of the RSL, however in saying that I agree with most of

**AT THE DOCTORS OFFICE.....** A gorgeous young redhead goes into the doctor's office and said that the body hurt where ever she touched it. "Impossible," says the doctor. "Show me." The redhead took her finger, pushed on her left shoulder and screamed, then she pushed her elbow and screamed even more. She pushed her knee and screamed; Likewise she pushed her ankle and screamed. Everywhere she touched made her scream.

The doctor said, "You're not really a redhead, are you?" "Well ,no" she said, "I'm actually a blonde' I thought so, the doctor said , 'Your finger is broken."

\*\*\*\*\*

Highway patrolman pulled alongside a speeding car on the freeway. Glancing at the car, he was astounded to see the blonde behind the wheel was knitting! Realising that she was oblivious to his flashing lights and siren, the trooper wound down his window, turned on his bullhorn and yelled, "**PULL OVER!**" the blonde yelled back, "**NO, IT'S A SCARF!**"



# Nasho's News

Westlake Macquarie  
National Servicemen's Association



## NASHO'S NEWS MARCH, 2018

There was two months break and we resumed in February, 2018

A picture show day was organised by Brian Jones and Bruce Robberds on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2018 at Stockrington. There was a good attendance and followed by lunch at the Minmi Hotel.

15<sup>th</sup> February, 2018, A Service to commemorate the Fall of Singapore; also the bombing of Darwin on the 19<sup>th</sup> February, 1942 was held at Goffet Park and wreaths and books placed on epitaph followed by a barbeque at the rear of R.S.L. Sub-Branch Office.

Combined Forces meeting was held at Mayfield Diggers, 26<sup>th</sup> February, 2018 and was attended by Bruce, Des, Janice, Kevin, Marjorie and myself. Nothing new came from the meeting except Reserve Forces Day, 30<sup>th</sup>, June, 2018.

Owen Rowney spoke about the Light Horse.

Newcastle Branch put their hand up to hold the next meeting to be held at the Waterboard Bowling Club, North Lambton, 29-may -2018

3<sup>rd</sup> March, 2018 was the Westlake Macquarie National Servicemen's Association Service was held at Goffet Park, Toronto,; Supported by the Australian Armed Forces Rifle Re enactment Group. Newcastle Bagpipe Band did the honours for the day. Tributes of Roses and Wreaths were laid on the memorial.

Newcastle Memorial Service 17<sup>th</sup> March,2018 at Maitland Park was attended by Bruce, Des, Alf, Brian Smith and myself. I placed a wreath on the memorial stone. It was a good service with the assistance of Army and Airforce Cadets and the Army Rifle Re enactment Group also a Bagpipe Band. A barbeque was held at the site.

**BLONDES AGAIN.....A Police Officer stops a blonde for speeding and asks her very nicely for her license. She replied in a huff "I wish you guys would get your act together, just yesterday you take away my license and then today you expect me to show it to you."**

**THE FOLLOWING IS A POEM READ BY DANIEL BAIN-  
BRIDGE A YEAR 12 STUDENT FROM TORONTO HIGH SCHOOL  
THAT WAS WRITTEN BY HER GREAT GREAT GRAND-FATHER  
TO HIS WIFE IN WW2**

*Our Parting*

*In this land so hot and sultry,  
With its rain and heavy dew,  
With its tin and rice and rubber,  
Here I sit and dream of you.*

*I often see you as I parted,  
How you smiled to hide the tears,  
How you played your part with courage,  
How I loved you then my dear.*

*I tried to hide my feelings  
With a carefree jovial air.  
You must have thought me heartless  
And that I'd ceased to care.*

*But just behind my reckless smile,  
I fought a bitter fight.  
I felt the pangs of parting  
As you did that night.*

*I felt the temper at my side,  
To me he spoke quite clear,  
He said, "The price your asked to pay,  
Is costing you too dear.*

*But if I had but turned my head,  
And "Yes" to him had said,  
Unworthy of your love I'd be  
Twere better I were dead.*

*I know you miss me every hour,  
For me each night you pray.  
I know you long for my return,  
Though long and rough the way.*

*But if you I cannot come,  
With honour, head held high,  
I know you will remember me,  
Our love could never die.*

*So as I think of you each night,  
I pray with all my heart,  
That we will reunited be,  
When we have played our part.*

*To-day is the 26th Darling, I have not been able to send this letter yet. I cannot celebrate Honey but I am remembering "To-day" (Our Anniversary)*

**Written by Ernest Arthur Clendon Hayes to his wife on the 26th of January 1942, just before the fall of Singapore and his subsequent capture by the Japanese. He was a prisoner-of war on the Burma railway for two and a half years. He died on the 14 September 1944 after the ship on which he was being transported to Japan was torpedoed and sank by American Submarines**



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