



War Veterans Village [Narrabeen] RSL Sub-Branch

Through an active membership we keep the ANZAC spirit alive and growing

MARCH 2016

Editor Doug Smyth – email rsesubbranch@rsllifecare.org.au or mail to PO Box 56, Narrabeen, NSW
Sub-Branch Office Hours. Monday and Thursday 9am – noon. Phone: 8978 4266

“In the end, it’s not the years in your life that count. It’s the life in your years”

The President’s Message

2015 in Review (My report as presented to the AGM 11th February 2016)

Thank you to the following:

- The committee for all their hard work and support throughout the year.
- Our Angels for always being there to assist and host meetings and functions.
- A special thank you to Ian Galloway for his organising and running our badge and poppy days. This past year was one of our best years financially. These two occasions are our major fund raisers for the year.
- A big thank you to Alf Murray and the team of sellers.
- A very special thank you to Doug Smyth for being the glue that keeps this sub branch together. He is dedicated and hardworking.
- Doug will be reducing his work load this year and will relinquish his position as Secretary/Treasurer. Doug will be remaining a committee member responsible for membership, minute taking and the monthly newsletter.
- Our finances are in good shape. Not a lot of money but enough to manage and with the continued support of RSL Life Care our future is certain.
- Our sub branch can be found on the RSL Life Care web site. Updated monthly.
- Our functions throughout last year were successful and well attended. Thanks to all involved.
- State Congress this year will be in Sydney. President and committee members are welcome to attend.
- Membership as of February 2016: 134 - last year 144.
- Attendance at monthly meeting needs improving. Remind your fellow members. Working on guest speakers for this year.
- Once again thank you for your ongoing support. Looking forward to a bigger and brighter year with new committee members and new ideas.

Message continues next column >>>^^^

Change of Office Bearers

With Doug standing down from the position of Secretary/Treasurer the following members were voted in at our Annual General Meeting in February. Stu Doyle, Secretary and Neil Stronach, Treasurer.

I am looking forward to working with both Stu & Neil. Both gentlemen have a wealth of experience to bring to the Sub-branch.

George Main
President

Chaplain’s Corner

What is the meaning of Easter?

For Christians, Easter is the day when we celebrate Jesus Christ rising from the dead. Jesus is the Son of God and heroically gave His life to die for our sins. On the third day after He died - the day we now celebrate as Easter Sunday - His friends went to His grave, and found that He had risen from the dead. They saw an angel who told them, *“Don’t be afraid! I know you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He isn’t here! He has been raised from the dead, just as He said it would happen.”*

Yes, it is easy for most in Australian society to say “this story is familiar” but do we really *know* the impact it can have on our lives?

Jesus rose from the dead on Easter Sunday; now He offers to you and me the gift of eternal life and forgiveness of sins. **This is the true story of Easter, and how it can change your life.**

John 3:16 tell us that *“God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.”*

The problem for many is that we then say “But I am a sinner, how can He love me and offer this to me?”

The next verse, John 3: 17, offers us the assurance of forgiveness: *“For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.”*

The truth is that God sent His only Son Jesus Christ to die for our sins, to wipe our slates clean and to offer each one of us the gift of eternal life! God reaches out in love to you through Jesus Christ. If you haven’t already, you can choose to ask Jesus Christ to forgive your sins and come in to your life as your Lord and Saviour. It is never too late!

Happy Easter. Grace & Peace
Bob Durbin - Chaplain

The loss of HMAS Perth, 1 March 1942

HMAS *Perth* was built at Portsmouth Naval Dockyard and commissioned into the Royal Navy as HMS *Amphion* on 15 June 1936. Purchased by the Australian Government, she was commissioned into the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) on 29 June 1939. The light cruiser displaced 6,830 tons, was 169 metres long, and had a beam of 17.3 metres. Her armament consisted of eight 6-inch guns, eight 4-inch dual purpose guns, a number of automatic anti-aircraft weapons and eight 21-inch torpedo tubes. She also carried a Seagull V aircraft for reconnaissance and spotting duties. Her speed was 32 knots and she carried a complement of 681.

