

RIGHT: Decommissioned Battle Tank gifted by the Australian Government.

Leopard tanks are an important part of Australia's military history, having played a central role in meeting the nation's defence.



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

It gives me the greatest of pleasure to report to members through this newsletter on Sub-Branch activities.

First and foremost I would like to acknowledge the good work of our many volunteers who have given their time to care for others; this commitment is a clear indication that there is a passion to succeed in the Welfare & Charitable objects of our Sub-Branch. In summary, I clearly recognise the individual commitment of many and my thank-you list if published would be a long one.

Thank you to the Sub-Branch Executive and the House & Finance Committee for their positive direction and forward planning when dealing with some very technical and business-like matters. There has been an enormous amount of commitment by individuals on critical Sub-Branch issues, in particular formalising the sale of the Eaglehawk Campus to Ambulance Victoria and working with the Victorian Government to secure our Gaming Machine Licences for 2012. The management of these two time-consuming

issues cannot go unmentioned and the Committees and staff involved in the successful outcomes are to be commended on their professional abilities.

Our membership numbers are stable at around 850 due to the increasing membership numbers of Affiliate and current serving ADF personnel. The number of new younger members joining our Sub-Branch is increasing. This is also reflected in the Sub-Branch Committee which includes 4 post 1975 veterans and for the first time in our Sub-Branch history, the important role of Treasurer being held by an Affiliate member.

There were some wonderful productions of veteran stories and photographic exhibitions last year. The exhibition gallery in the bistro has proved to be very popular with members and is booked out for the remainder of 2011. There is an educational partnership evolving with the Shrine of Remembrance and schools and colleges within the Bendigo region and we should congratulate ourselves on having a positive and progressive image throughout the wider Bendigo community.

The General Manager and his staff are to be congratulated on their commitment to ensure our commercial business practices are of the highest standard. They undertake numerous tasks which far exceed their job descriptions. As an individual I value the opportunity to work with people both paid and volunteers who are united in their

dedication to do their best for the veteran community and their dependants.

In closing I would like to acknowledge the support given to me by my family and friends - their caring and understanding is greatly appreciated.

Cliff Richards
PRESIDENT

GENERAL MEMBERS MEETING DATES FOR 2011

April, Monday 11th at 10:00 am
May, Monday 9th at 10:00 am
June, Monday 20th at 10:00 am
July, Monday 11th at 10:00 am
August, Monday 8th at 10:00 am
September, Monday 12th at 10:00 am
October, Monday 10th at 10:00 am
November, Monday 14th at 10:00 am
December, Monday 12th at 10:00 am

** Due to lack of support, Sunday meetings have been reconvened to Mondays.*

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GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

In 2011 the integrity of our revenue base, the Legislative hurdles placed before us, the development of our facilities and the ageing and changing demographics of our membership will all present as issues that we will need to come to terms with.

The Bendigo District RSL Sub-Branch Inc. had a mixed year in terms of our trading results 2010. The net trading result reflected a deficit of \$67,263 however that result was impaired like other years by the rent paid to our Building Patriotic Fund which totalled over \$500,000. Our earnings before rent equated to a surplus of over \$430,000 or 15% of total income.

As always the Committee and I are constantly looking at the facilities we provide to our members. Upgrading our facilities not only serves to build our ability to drive the business, it forms the fabric in our ability to maintain our membership growth. Despite possible threats to our business we cannot sit back on our laurels and let our facilities fall behind the competition. For that reason we have commenced the planning phase for proposed building redevelopment and extensions.

Threatening the increase in our revenue post 2012 are a number of Legislative changes that have been passed including the removal of ATM facilities from gaming venues and the Federal Government is proposing to bring in mandatory pre-commitment, a term which means every punter will have a preset limit on the amount they can freely spend on gaming machines.

As we look forward to another year we will make every endeavour to build the success of our Sub-Branch. I once again thank you – the members of this Sub-Branch for your support as we embark on a challenging period which will define the future of the Bendigo District RSL Sub-Branch Inc.

Erik Wynveen
GENERAL MANAGER

KANGAROO FLAT RSL

Two of the sixteen plaques for the upgrade of the Soldiers Memorial at Kangaroo Flat have been dedicated and the third has been received. Three more are on order.

The Sub-Branch looks forward to obtaining plans for the alterations proposed for our hall so that quotes for the works can be sought. The changes will include easier entry and egress to all parts of the building.

The AGM was held on 15th February.

Graeme Martin was elected Snr. Vice President and Jack Thomas was retained as Treasurer; Sue Hutcheson was elected Assistant Treasurer. The Sub-Branch welcomes all the new members to the Executive. The Kangaroo Flat Sub-Branch is looking forward to another year of progress with new vitality.

President: Ivon Hutcheson 5443 9213
Secretary: John Handley 5442 6819
Hall Hire: Trevor Toman 5447 7397

DARWIN DEFENDERS 1942-45 INC.

Photo taken Friday, 18th February 2011 at the unveiling of the dedication to the Darwin Defenders plaque in the Kangaroo Flat RSL War Memorial Park.



