



RSL

Returned & Services League of Australia

National Annual Report

2007





2007 RSL National Annual Report

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National President's Report - 2007



I am pleased to be able to report on some of the key activities with which the League has been engaged during 2007.

Overview

2007 has been a productive, busy, and fulfilling year for the League. In all aspects of **the League's** objectives, sound achievements have been realised. Most noteworthy are the enhancement of veteran benefits through additional government funding, the growing community contribution made by our Sub-Branched throughout Australia, and the encouraging recruitment of currently serving men and women. **At year's end, the League had** 160,294 Service members and 33,124 Affiliates.

The decline in membership, while regrettable, had been in some respects inevitable. The decline is consistent with the overall reduction in the size of the veteran and Ex-Service population in Australia, as many of our World War II veterans sadly pass on. While we have had some notable successes in recruiting currently or recently serving men and women, and these new members are warmly welcomed, numerically they cannot compensate for the losses.

In late November 2007, the Federal Election saw a change of government after 11 years. It was evident that the lead up to the election focussed both the then Government and Opposition on redressing several of the remaining concerns in the veteran community. The election period also saw the major Ex-service organisations in Australia seeking to present a collective expression of the key issues to all political parties. While the veteran vote in Australia does not have the impact it once did, the veteran community and extended families still constitute a sizeable proportion of the voting population.

Commemorations

Our first National Executive meeting of the year was held in Darwin to coincide with the 65th anniversary of the bombing of Darwin and Northern Australia. This event in 1942 was the most significant attack experienced on the Australian mainland. Many veterans and their families return annually to Darwin to reflect on that difficult experience.

In Canberra, three projects have been launched to establish memorials on or in the vicinity of ANZAC Parade. These memorials include a Peacekeeping Memorial, World War I and World War II Memorials, and a Boer War Memorial. Government support for these projects will be modest.

The year also saw much debate over a proposal to mine copper and gold in the vicinity of the Kokoda Track in Papua New Guinea. This area has become a favourite destination for many young (and not-so-young) Australians wanting to experience for themselves what their forebears experienced during the Kokoda Campaign of 1942. **At year's end, negotiations** continued between the mineral exploration company and the PNG Government, while the Australian Government stood willing to assist PNG in seeking World Heritage Listing of both the Kokoda Track and the Owen Stanley Ranges. The prospects look positive that the outcome will be both protection of this significant region, and economic advancement of the descendants of those who fought with Australian Forces in that significant Campaign.

2007 marked the 40th Anniversary of the 1967 Referendum which effectively gave Australian Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders full citizen ship recognition through their inclusion in the Australian Census. Special commemorative services were conducted to also recognise the remarkable contribution which Aboriginal servicemen and women have **made to Australia's defence since Federation.**

After considerable research and negotiation, the remains of three of the six Australians listed as Missing-in-Action in the Vietnam War were found, identified, and have been repatriated for reinterment. Congratulations for this outcome **are due to the group 'Operation Aussies Home',** the Army History Unit, and then Minister Bruce Billson.

2007 saw the 90th Anniversary of further major engagements on the Western Front in France and Belgium, and notably, the 90th Anniversary of the Charge of the Light Horse at Beersheba in what is now Israel. There is increased awareness in Australia, particularly amongst our younger citizens of the horrendous experiences and tragic losses during World War I.

Veterans' Affairs

The major achievement of the year was **undoubtedly the Prime Minister's announcement, at the RSL National Congress in September, to put in place a more favourable indexation arrangement for disability support pensions.** The Leader of the Opposition, speaking to the Congress, subsequently endorsed the announcement. The legislation was passed within the week.

This outcome should not be seen to undervalue in any way the enormous welfare and pension support which continues to be provided throughout the League by many volunteers who have taken the time to become qualified for this work. This voluntary contribution is literally priceless and ensures that veterans are able to access the support they need.

Our general approach continues to be a steady move away from a long established culture of illness and compensation to one of wellness and rehabilitation. It is clearly recognised that many veterans are suffering because their conditions – physical or psychological – were not diagnosed early enough to benefit from proper treatment. The Australian Defence Force now takes a more active role in rehabilitation, and we are working to ensure that there is an effective transition from Service to post-Service life which provides appropriate support for any conditions which emerge.

The year saw the production of a landmark report on **"The Intergenerational Health Effects of Service in the Military"**. The Government allocated \$13.5 million to progress studies in this field, the first being to examine the health impacts on the children of Vietnam Veterans.

Mental health concerns continue to gain media attention, particularly those arising from our current operations in Iraq, Afghanistan and East Timor. It is a matter of great concern that the ADF Mental Health Service is seriously under-resourced.

Through the work of the National Veterans Mental Health and Wellbeing Forum, the Department of **Veterans' Affairs has launched Operation Life** – A national suicide prevention strategy for the veteran community, and developed **the 'At Ease' mental health awareness program.**

The focus in our welfare work is moving strongly to addressing the needs of our younger service and ex-service men and women. Their circumstances and expectations differ significantly from those of earlier generations. However, we will continue to ensure that our more elderly veterans are not forgotten,

and will seek to fulfil their expectations of ageing with dignity.

Increasing experience with the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act introduced in July 2004 has identified a need for some changes – both with the legislation and the supporting protocols. With regret, there has been some difficulty in progressing some of these changes and we anticipate that new consultative arrangements proposed by the incoming government will facilitate this process. We acknowledge, however, changes that have had to be made within the DVA structure, and pressure applied, including by the RSL, to reduce claims processing times. These may have limited the capacity to convene the Operational Working Group.

Defence

Our relationship with the Defence Force strengthened further this year. While our most practical direct assistance to the ADF is through our bi-annual distribution of AFOF parcels to those serving on operational deployments, our Defence Committee continues to contribute to the development of Defence Policy. The Committee received several briefings during the year from key officers of the ADF. In turn, periodic meetings were held with the then Minister, The Honourable Dr Brendan Nelson, and with the then Shadow Minister, Mr Joel Fitzgibbon. These meetings allowed for the **expression of the League's considered views on a wide range of force structure, personnel and deployment issues.**

Our close engagement also with the Chief of the Defence Force and Service Chiefs fostered a strong appreciation of the value which the League could offer to the Transition Management process as servicemen and women leave the Service. Accordingly, the League was given principal ESO responsibility for facilitating the Integrated People Support Strategy (subsequently referred to as the Transition Management Program). We have engaged with the two pilot programs in WA and SA.