She was involved in the evacuations of Crete and Greece in April and May 1941, in the course of which she was badly damaged by bombing. After repairs, the cruiser was engaged in operations off the coast of Syria before proceeding to Australia for an extended refit. After completion of her refit, *Perth* operated off eastern Australia on patrol and escort work, visiting New Caledonia and New Guinea. On 14 February 1942 *Perth* sailed for the Netherlands East Indies, arriving at Batavia (now Jakarta) on 24 February, where she was attacked by Japanese aircraft that day and the next without sustaining any damage.

The *Perth* then sailed for Surabaya on 25 February. On 26 February the ship departed Surabaya in company with the Dutch light cruisers *De Ruyter* and *Java*, the heavy cruisers USS *Houston* and HMS *Exeter*, and two Dutch, three British and four US destroyers proceeded along the north coast of Madura Island, searching for a Japanese invasion convoy.

The cruise was unsuccessful but as the ships were preparing to enter Surabaya and refuel, information was received that the Japanese forces had been sighted to the north. Accordingly, they steamed to intercept. In the ensuing battle of the Java Sea, fought over the night of 27-28 February the Allied force was soundly defeated by a Japanese force which was able to exploit its superiority. The Dutch cruisers were sunk and *Exeter* badly damaged, while most of the destroyers were sunk or withdrew as their torpedoes were exhausted. *Perth* and *Houston* were able to break off the action with the Japanese and sailed to Tandjung Priok, where they refuelled.

Orders were received for the cruisers to sail through the Sunda Strait for Tjilitjap on Java's south coast. They sailed at 7.00 pm on 28 February and set a course to the west for the Strait, *Perth* leading, with *Houston* five cables astern. At 11.06 a vessel was sighted at about five miles range, close to St Nicholas Point. When challenged she proved to be a Japanese destroyer and was immediately engaged. The two cruisers had met the Japanese invasion force assigned to western Java. *Perth* was to suffer only superficial damage in this phase of the action.

At about midnight it was reported that the cruiser had little ammunition left.

Cont. next column: >>>>>>>>>>

It was decided to attempt to force a passage through Sunda Strait. At full speed they turned the ship south for Toppers Island. *Perth* had barely steadied on her new course when a torpedo struck her in the starboard side. The captain ordered the crew to prepare to abandon ship. A few moments later, another torpedo struck just forward of the first hit and the captain gave the order to abandon ship. After five or ten minutes, a third hit torpedo struck well aft on the starboard side, followed shortly after by another on the port. *Perth*, which had been heeling to starboard, righted herself, then heeled to port and sank at about 12.25 am on 1 March.

Perth's crew abandoned ship between the second and third torpedoes, but it is doubtful if any boats were successfully launched, although many rafts and Carley floats were. During the abandon ship operation the *Perth* was under fire from many destroyers at close range and many hits were sustained and casualties caused. Many were killed or wounded in the water by the explosion of the last two torpedoes and by shells exploding in the water.

Of the *Perth's* company of 686, which included four civilian canteen staff and six RAAF personnel for operating and servicing her aircraft, only 218 (including one civilian and two RAAF) were eventually repatriated; the remainder were killed during, or soon after, the action, or died as prisoners of war. The Captain was lost with the ship.

Dates to Remember

Monday 7th March Committee Meeting 11.00am
(Steven Stack Room)

Thursday 10th March General Meeting 9.30am
(Montgomery Centre)

Monday 11th April Committee Meeting 11.00am
(Steven Stack Room)

Thursday 14th April General Meeting 9.30am
(Montgomery Centre)

Membership

Life Member	= 1
Life Subscribers	=12
Service Members	=63
Associate Members (belonging to other sub-Branches	=41
Affiliate Members	=21
Our strength at 29 th February 2016	=138

Who's Who - Name Tags

Please wear your name tag to all Meetings
(If you need a name tag please drop the Secretary a note, or email and request one.)

Sub-Branch Office Hours

Monday 9 am - 12.00noon
Thursday 9 am - 12.00noon