(L-R) Stan Phillips, Bernie K Lenaghan, Frank Cantwell, Bill (WJ) Hosking, George Addlem, Ron Hamley, Kevin Coughlin.

ANZAC APPEAL

The ANZAC Appeal will commence in Bendigo on 8th April. ANZAC badges will be on sale at various positions around town as well as at shopping centres.

This year three new badges have been introduced. They are the \$5 Rising Sun, \$50 badge depicting a wounded 2/10 Battalion soldier being assisted by a native Papuan and a commemorative issue for the 70th anniversary of Tobruk which will sell for \$30. These will all be in very limited supply.



A full range of other badges as well as the ever popular wristbands and tattoos will be available from the collectors with a limited range available from various businesses, hospitals and some homes around the district.

A shortage of volunteers is our greatest challenge so we are once again asking for your assistance. Just a couple of hours are all it takes to make a big difference to the success of our appeals. Please contact the RSL Office on 5443 4013 to leave your details.

COMMEMORATIVE COMMITTEE

The extremely successful Bendigo and Eaglehawk Commemorative activities conducted throughout 2010 have been the result of a combined team effort and a very active Committee.

Larger than expected crowds have been attending these commemorative events and the community expectation to conduct them in various locations throughout the wider Bendigo region remains high.

Committee members have worked together to ensure the commemorative activities conducted by our Sub-Branch are of the highest standard as we, together with the wider Bendigo community, remember fallen comrades. New paving and garden works at both Bendigo and Eaglehawk Memorials have made planning for greater attendance at our services to be catered for.

Positive 2011 ANZAC Day outcomes were achieved by the Sub-Branch Committee and the Easter Fair Committee and the result will see 25th April - Easter Monday, exclusively reserved for the ANZAC Day parade and the Easter Fair Parade has been moved to Easter Sunday.

New initiatives implemented by the Sub-Branch Committee within the RSL Office will see greater support given to organising committees planning commemorative activities in 2011 and beyond.

Cliff Richards
Chairman, Commemorative Activities
Sub-Committee

CENTRAL VICTORIAN VETERANS' SUPPORT CENTRE

A steady stream of veterans and their partners or family members have already been to the centre this year which is great. If we have not seen 'you' for a year or so, make an appointment and come in to check if you are receiving your full entitlements.

Unfortunately we have had a few widows in of late whose husbands passed away from non-accepted disabilities and it is now impossible for us to get the war widows and gold card for them.

Phone us on 5444 1871 to make an appointment to come in to see us at our office on Platform 2, Bendigo Railway Station. We are open Mon-Fri 10 am to 4 pm however we are closed for the 4 days after Easter this year. Mail and messages will be dealt with daily, so if urgent please do not hesitate to call.

Currently we have 10 active pension officers and 14 active welfare/reception personnel on roster. Many people have been coming in lately to make application for their

medals; believe it or not, many veterans did not bother to get them. Aged care referrals have been another common enquiry. We provide a one-stop-shop for all your pension and welfare needs. Don't forget we are here to assist you!

Max Godwin
Secretary

15 TRANSPORT SQN – BENDIGO'S OWN!



SGT Anthony Murphy (back to camera) and CPL Justin Droney conducting sandbagging and evacuations in Rochester, 15th January 2011.

15 Transport Squadron has had a very busy start to 2011. Prior to the arrival of the new regular Army personnel, the Squadron conducted 10 days of defence aid to the civil community. The tasking began on 14th January with the evacuation of nine people in Newbridge and finished on 24th January with the return of five Unimog trucks from Swan Hill. During that period, the Squadron evacuated approximately 100 people, delivered almost 250,000 sandbags and assisted in the sandbagging of approximately 60 homes. The Squadron also sent four Mack dump trucks to Queensland to assist in flood relief for our northern friends.

Since the floods, the pace of tasking has remained high, with the highlight being a young (or not so young) leadership weekend. The Squadron travelled to Army Adventure

Training Wing located at Kapooka to utilise the high ropes confidence course. In very wet conditions, everyone made it through safely, albeit with very white knuckles and a few tears!

Our focus now rests on ANZAC Day and the extensive activities planned over the Easter festival.

WELFARE & CHARITABLE

Did you know the Bendigo District RSL Visiting Officers look after more than 200 Veterans in nursing homes and hospitals throughout the Bendigo area? It is a fantastic effort by our visiting officers not only to visit so many veterans but to visit them on such a regular basis. Well done and thank you.

We could always use more volunteers to help, and in particular we need volunteers to help us at the Bendigo Base Hospital. If you can spare some time, please contact the RSL Office on 5443 4013.

One of our projects for this year is to run more BBQ's & luncheons for our veterans in aged care facilities. When they are together in these social situations it gives them a great sense of camaraderie and purpose.

We are looking forward to developing our role in 2011 and we wish all a safe and successful 2011.