Other interaction with the ADF included :

- Commitment at national and state level to the Defence Reserve Support Council
- Chairing the Forces Advisory Council on Entertainment
- The RSL/ADF Cadet of the Year Program

- Participation in the Australian Defence Force Academy Advisory Council
- Continuing our practice of making substantial awards to the Service colleges.

Our Conditions of Service Committee continued its engagement with Defence and the Defence Force Remuneration Tribunal. Of particular note this year was the submission to and subsequent consultation with the Military Superannuation Review.

The Nature of Service Review was progressed within Defence. The League received several update briefings on this Review, and was engaged directly with a number of related reviews into service anomalies, arising from our National Congress deliberations.

The League

Our National Congress was conducted in Melbourne, comprehensively supported by our Victorian State Branch. The Congress was opened by His Excellency the Governor General, and our Congress Dinner was attended and addressed by both the Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition.

The ANZAC Peace Prize for 2007 was awarded to Mr Ian Simkin of Ballarat, Victoria. Mr Simkin is a school Deputy Principal who has made a substantial contribution to international understanding and goodwill through the connections he has established between his students and schools in Turkey. The Award was presented at the National Congress.

The League made a formal submission to all parties of the Federal Parliament in the leadup to the 2007 Federal Election. In addition, we engaged with all major Ex-Service organisations in presenting a combined ESO submission. Our relationship with those ESOs remains strong, notwithstanding the different emphasis and approach which we all have. While there may be reluctance to acknowledge that The League has a leading role within the Ex-Service Community, such a role is willingly accepted and often expected. This is particularly evident in the operations of our Kindred Organisation Committees, and preparing the framework for pre-election submissions.

Royal Commonwealth Ex-Services League

The Founding Member Nations of the League met during 2007 in Hong Kong to determine an approach to the future of the League to be put before members at the 2008 Triennial Conference in Ghana. Both the National President and National Secretary attended. Significantly, it has been proposed to revise the Constitution to constrain the

League's commitment to those who served the Crown (rather than dependants), and to reduce the annual affiliation fee to a modest amount. These are welcome moves, and in return, we have committed to continue supporting needy British veterans now resident in Australia.

The Australian War Memorial

I value my engagement as a member of the Council of the Australian War Memorial. This involvement affords an opportunity to advance the sympathetic commemorative objectives of both the League and the Memorial, and provide a veteran perspective to key Memorial issues.

The major undertaking in 2007 has been the completion of the **'Conflicts 1945 to Today'** galleries, a significant challenge for the staff of the Memorial. The galleries were opened for preview prior to Christmas, primarily to allow for veteran commentary on the exhibits. This followed extensive stakeholder consultation in which the League was actively engaged. The overall result has been outstanding.

In other areas, the Memorial is enhancing its web-based research capability and on-line sales, continues its unit plaque dedication program, and reaches out to the wider community through the travelling exhibitions.

Challenges

The incoming Government went to the election with a **28 page Veterans' Affairs Policy** document which is being used as the action plan for this parliamentary term. We will work with the Government to support this plan, noting that it reflects largely issues brought forward by the veteran community.

Government-wide budget constraint, intended to contain inflation in Australia, will have an impact on the implementation of some **veterans' policy proposals**. However, there are several proposed enhancements with minimal budget impact which can be progressed.

Working closely with the Australian Defence Force, and engaging with those who have recently served, will be one of our continuing challenges in the year ahead. We owe it to those who are serving Australia with distinction in many parts of the world.

Military Superannuation was the subject of a formal review in 2007. The Report of the Review was presented to the then Government

mid year, but released by the incoming Government in December. Responses to the Report were invited. The League decided to work closely with the Defence Force Welfare Association in responding, as some major concerns had been identified, including :

- the imposition by the Review Team of a cost constraint, not mandated in its Terms of Reference;
- perceived detriment to some service-men and women who may elect to transfer to the proposed defined contribution scheme ; and
- an inadequate response to the issue of indexation of the existing DFRDB and MSBS schemes.

Conclusion

We must recognise that 2007 may have brought sadness to several members of the Veteran Community, and the ADF. Our concern remains with all who have had difficulty, and with it our hope that 2008 will be a better and more fulfilling year.

I formally record my thanks to the many members of the League who have diligently committed themselves to fulfilling our objectives in support of fellow veterans and the Australian Community. I thank particularly those who assume leadership roles in these endeavours. Our appreciation extends also to the agencies with which we deal, **most notably, the Department of Veterans' Affairs.**

BILL CREWS
National President

National Congress – 2007

The 92nd Annual National Congress of the Returned & Services League of Australia was officially opened by His Excellency Major General Michael Jeffery AC CVO MC, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia. The Official Opening was held in the Melbourne Town Hall.

The Minister for Veterans' Affairs, The Hon Bruce Billson MP, represented the Prime Minister, and **Mr Alan Griffin MP, Shadow Minister for Veterans' Affairs**, represented the Leader of the Opposition. The National Secretary, Mr Derek Robson AM, **read the Queen's message to the Congress.**

Mr Ian Simpkin was presented with the ANZAC Peace Prize for 2007 by His Excellency the Governor-General, for his work in forging an enduring interest in Australia and Turkey by creating an extraordinary bond between Australian and Turkish students so that they can gain a greater understanding of our military history and its role in the promotion of international understanding and peace.



Mr Ian Simpkin receiving his ANZAC Peace Prize from the His Excellency the Governor-General and National President.

The National President in his Report to Congress, restated the importance of three themes which continue to encapsulate the enduring objectives of the League - Reaching Out to the Community, Quality Welfare, and Committed Membership.

