



Terrigal Wamberal RSL sub Branch

NEWSLETTER

President's Message

Dear Members,

Once again, COVID restrictions forced the cancellation of our July, August and September monthly meetings and the closure of the sub-Branch office for an extended period. As a result, there were limited opportunities to provide face-to-face members' support or conduct commemorative events.

Regrettably, for the second year running, we were unable to commemorate VP and Vietnam Veterans Day. However, we acknowledge the sacrifice of our WW2 and Vietnam veterans and honour their service.

The next opportunity to hold a commemorative event will be Remembrance Day in November. Assuming that COVID restrictions will be eased, we will be conducting services at the Terrigal Beach Memorial and Breakers.

Our BBQ at the Haven in June was a blast, literally, as we encountered wind gusts up to 50kph, requiring some of more athletic members to chase unsecured paper plates and plastic cups. Nevertheless, I thank Roger Wrightson, Barry Smith and others for organising the BBQ, including catering and cooking. I hope that the weather gods will be kind to us at our next outdoor social event. I'm sure we all need a dose of social connection.

NSW RSL Congress

Considering the COVID-19 pandemic and associated restrictions, the RSL NSW Board has postponed the State Congress and AGM to **6 and 7 December 2021**. Several contentious issues will be debated, including the Boards decision to introduce a Conflict of Interest policy. We believe that the Policy is unclear and disrespects our ability to comply with standard governance regulations. I thank Michael Tabone for writing a Congress motion and supporting argument opposing the Policy. The motion has been submitted for review and consideration by the Congress Agenda Committee.

Strategic Plan

NSW RSL Board has approved funding for year one of the Strategic Plan. This involves the start of a marketing campaign to promote the aims and objectives of the RSL. The Plan is ambitious, and its success is essential for the future of the League.

Breakers Amalgamation

The vote on the proposed amalgamation between Breakers and the Mounties Group is indefinitely delayed. The sub-Branch executive committee is satisfied that our existing conditions at the Club will be protected if the amalgamation proceeded.

I am hopeful that we will be open for business in October, and until then, get vaccinated and stay safe.

Regards,

Terry Saxby



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Meet The Members 2
- Opinion Article3-4
- Middle East Day.....5
- Sub Branch History6 to 8

Upcoming Events

- TBA

Meet the Members

Leonard ELLIS



Len joined the Navy in 1966 and was trained as Quartermaster Gunner and spent many years on a number of ships including HMAS *Perth*, *Brisbane*, *Derwent*, *Yarra*, *Stalwart*, *Bayonet* and Torpedo Recovery Vessel *Tuna*.

He was on ***Vendetta*** when the ship was deployed for duty in Vietnam 1969-70 and the *Sydney* in 1972.

HMAS Vendetta was one of three *Daring*-class destroyers built for and operated by the Royal Australian Navy (RAN). The destroyer was built by Williamstown Naval Dockyard and entered service in 1958. During her early career, *Vendetta* was deployed to the Far East Strategic Reserve on multiple occasions. In 1965 and 1966, the destroyer undertook deterrence patrols during the Indonesia-Malaysia Confrontation. Along with several runs escorting the troop transport HMAS *Sydney* to South Vietnam, from late 1969 to early 1970 *Vendetta* was assigned to combat operations and became the only Australian-built warship to serve in a shore bombardment role during the Vietnam War.



Len was discharged from the permanent Navy while serving at the ADFA in 1987 as a Chief Petty Officer.

He joined the Naval Reserves and was also involved in the Young Endeavour project training young Australians.

He resigned from the Reserves as a Chief Petty Officer Boatswain in 2012 due to ill health, with a combined service history of 46 years.

Len is a valued member of the sub-Branch Committee, and for several years he held the position of welfare officer. He also represented the sub-Branch on various community committees, including the HMAS Adelaide mast project.

HISTORY REPEATS AS OUR ALLIES LEFT BEHIND



ON August 18, 1971 then prime minister William Mc-Mahon announced the final withdrawal of Australian combat troops from Vietnam.

It was five years to the day after Australian soldiers fought a battle in a rubber plantation at Long Tan, Phuoc Tuy province South Vietnam.

That battle has become the symbolic Australian event of our 10-year involvement in that war, from the deployment of the Australian Army Training Team in 1962 to the withdrawal of the remaining elements of the unit in February 1973.

In 1971 PM McMahon simultaneously announced a 4000-person reduction in the Australian Army strength to 40,000.

That reduction was reflected in the numbers of Australian 20-year-olds conscripted until the newly elected PM Whitlam totally scrapped the national service scheme in December 1972.