Bob Harrison
Chairperson
Welfare & Charitable Committee

PARTNERS OF VETERANS (PVA) - BENDIGO SUB-BRANCH

If you are a partner of a veteran or peacekeeper/peacemaker who served in an allied conflict you are welcome to join the PVA Bendigo Sub-Branch. This group meets on the third Monday of the month

at 11:30 am at the Bendigo RSL to enjoy fellowship and support. We are an active group enjoying the use of the Bendigo RSL bus to visit areas of interest. If you are interested in joining and want to know more you can contact:

Joy Herman 0409 343 950 or
Sherold Kelleher 0417 571 656
joy.herman49@gmail.com

RAAF ASSOCIATION - BENDIGO

I have inadvertently discovered that there is little known about the existence of the RAAF Association in Bendigo. We are alive and flourishing! At our monthly meetings held on the 1st Thursday of each month at BDRSL we average around 30 attendees who then have lunch and socialise before heading home.

The RAAF celebrates its 90th birthday on 31st March and we are heading to Ballarat Aerodrome by bus on 30th March to watch 50-70 vintage planes arrive and participate in a fly-over which will be followed by the famous Roulettes performing acrobatic stunts.

Bendigo RAAFA will recognise the 90th birthday on 7th April with a members' luncheon. We are hopefully going to have a get-together later in the year with Ballarat & Geelong Branches to re-ignite old friendships.

Bendigo RAAFA welcomes new members, especially the younger generation of RAAF.

Glenis Gordon
Secretary/Treasurer

MUSEUM

Left: Museum Sub-Committee members John Young, Graeme & Carol Monaghan at the Family History Day conducted by the Australian Institute of Genealogical Studies held at the Kangaroo Flat Leisure Centre on Sunday, 20th March.

They have been attending on this day for 4 years and their stand is one of the biggest and most popular. Graeme's massive museum project is the basis of their stand which is documenting those who served and died in WWI and WWII over the wide Bendigo area. So far the project has filled 65 large folders and is ongoing. The day is also a good advertisement for our museum.

Peter Ball
Chairman Museum Sub-Committee



RSL SHEDS

After an extended Christmas & New Year break we have now recommenced our activities at the sheds. Completion of additional work benches for our "Woodies" makes life easier for them and the construction of a welding table will be a welcome addition for the "Men of Steel".

The team has worked extremely hard in the short time we have been operating and its achievements are a credit to them. Almost all of our construction needs within the "sheds" have now been completed and this will enable us to get into the serious projects. Fitzpatrick's Home Hardware has generously donated a drill press, work bench grinder and an arc welder to make this possible.

Under perfect weather conditions we visited the Seymour Alternate Farming Expo where our participants enjoyed a great day with transport to and from the Expo made possible by the use of the RSL Bus which Ken Butler kindly agreed to drive.

Projects that will commence within the next couple of weeks will include construction of a few outdoor garden barrows and a children's toys project. Our participant numbers continue to grow with 51 now registered.

David Paynter
RSL Sheds Co-Ordinator

TENNIS

The official tennis season is winding up and the latest report from the Eaglehawk & District Tennis Association is that one of our three teams has made it to the finals – we wish RSL Bronze every success.

With the 2010/2011 season winding up, it is a good opportunity to think about dusting off the tennis racquet and having a hit with fellow members. The Havilah Road tennis courts are available for all members of the RSL.

The Tennis Section would like to thank the staff at the RSL for helping to make the season run smoothly and I hope I am not letting the cat out of the bag by mentioning a plan to resurface the courts this year which will make them some of the best in Bendigo.

Jonathan Ridnell
President – Tennis Section

VIETNAM VETERANS ASSOCIATION (BENDIGO SUB-BRANCH)

At the AGM conducted last month, several new faces were elected to the Executive. We welcome Ross Macdonald (President), Garrie Darrall (Vice President), John Young (Assistant Secretary) and Mike Rohde (Assistant Treasurer). The Sub-Branch is looking forward to a year with many new ideas.

The Sub-Branch general meetings have traditionally been conducted on the third Tuesday evening of the month. At the last general meeting it was decided to change the meetings to day time starting at 10:30 am for the period from April to October inclusive. The next general meeting will be on Tuesday 19th April. All members are welcome.

Maurie Betts
Secretary

VALE

| | | |
|---------------------------|---|------------|
| GOLDING Edwin Jas | HMAS AUSTRALIA | 1/11/2010 |
| O'BRIEN Noel Fredrick | 15th Transport Squadron | 1/11/2010 |
| HUNTER Henry Alexander | 11th, 38th, & 5th Batt A.A.C.C. | 14/11/2010 |
| THOMSON Alan Rouvray | 22 Works Company | 21/11/2010 |
| DEWAR Donald Albert | 18th Australian Lines of Communication & 91st Australian Operating Section | 24/11/2010 |
| HARRIS Alan | 39 Operational Base Unit RAAF | 24/11/2010 |
| GIOVANETTI Leslie Robert | 22 Australian Infantry Battalion | 8/12/2010 |
| KRAUSGRILL Fredrick James | 16th & 38th Battalion | 14/12/2010 |
| BANNISTER Stanley Charles | 20 Australian Gen TSPT Coy | 27/01/2011 |
| McARTUR Maxwell | RAN | 24/02/2011 |
| MARKS Bernard John | Army Catering Corps. | 15/02/2011 |