The National President also spoke on **commemoration and the community, veterans' welfare and the needs of younger veterans.**

A wreath laying ceremony was held at the Shrine of Remembrance in St Kilda Road, and the business sessions of the Congress were held in ANZAC House, Melbourne.

During the Congress, the following national officers were returned:

National President:
Major General Bill Crews AO (Retd)

Deputy National President:
Mr Don Rowe OAM

National Treasurer:
Mr David Sinclair

Overseas Guests attending the Congress were:

- Mr Barry Clark
District President, Royal New Zealand Returned & Services Association
- Mr Peter Cleminson
National Chairman, Royal British Legion
- Maj.Gen (Ret) Bantu Hardjijo
Head, Foreign Relations, Legiun Veteran Republik Indonesia
- Lieutenant General Ruperto Ambil Jr (Ret)
District Commander, Veterans Federation of the Philippines
- Mr Lin Wen-shan
Deputy Minister, Veterans Affairs Commission, ROC, Taiwan
- Colonel Hans Song
Director, Overseas Liaison Department, VAC

Motions

138 Motions were tabled and debated, covering the following topics:

- The League
- **Veterans' Affairs Matters**
- Aged Care in the Veteran Community
- Defence Service Homes
- Defence and Foreign Affairs
- ADF Conditions of Service
- Military Superannuation
- Younger Veterans
- ANZAC, Commemoration, Ceremonial and Memorials
- Social Security and Taxation
- Population and Immigration
- Australian Youth, and
- General Standing Policy on Various Matters

Messages

Messages for a successful congress were received from the following ex-service organisations:

- The American Legion
- Royal Canadian Legion
- Royal Commonwealth Ex-Services League
- Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States
- South African Legion of Military Veterans

Functions

A State Reception, hosted by the Premier of Victoria, The Hon John Brumby MLA, was held during the Congress for RSL National Executive and Delegates.

The National Congress Dinner was held at the Sofitel Hotel, in Collins Street, Melbourne. The then Prime Minister, the Hon John Howard MP and the then Leader of the Opposition, Mr Kevin Rudd MP, took the opportunity to speak to the Congress delegates and observers and others attending the Dinner.



The then Prime Minister, the Hon John Howard MP speaking at the National Congress Dinner.

The general arrangements for the conduct of the National Congress are regularly organised by the National Headquarters staff in Canberra, but any successful Congress could not be achieved without the direct assistance of the host State. Our sincere thanks go to Mr Mike Annett and his wonderful staff at the Victorian State Branch. Their efforts were very much appreciated.

The enormous contribution of the National Headquarters staff ensured the smooth running of this National Congress.

2008 National Congress

This Congress resolved that the 2008 National Congress would be held in Townsville, Queensland.

National Secretary's Report - 2007



National Headquarters has changed the way in which we manage our affairs, project ourselves into the community and provide information for the benefit of members and supporters of the League. As a result, the file management system

has been reviewed to better represent the issues and assist in faster recall of past subjects, there has been a total revamping of the content of the National website and its presentation, and more appropriate response mechanisms have been introduced to cater for the large volume of daily enquiries. There has also been some variation in staff duties to accommodate the changes. It is our view that these collective changes will allow for greater flexibility in dealing with this flow of information, and allow us to better serve the broader Australian community who make the RSL the first port of call whenever they are seeking any information relating to personal service records, medal entitlements, conditions of service, commemorative activity or history.

It has also been timely to undertake this total review of our business management as we look forward to moving to alternate premises during the period of the redevelopment of our present site. Clearly we need to ensure that we will be able to maintain our normal levels of service, regardless that we might not be blessed with the flexibility of our historical office space.

The actual dates for vacating the present site, moving to alternate accommodation and then returning to the new premises, are still unclear. The reasons for this uncertainty is largely beyond our immediate control and includes the tardiness of the final approval process, the unknown timetable for the provision of improved engineering services to the office precinct, the withdrawal of Commonwealth funding for the widening of Constitution Avenue and the Budgetary pressures delaying the announcement of future Government tenancy arrangements. Regardless of this, design work for the new construction is continuing and it is expected that a commencement date of late 2008 will be announced around mid-year.

The Headquarters hosted the regular meetings of the National Executive in May and November. The February National Executive meeting was held in Darwin to support the Darwin City Council and Northern Territory Government activities surrounding the 65th Anniversary of the bombing of Darwin. The September National Executive

meeting was held in conjunction with the National Congress activities in Melbourne. On each of these occasions, the National Executive has taken the opportunity to involve itself in various commemorative and supportive community activities. The National Congress, which was held at ANZAC House in Melbourne, was very well presented and offered another opportunity for the local Sub-Branched and broader community to be involved in the workings of their League.

As always, the National Executive has been well supported by the National Advisory Committees for **Veterans' Affairs, Defence, Youth Heritage and Citizenship**, Defence Conditions of Service, National Tribunal, ANZAC Awards, National Membership and Finance. The work of these Committees is invaluable to the decision making processes of the National Executive, and the voluntary contribution of their members is always very much respected and appreciated. The RSL National Annual Reception, which is regularly held in conjunction with the November National Executive meeting, offered us the opportunity to acknowledge and thank all of these Committee members for their considerable contribution, and also to similarly acknowledge and thank those others in our community who have contributed to the business of the League during the year.

The Headquarters hosted a steady stream of delegations from Australian and International ex-service bodies and it is important that we continue these associations so that we might all gain a greater understanding of each others issues. Similarly, we have hosted several visiting overseas delegations keen to enhance their knowledge through our experience. We also received many calls for assistance from groups and individuals, and the constant request for information from webmail enquirers, which have largely replaced much of the traditional letter writing responses, ensured that we remained connected to the broader Australian community. Importantly, this confirms that Australians are deeply committed to issues related to our military history and commemorative activity and our involvement greatly assists us in meeting our Object that the deeds of those who have served their Nation will never be forgotten.

The National Headquarters acts as a meeting place for several RSL Sub-Branched, Ex-Service Organisations and other related bodies and we look forward to continuing to respond to the needs of the veteran community and the RSL Brand.