Just over three years later, five days after Anzac Day 1975, the last Americans ignominiously withdrew from Saigon as North Vietnamese regular forces occupied South Vietnam's now former capital.

RAAF C130 aircraft, air defence guards and a Butterworth-based company of 2/4RAR were despatched to evacuate Australian diplomatic and government staff, ultimately an exercise in pure farce.

With the force already inbound, Whitlam refused to let any army Diggers land in the mayhem at Tan son Nhut, not from security concerns but in an act of pure political and personal bastardry.

Initially RAAF ADG sent to assist evacuate Australia's diplomatic mission were left behind when the ambassador insisted on bringing the embassy limousine.

They had to be rescued before also being evacuated.

The aircraft left with empty seats, abandoning loyal Vietnamese to re-education camps and worse. When foreign minister Don Willesee requested some of those allies be evacuated, Whitlam refused, infamously declaring he was "not having those f---ing Vietnamese Balts coming into the country with their religious and political bias against us!"

Whitlam's perfidy to former loyal wartime allies had one more act to play before he was voted from office in December 1975.

Declaring Indonesia's intentions to annex East Timor as "no more than an accident of Western colonial history", he gave tacit approval to president Suharto for the invasion.

Twice in one year ADF personal watched helplessly as former allies were abandoned to fates they didn't deserve and were powerless to prevent.

August 18, 2021, is a date that will now resonate with Australian veterans of another war, frustrated how their Afghan colleagues have been shamelessly abandoned.

Their fate seems as final as our withdrawal.

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Commemoration for Australians involved in the Middle East Area of Operations



The terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 prompted a significant global response in the fight against terrorism. Australia and our allies went to Afghanistan in a joint effort to deny terrorist organisations a safe haven.

Military personnel and civilian staff from various agencies took part in campaigns across the Middle East Area of Operations from 2001.

Australia's participation came at a terrible cost. Forty-one lives were lost in Afghanistan and two lives were lost in Iraq and Kuwait. Their service and sacrifice have helped to save Australian lives from terrorist attacks on our own soil.

On 11 July 2021, the Minister for Defence confirmed all Defence personnel had departed Afghanistan, bringing our nation's longest war to a close.

As we mark the end of our military operations in Afghanistan, it is important to recognise the service and sacrifice of Australians.

A national day of commemoration is proposed to acknowledge the service of Australians in the Middle East Area of Operations, those who supported at home, and to honour those who lost their lives.

The Australian Government is considering the most appropriate day to hold this commemoration based on the views of Australians.

An update will be made shortly.

History of the Terrigal Wamberal RSL Sub Branch.

The Terrigal Wamberal RSL Sub-Branch was inaugurated as a member of the Returned Sailors' & Soldiers' Imperial League of Australia (NSW Branch) on 8 August 1945. Mr G.F. Stewart was elected President with Mr I.E. Brown as Secretary and Mr M. Hobson as Treasurer.

The RSL name was later changed to the Returned & Services League of Australia.

A converted military hut was the initial Sub-Branch premises and was located near the current location of the Terrigal Bowling Club. Once established, the building was referred to as the Terrigal Soldiers' Hall. The Bowling Club became the preferred venue for post-meeting 'smokos'.

In 1949 and reported in the local media as being "unique for the times", the Sub-Branch appointed a woman as Patron. She was Mrs P Sheean who was elected to mark the vast amount of work she had done for the Sub-Branch and her efforts in raising funds.

A Women's Auxiliary was formed in 1953 and assisted in fundraising activities over many years until it disbanded in 1998.



Sub Branch Committee members at the site

In 1964 the Sub-Branch purchased nine acres of land in Dover Road, Wamberal, from a local builder for 1,500 pounds. The banks were initially reluctant to finance the purchase as they did not believe that there was enough equity in the land to cover the loan. As a result, several members were required to underwrite the loan with their guarantees before funding was approved.

Around that time, a public meeting was called to establish an RSL Club. The meeting was well attended, and it was resolved to form a club and call it the Terrigal Wamberal RSL Club.

The Sub-Branch had plans drawn up for a large building with a construction cost of between 300,000 and 500,000 pounds. The Committee felt that the cost of the building was far too expensive, considering the population of the areas was only around 2,000. In addition, there was no town water or sewerage available, and the road to the land was in a state of disrepair.

Further meetings were called during 1965, but interest waned to where membership of the proposed Club ceased to exist.