DEREK J ROBSON
National Secretary

National Treasurer's Report – 2007

The following Financial Report is the audited financial statements for the National Headquarters of the League for the year ended 30 June 2007.

The net result of the year's operations on an accrual basis was a surplus of \$149,019 compared with a deficit of \$60,988 for the previous year. The principal drivers of this turnaround, amounting to \$210,007, were increases of \$191,330 in donations and \$32,205 in capitation fees.

Also on the income side, Unibic commissions decreased by almost \$13,000 due to lags in receipt of commission payments. This lag is expected to be resolved in 2008. On the expenditure side, variations to line items were almost self-cancelling, with overall expenditure increasing by only \$3,300 **compared to the previous year's results.** Salaries and superannuation, together with provisions for long service leave and annual leave continued to comprise the largest expenditure item at 51% of total expenditure.

As is evident by the increase in donations, the **Headquarters' budget was once again heavily reliant** on the good will of some State Branches for their generous additional contributions. These additional contributions are specifically directed at assisting the

Headquarters to transition towards more extensive and efficient service delivery **reflecting the League's position as a premier Ex-Service Organisation**

The Headquarter's principal long-term liability for many years was the loan taken out to enable refurbishment of the building at 81 Constitution Avenue, Campbell, ACT. This loan has now been extinguished with final payments of \$48,000 loan being made in 2007.

There were no changes to the financial policies of the Headquarters during the period.

The notes to the audited statements also show the balances of the various Trust Funds managed by the National Trustees.

Finally, I would like to record my grateful **appreciation to the Headquarter's staff and to our auditor, Kim Hanna,** whose assistance, guidance and support in shouldering the bulk of the financial work make my own involvement a pleasure.

DAVID SINCLAIR
National Treasurer

THE RETURNED & SERVICES LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA LIMITED
A.C.N. 008 488 097

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The National Executive of The Returned & Services League ("RSL") of Australia Limited, submit herewith the annual financial report for the financial year ended 30 June 2007. In order to comply with the provisions of the Corporations Act 2001, the directors report as follows:

The names and particulars of the directors of the Company during or since the end of the financial year are:

NAME	EXPERIENCE	MEETINGS HELD	ATTENDED
W E Gaynor OAM RFD	Member National Executive - 5 years, 11 months	5	5
DJ McLachlan AO JP	Member National Executive -5 years, 1 month	5	5
W J Crews AO	Member National Executive - 3 years, 9 months	5	5
D E J Rowe OAM	Member National Executive - 3 years, 7 months	5	5
G I Brodie OAM	Member National Executive - 3 years, 2 months	5	5
J H Statton OAM	Member National Executive - 3 years	5	5
A J Scott OAM	Member National Executive - 1 year ,1 month	5	5
D A Formby	Member National Executive - 1 year ,1 month	5	5

The following changes of Directors occurred during the financial year:

Nil

The RSL is a company established in Canberra to conduct the operations of the National Headquarters of the League.

PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES

The Principal activities of the National Headquarters during the course of the year were:

- (i) the continued care and welfare of ex-service personnel;
- (ii) representing the views and opinions of its members to governments, to the public generally and to organisations with interests similar to those of the RSL;
- (iii) the provision of representation before statutory Boards and Tribunals;
- (iv) the liaison with overseas ex-service organisation; and
- (v) overseeing the conditions of service of serving personnel in the Australian Defence Force.

During the year there was no significant change in the nature of those activities.

REVIEW OF OPERATIONS

The net amount of surplus (loss) of the National Headquarters for the year was \$ 149019 (2006: loss \$60,988).

DIVIDENDS

In accordance with the Constitution, the National Headquarters is a company limited by guarantee and accordingly no shares or debentures have been issued and no dividends have been recommended or paid.

CHANGES IN STATE OF AFFAIRS

During the financial year there was no significant change in the state of affairs of the National Headquarters, other than those referred to in the accounts or notes thereto.

SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

There has not been any matter or circumstance, other than referred to in the accounts or notes thereto, that has arisen since the end of the financial year that has significantly affected or may significantly affect the operations of the National Headquarters, the results of those operations, or the state of affairs of the National Headquarters in financial years subsequent to this financial year.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

No significant future developments which may affect the operations or results of the National Headquarters, are envisaged.

INDEMNIFICATION OF OFFICERS AND AUDITORS

During the financial year, the RSL paid a premium in respect of a contract insuring the directors of the company against a liability incurred as such a director to the extent permitted by the Corporations Act 2001. The contract of insurance prohibits disclosure of the nature of the liability and the amount of the premium.

The RSL has not otherwise, during or since the financial year, indemnified or agreed to indemnify an officer or auditor of the company or of any related body corporate against a liability incurred as such an officer or auditor.

AUDITOR'S INDEPENDENCE DECLARATION

A copy of the Auditor's independence declaration as required under section 307C of the Corporations Act 2001 is attached to this report.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Directors

On behalf of the Directors

Director

Director

Date:
Canberra, ACT

THE RETURNED & SERVICES LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA LIMITED

A.C.N. 008 488 097

INCOME STATEMENT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2007

2006		Notes	2007
\$			\$
<u>648,313</u>	Revenue from ordinary activities	3a	<u>861,625</u>
79,537	Administration expenses		88,193
358,755	Employee benefits expense		361,112
33,116	Occupancy expenses		25,796
3,902	Borrowing costs		510
34,074	Depreciation		30,362
57,097	Meeting and conference expenses		39,939
23,323	Insurance costs		21,211
9,935	Accounting and auditing fees		5,140
221	Loss on disposals of assets		-
12,690	Commissions - to States for UNIBIC sales		9,591
<u>96,651</u>	Other expenses from ordinary activities		<u>130,752</u>
<u>709,301</u>	Total Expenses	3b	<u>712,606</u>
<u>(60,988)</u>	(Loss)/Profit from ordinary activities before income tax		<u>149,019</u>
<u>-</u>	Income tax expense relating to ordinary activities		<u>-</u>
<u>(60,988)</u>	Total changes in equity other than those resulting from transactions with owners as owners		<u>149,019</u>

THE RETURNED & SERVICES LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA LIMITED

A.C.N. 008 488 097

BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 30 JUNE 2007

2006 \$		Notes	2007 \$
	Current Assets		
214,118	Cash assets	4	356,626
23,179	Receivables	5	10,215
21,845	Other	6	-
29,379	Inventory		21,475
<u>158,240</u>	Investments	7	<u>162,342</u>
<u>446,761</u>	Total Current Assets		<u>550,658</u>
	Non-Current Assets		
<u>858,942</u>	Property, plant and equipment	8	<u>843,674</u>
<u>858,942</u>	Total Non-Current Assets		<u>843,674</u>
<u>1,305,703</u>	Total Assets		<u>1,394,332</u>
	Current Liabilities		
68,090	Payables	9	42,518
74,178	Provisions	10	87,360
<u>42,000</u>	Interest-bearing liabilities	11	<u>-</u>
<u>184,268</u>	Total Current Liabilities		<u>129,878</u>
	Non-Current Liabilities		
<u>6,000</u>	Interest-bearing liabilities	11	-
<u>6,000</u>	Total Non-Current Liabilities		-
<u>190,268</u>	Total Liabilities		<u>129,878</u>
<u>1,115,435</u>	Net Assets		<u>1,264,454</u>
	Equity		
<u>1,115,435</u>	Retained earnings	15	<u>1,264,454</u>
<u>1,115,435</u>	Total Equity		<u>1,264,454</u>

THE RETURNED & SERVICES LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA LIMITED

A.C.N. 008 488 097

CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2007

2006 \$	Notes	2007 \$
Cash Flows From Operating Activities		
636,589	Receipts from customers	857,509
(609,680)	Payments to employees and suppliers	(650,717)
11,724	Interest received	4,116
<u>(3,902)</u>	Interest paid	<u>(510)</u>
<u>34,731</u>	Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities 20a	<u>210,398</u>
Cash Flows from Investing Activities		
(25,919)	Payments for property, vehicle & equipment	(34,038)
<u>12,267</u>	Proceeds from sale of vehicle, plant & equipment	<u>18,250</u>
<u>(13,652)</u>	Net cash used in investing activities	<u>(15,788)</u>
Cash Flows from Financing Activities		
<u>(42,000)</u>	Repayments of borrowings	<u>(48,000)</u>
<u>(42,000)</u>	Net cash used in financing activities	<u>(48,000)</u>
(20,921)	Net Increase/(Decrease) In Cash Held	146,610
<u>393,279</u>	Cash At The Beginning Of The Financial Year	<u>372,358</u>
<u>372,358</u>	Cash At The End Of The Financial Year	<u>518,968</u>

THE RETURNED & SERVICES LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA LIMITED
A.C.N. 008 488 097

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2007

NOTE 1: Statement of Significant Accounting Policies

The financial report is a general purpose financial report which has been prepared in accordance with the Corporations Act 2001, Accounting Standards and Urgent Issues Group Consensus Views, and complies with other requirements of the law.

The financial report covers The Returned & Services League of Australia Limited as an individual entity. The Returned & Services League of Australia is a company limited by guaranteed, incorporated and domiciled in Australia.

The financial report of the Company complies with all Australian equivalents to International Financial Reporting Standards (AIFRS) in their entirety.

The following is a summary of the material accounting policies adopted by the economic entity in the preparation of the financial report. The accounting policies have been consistently applied, unless otherwise stated.

Basis of Preparation

Reporting Basis and Conventions

The financial report has been prepared on an accruals basis and is based on historical costs modified by the revaluation of selected non-current assets, and financial assets and financial liabilities for which the fair value basis of accounting has been applied.

Accounting Policies

a. Income tax

No provision has been made for income tax as the Company is exempt from taxation under Section 50-5 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997.

b. Inventories

Inventories are valued at the lower of cost and current replacement cost in accordance with *Aus9.1 of AASB 102: Inventories* as the Company is a not-for-profit entity. Costs are assigned to inventory on hand based on the first in first out method.

c. Property, Plant and Equipment

Each class of property, plant and equipment is carried at cost or fair value less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation and impairment losses.

Where an asset is acquired at no cost, the cost is its fair value as at the date of acquisition

The carrying amount of the assets is reviewed annually by directors to ensure it is not in excess of the recoverable amount from these assets. The recoverable amount is assessed on the basis of the expected net cash flows that will be received from the assets employment and subsequent disposal. The expected net cash flows is discounted to their present values in determining recoverable amounts.

THE RETURNED & SERVICES LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA LIMITED
A.C.N. 008 488 097

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2007

Depreciation

The depreciable amount of all fixed assets is depreciated on a diminishing value basis over its useful lives to the Company commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use.

The estimated useful lives used for each class are:

Class of Fixed Asset	Useful Lives
Buildings	77 years
Plant and Equipment	5-13 years

d. Leases

Leases of fixed assets where substantially all the risks and benefits incidental to the ownership of the asset, but not the legal ownership that are transferred to the Company is classified as finance leases.

Finance leases are capitalised by recording an asset and a liability at the lower of the amounts equal to the fair value of the leased property or the present value of the minimum lease payments, including any guaranteed residual values. Lease payments are allocated between the reduction of the lease liability and the lease interest expense for the period.

Leased assets are depreciated on a straight-line basis over their estimated useful lives where it is likely that the Company will obtain ownership of the asset or over the term of the lease.

Lease payments for operating leases, where substantially all the risks and benefits remain with the lessor, are charged as expenses in the periods in which they are incurred.

Lease incentives under operating leases are recognised as a liability and amortised on a straight-line basis over the life of the lease term.

e. Financial Instruments

Recognition

Financial instruments are initially measured at cost on trade date, which includes transaction costs, when the related contractual rights or obligations exist. Subsequent to initial recognition these instruments are measured as set out below and details have been disclosed in Note 18 to this report.

Financial assets at fair value through profit and loss

A financial asset is classified in this category if acquired principally for the purpose of selling in the short term or if so designated by management. Derivatives are also categorised as held for trading unless they are designated as hedges. Realised and unrealised gains and losses arising from changes in the fair value of these assets are included in the come statement in the period in which they arise.