In 1966 the Sub-Branch decided to try and erect a small clubhouse on their 9 acres. They approached Gosford Brick Works and Sterland Bros. Ltd for the supply of building materials on-time payment without much money. However, they agreed to the request and with voluntary labour from Sub-Branch members and other local supporters, they were able to erect the first stage of the first clubhouse. The debt for the building material was paid off over the next 2-3 years.

On 28 November 1968, a meeting was held in the old CWA Hall Terrigal by persons interested in forming the "The Terrigal Memorial Country Club". Forty-two people were in attendance, and the following executives were elected; President - Harry Hall, Secretary - Peter Bosgard and Treasurer - Geoff Milne.

In 1970, the Sub-Branch Committee decided to call a special meeting to form a new Club under the "Companies Act" and to register the name "Terrigal Memorial Country Club Ltd". Accordingly, the Club was incorporated under the Act on 23 September 1970; at the time the membership of the Club stood at 270.

On three occasions over the next few years, the Club unsuccessfully applied for a liquor licence. Each application was rejected as the licensing authority considered that the population in the area was too small and that there were insufficient sporting activities at the Club to warrant licensed premises. As a result, the Club's only sporting activities were darts and indoor bowls.

The Sub-Branch committee then decided to commence the construction of a small golf course on the existing 9 acres and apply to Gosford Council to lease 25 acres of land adjoining the 9 acres. The Club commenced construction of the first three holes with volunteers from the Sub-Branch and Club and within six months completed the work. In 1972 the members played the three holes three times for their nine-hole competition.

The golf course development created a lot of interest in the area, and soon the membership of the Club increase dramatically, leading to the Court granting the Club's Liquor Licence on 29 September 1973.

Voluntary work continued on additional golf holes. By this time, the Club was able to employ staff to assist with the voluntary labour in the clubhouse and on the golf course. The first greenkeeper was Bob Day, who, with the aid of volunteers, did outstanding work. The first Secretary Manager, Sid Almond, was also appointed in 1973.



Club building circa 1977

In 1974 a further 15 acres of land became available and was purchased for \$15,000. This gave the Club a total of 50 acres of land, with an established clubhouse, tennis courts, bowling greens and a golf course. In 1976 two all-weather tennis courts were built on the lakefront area. In 1978 the clubhouse was extended on the eastern end, and a dining room, extra lounge area, bottom bar games room and toilets upstairs were added.

At this time, the Club had been leasing the building and grounds from the Sub-Branch. The existing RSL Constitution of the Club required it to have

13 directors, 8 of whom must be Sub-Branch members. Each year, it became more difficult to find enough members to serve on the club board. It entailed a considerable financial responsibility and a good deal of voluntary work by the directors.

In 1983 after several Sub-Branch meetings, members agreed to sell the assets of the Sub-Branch to the Club. A condition of the sale was that the Club provides a room for the Sub-Branch to conduct their activities.



Circa 1977



After further redevelopments and for commercial reasons, the name of the Club was changed to the Breakers Country Club (trading as the Terrigal Memorial Country Club) in 2008. The Club remains respectful to those who served, and they continue to abide by RSL ceremonies and tributes. A sandstone wall and Plaque opposite the entrance to the Club is registered as a War Memorial.

While the Sub-Branch no longer has any financial interests in the Club, it operates at Breakers as a not for profit organisation, assisting the ex-services community.

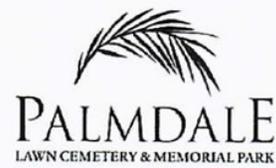
The mission of the RSL and this Sub-Branch is to "Provide for the wellbeing, care, compensation and commemoration of serving and ex-serving Defence Force Personnel and their dependants and promote Government and Community awareness of the need for a stable and progressive Australia."

PRESIDENTS' HONOUR ROLL

| | | | |
|------------------|----------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| 1946 | G F STEWART | 1973-1977 | D BROWNE |
| 1947-1949 | J A BROWN | 1978-1984 | R HENRY |
| 1950-1953 | G MOTTERSHEAD | 1985-1991 | T B FULLER |
| 1954-1955 | M STEDMAN | 1992-1993 | A HILL |
| 1956-1957 | W UPTON | 1994-2001 | B STOKES |
| 1958-1961 | M STEDMAN | 2002-2003 | R LINDSAY |
| 1962-1964 | R SYDENHAM | 2004-2007 | M WARDLE |
| 1965 | W GARDENER | 2008 | B BETHEL |
| 1966 | A SMALL | 2009-2014 | M WARDLE |
| 1967-1972 | H HALL | 2015-2019 | P WHITE |
| | | 2020- | T SAXBY |

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