Loans and receivables

Loans and receivables are non-derivative financial assets with fixed or determinable payments that are not quoted in an active market and are stated at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method.

Held-to-maturity investments

These investments have fixed maturities, and it is the group's intention to hold these investments to maturity. Any held-to-maturity investments held by the group are stated at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method.

THE RETURNED & SERVICES LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA LIMITED
A.C.N. 008 488 097

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2007

Available-for-sale financial assets

Available-for-sale financial assets include any financial assets not included in the above categories. Available-for-sale financial assets are reflected at fair value. Unrealised gains and losses arising from changes in fair value are taken directly to equity.

Financial liabilities

Non-derivative financial liabilities are recognised at amortised cost, comprising original debt less principal payments and amortisation.

Derivative instruments

Derivative instruments are measured at fair value. Gains and losses arising from changes in fair value are taken to the income statement unless they are designated as hedges.

Impairment

At each reporting date, the Company assesses whether there is objective evidence that a financial instrument has been impaired. In the case of available-for-sale financial instruments, a prolonged decline in the value of the instrument is considered to determine whether an impairment has arisen. Impairment losses are recognised in the income statement.

f. Impairment of Assets.

At each reporting date, the Company reviews the carrying values of its tangible and intangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have been impaired. If such an indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset, being the higher of the asset's fair value less costs to sell and value in use, is compared to the asset's carrying value. Any excess of the asset's carrying value over its recoverable amount is expensed to the income statement.

Where it is not possible to estimate the recoverable amount of an individual asset, the group estimates the recoverable amount of the cash-generating unit to which the asset belongs.

g. Employee Benefits

Provision is made for the Company's liability for employee benefits arising from services rendered by employees to balance date. Employee benefits that are expected to be settled within one year have been measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liability is settled, plus related on-costs. Employee benefits payable later than one

year have been measured at the present value of the estimated future cash outflows to be made for those benefits.

h. Provisions

Provisions are recognised when the Company has a legal or constructive obligation, as a result of past events, for which it is probable that an outflow of economic benefits will result and that outflow can be reliably measured.

i. Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents includes cash on hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities on the balance sheet.

THE RETURNED & SERVICES LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA LIMITED
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2007

Cash flows are included in the statement of cash flows on a gross basis. The GST component of cash flows arising from investing and financing activities which is recoverable from, or payable to, the taxation authority is classified as operating cash flows.

j. Revenue

Capitations

RSL has an ongoing agreement with the State Chapters in regard to Capitation Revenue. Revenue is recognised on notification from the States as to the number of new memberships, or membership renewals, for a financial period.

Government Grants

Government grants are recognised as income on a systematic and rational basis over the periods necessary to match them with the related costs.

Commissions and Donations

Commissions and donations revenues are recognised when they are received.

Sale of Goods and Disposal of Assets

Revenue from the sale of goods and disposal of other assets is recognised when the entity has passed control of the goods or other assets to the buyer.

Interest revenue

Interest is recognised on an accrual basis.

k. Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amounts of goods and services tax (GST), except:

- where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the taxation authority, it is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of an asset or as part of an item of expense; or
- for receivables and payables which are recognised inclusive of GST.

The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the taxation authority is included as part of receivables or payables.

l. Trust Funds

The financial transactions of the Company are recorded in thirteen separate funds, each being represented by separate net assets and shown either in the balance sheet or notes to the financial statements as follows:

- General Fund (Statement of Financial Performance - Cash)
- Special Funds
- Jubilee Commemorative Fund

**THE RETURNED & SERVICES LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA LIMITED
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2007**

m. Comparative Figures

When required by accounting Standards, comparative figures have been adjusted to conform to changes in presentation for the current financial year.

NOTE 2: Statement of Significant Accounting Policies

On transition to AIFRS, there are no adjustments to equity or profit or loss between previous Australian GAAP and AIFRS.

THE RETURNED & SERVICES LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA LIMITED
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2007

2006	NOTE	2007
\$		\$
	3	
	PROFIT FROM ORDINARY ACTIVITIES	
	Profit from ordinary activities before income tax includes the following items of revenue and expenses:	
	(a) Operating revenue	
367,835	Capitation fees	400,040
120,389	Commission - UNIBIC	107,471
43,902	Grants	40,589
74,737	Donations	265,067
19,866	Royalties	27,031
11,724	Interest	4,116
<u>9,860</u>	Other revenue from ordinary activities	<u>17,311</u>
<u>648,313</u>		<u>861,625</u>
	b) Expenses	
	Depreciation of Non Current Assets:	
10,102	Buildings	11,129
10,599	Equipment, furniture and fixtures	10,560
9,522	Motor vehicles	7,603
1,442	Computer hardware and software	870
<u>2,409</u>	Library, plaques & RSL march	<u>200</u>
<u>34,074</u>		<u>30,362</u>
	Net transfers to/(from) provisions:	
	Employee entitlements	
8,000	Annual leave	2,896
<u>4,500</u>	Long service leave	<u>10,285</u>
<u>12,500</u>		<u>13,181</u>
	Borrowing Costs:	
<u>3,902</u>	Interest - Loans	510
		<u>-</u>
<u>12,667</u>	Operating lease rental expenses	<u>12,527</u>
	Government Grant - Contributions towards:	
3,000	- National Executive	3,000
6,000	- National Congress	6,000
13,000	- National President's Expenses	13,000
12,000	- National Headquarters Travel	12,000
<u>6,000</u>	- Community Consultation	<u>6,000</u>
<u>40,000</u>		<u>-</u>
		<u>40,000</u>

THE RETURNED & SERVICES LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA LIMITED
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2007

2006	NOTE		2007
\$			\$
	4	CASH ASSETS	
500		Cash on hand	500
<u>213,618</u>		Cash at bank	<u>356,126</u>
<u>214,118</u>			<u>356,626</u>
	5	CURRENT RECEIVABLES	
13,751		Trade receivables	1,981
<u>9,428</u>		GST receivable	<u>8,234</u>
<u>23,179</u>			<u>10,215</u>
	6	OTHER CURRENT ASSETS	
<u>21,845</u>		Prepayments	<u>-</u>
	7	INVESTMENTS	
<u>158,240</u>		Current Term deposits	<u>162,342</u>

THE RETURNED & SERVICES LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA LIMITED
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2007

NOTE 8 PROPERTY PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

	Buildings at cost	Equipment, Furniture & Fixtures at cost	Motor Vehicles at cost	Computer Hardware & Software at cost	Library, Plaques & RSL March at cost	TOTAL
Gross Carrying Amount	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Balance start of year	822,896	195,664	51,203	16,558	21,260	1,107,581
Additions	-	2,296	31,742	-	-	34,038
Disposals	-	-	(30,325)	-	-	(30,325)
Balance at end of year	822,896	197,960	52,620	16,558	21,260	1,111,294
Accumulated Depreciation and Amortisation						
Balance at start of year	(90,793)	(112,845)	(12,452)	(14,368)	(18,179)	(248,637)
Depreciation	(11,129)	(10,560)	(7,603)	(870)	(200)	(30,362)
Disposals	-	-	11,379	-	-	11,379
Balance at end of year	(101,922)	(123,405)	(8,676)	(15,238)	(18,379)	(267,620)
Net Book Value						
As at 30 June 2006	732,102	82,819	38,751	2,189	3,081	858,942
As at 30 June 2007	720,974	74,555	43,944	1,320	2,881	843,674

THE RETURNED & SERVICES LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA LIMITED
A.C.N. 008 488 097

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2007

2006 \$	NOTE		2007 \$
	9	CURRENT PAYABLES	
36,690		Trade creditors	4,589
18,802		Other payables	20,434
<u>12,598</u>		Accruals	<u>17,495</u>
<u>68,090</u>			<u>42,518</u>
	10	CURRENT PROVISIONS	
38,376		Annual leave (note 14.)	41,272
<u>35,802</u>		Long service leave (note 14.)	<u>46,088</u>
<u>74,178</u>			<u>87,360</u>
	11	CURRENT INTEREST-BEARING LIABILITIES	
42,000		Secured loan (i) Fully repaid during year	-
		(i) Leasehold certificate for the National Headquarters building 81 Constitution Avenue Campbell ACT	
	12	NON-CURRENT PROVISIONS	
-		Long service leave (note 14.)	-
	13	NON-CURRENT INTEREST-BEARING LIABILITIES	
6,000		Secured loan (i)	-
		(i) Leasehold certificate for the National Headquarters building 81 Constitution Avenue Campbell ACT	
	14	EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	
		The aggregate employee entitlement liability recognised and included in the financial statements is as follows:	
		Provisions for employee entitlements	
74,178		Current (note 9.)	87,360
<u>-</u>		Non-current	<u>-</u>
<u>74,178</u>			<u>87,360</u>
6		Number of employees (on a full-time equivalent basis) at the end of the financial year	6

HOUSTON & HANNA

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT

K D Hanna FCA (Principal)

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INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF THE RETURNED & SERVICES LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA LIMITED

Scope

The financial report and directors' responsibility

The financial report comprises the statement of financial position, statement of financial performance, statement of cash flows, accompanying notes to the financial statements, and the directors' declaration for the Returned & Services League of Australia Limited, for the financial year ended 30 June 2007.

The directors of the company are responsible for the preparation and true and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with the Corporations Act 2001. This includes responsibility for the maintenance of adequate accounting records and internal controls that are designed to prevent and detect fraud and error, and for the accounting policies and accounting estimates inherent in the financial report.

Audit approach

I have conducted an independent audit of the financial report in order to express an opinion on it to the members of the company. My audit has been conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards to provide reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free of material misstatement. The nature of an audit is influenced by factors such as the use of professional judgement, selective testing, the inherent limitations of internal controls, and the availability of persuasive rather than conclusive evidence. Therefore, an audit cannot guarantee that all material misstatements have been detected.

I performed procedures to form an opinion whether, in all material respects, the financial report is presented fairly in accordance with the Corporations Act 2001 and Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements in Australia so as to present a view which is consistent with my understanding of the company's financial position, and performance as represented by the results of its operations and its cash flows.

My procedures included examination, on a test basis, of evidence supporting the amounts and other disclosures in the financial report, and the evaluation of accounting policies and significant accounting estimates made by the directors.

While I considered the effectiveness of management's internal controls over financial reporting when determining the nature and extent of our procedures, our audit was not designed to provide assurance on internal controls.

The audit opinion expressed in this report has been formed on the above basis.

Independence

In conducting my audit, I followed applicable independence requirements of Australian professional ethical pronouncements and the Corporations Act 2001.

In accordance with ASIC Class Order 05/83, I declare to the best of our knowledge and behalf that the auditor's independence declaration set out on page 17 of the financial report has not changed as at the date of providing my audit report.

Audit Opinion

In my opinion, the financial report of the Returned & Services League of Australia Limited is in accordance with:

- (a) the Corporations Act 2001, including:
 - (i) giving a true and fair view of the company's financial position as at 30 June 2007 and of its performance for the year ended on that date; and
 - (ii) complying with Accounting Standards in Australia and the Corporations Regulations 2001; and
- (b) other mandatory professional reporting requirements.

.....
Kim D. Hanna
Registered Company Auditor

National Recruiting/Membership Report – 2007

Introduction

The League's membership continues to age in line with the demographics of the Nation. Although Service membership indicated a decline of less than three percent in that category, it was pleasing to note that South Australia, Northern Territory, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory had shown an improvement for the first time. Furthermore, Life Membership had shown an improvement in that the decline had slowed,

with Queensland and the ACT recording substantial improvements of 13.2% and 10.3% respectively. Affiliates on the other hand had made a substantial contribution of 13.2% increase to the membership total with Victoria providing a minimum of 14.8%. WA had also introduced new initiatives which would only be apparent in the forthcoming new year through its new facilities and membership card systems.

Membership Statistics

State	% of National Population	Service Members 31/12/06	Life, Life/Sub Members 31/12/06	Affiliates 31/12/06	Total Members plus Affiliates 31/12/06	% of RSL for 2006	Service Members 31/12/07	Life, Life/Sub Members 31/12/07	Affiliates 31/12/07	Total Members plus Affiliates 31/12/07	% of RSL for 2007
NSW	33.7	50,548	10,109	Nil	60,567	31.2	48,312	9,448	Nil	57,760	29.9
VIC	24.9	36,139	2,042	22,018	60,173	31.0	34,537	1,956	25,365	61,858	32.0
QLD	18.7	34,784	5,572	Nil	40,379	20.7	33,805	6,309	Nil	40,114	20.7
SA/NT	8.8	8,304	1,364	4,612	14,280	7.3	8,325	1,193	4,923	14,441	7.5
WA	9.9	10,115	340	1,888	12,343	6.3	9,777	308	1,776	11,861	6.1
TAS	2.4	4,244	143	649	5,036	2.6	4,432	140	921	5,493	2.8
ACT	1.6	1,431	183	33	1,647	0.9	1,550	202	139	1,891	1.0
TOTAL	100.0	145,565	19,753	29,200	194,425	100.0	140,738	19,556	33,124	193,418	100.0

Details of the State Branch statistics above include comparative figures with the National population as per the Australian Bureau of Statistics published survey.

National and State Branch Activities

- All States continued to promote their activities through various media outlets, and it was pleasing to report the highly successful advertising campaign emanating from Queensland which was designed to be of assistance to all States in the method of its delivery.
- States had focussed their attention on promoting events and information through the electronic media and had made substantial investments in providing services and information through their web sites.
- The National Executive constantly reviews efforts to promote membership through improved marketing avenues and membership forums, and were pleased to note the developments which had been undertaken at Branch and, in particular, Sub-Branch levels.
- The States have advised progress in their investigations in providing interstate membership transfer facilities for Service and Life/Subscribing members. This will overcome the difficulties experienced by serving members of the ADF and retirees who migrate from State to State.
- It was the belief of all States that a proposal to the National Executive on a National

Membership Strategy be developed and to link the Mission Statement and Objectives of the League to the Membership Plan through a focussed Marketing Program.

- The National Membership Committee was of the view that communications from the Sub-Branched was vital to the success of any venture undertaken by the League in the area of membership.

Future Directions and Challenges

We all note that the ageing of our membership concurrent with presenting the benefits of the League to younger veterans and their dependants remains the foremost membership challenge. The League will attract younger members if we continue to present as an organisation which is valued, energetic, relevant, and supportive.

The introduction of the National Membership Forum to succeed the membership Committee in 2008, chaired by the CEO of Victoria State Branch, promises a refreshing change in direction for our membership efforts.

BILL CREWS
Chair, National Membership Committee

Queensland Branch Report - 2007



State President
Doug Formby

2007 has seen good progress in the operations and effectiveness of the RSL in Queensland. The restructure of the administrative and financial arrangements is well underway as we seek to be relevant and reflect modern business practice,

without sacrificing our principle role of the care and well being of our membership.

As the State President, the issues of particular interest to me have been:

Membership

Through a well planned and funded campaign we have arrested the slide in our membership and expect to move into positive growth in 2008. Reconnecting with younger veterans and currently serving members of the ADF has proven to be of real benefit. The greatest improvement has been at a Sub-Branch level where the Membership Officers have been out selling the benefits of League membership in their local communities. Allied to a strong Citizens' and **Women's Auxiliaries network**, the membership of the RSL has grown in areas previously thought to be in decline. In 2008 throughout Queensland we will be running a Membership drive to produce a real increase in numbers compared to previous years.

Other ESOs

The formation of the State Kindred Organisations Committee (KOC) has been very successful. The leadership of nearly 20 other ESOs has met regularly at ANZAC House to explore the many issues for veterans on which we can all agree. The result has been a coordinated response to the Federal Election Campaign, the Budget and **the PM's Advisory Committee** based upon a willing and cooperative approach with the other ESOs **accepting the RSL's initiative but not feeling that** their particular area of interest and membership was threatened. We see this being one of the big items in 2008 as we increase the size of the KOC and contact even more organisations.

Youth

The centre piece of our effort to 'nurture the youth of Australia' was our RSL Youth Development Program. We provided \$500,000 and in partnership with Bond University delivered 128 scholarships, State wide, to deserving students in Years 11 and 12 who have achieved and shown promise in the academic, sporting and cultural/community fields. At a finale for the 2008 program held at Bond University, including a leadership forum, the response from the winners and their parents was over whelming. Their gratitude to the RSL was generous.



ANZAC Day

As in all States, ANZAC Day 2007 was bigger and better than ever. The support from the community at the Dawn Services and marches continues to grow. We are examining the challenges created by a diminishing number of veterans and an increasing number of descendants who wish to participate. The focus and very special nature of ANZAC Day must be protected and we have received very positive support from the State and Local Governments in the drive to increase public awareness and respect for ANZAC Day.

Welfare

A major task is to expand our Pensions and Welfare Services across the State in the face of growing difficulties in maintaining the traditional volunteer to undertake this essential work. We also seek to ensure that welfare is not just seen as the gaining of material benefits through pensions etc. Welfare is all about current able bodied members knowing of and providing assistance (mateship) to those in need, in hospital or alone.

A State Minister For Veterans Affairs

Following my observations and discussions with the President of the Victorian Branch, I approached the Queensland State Premier late in 2007 and planted the thought that we ought do the same thing. Discussions will be held in May 2008 between the Premier and the RSL in Queensland to get matters underway.

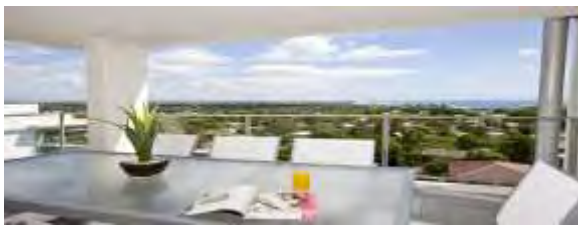
Art Union



Ongoing product innovation in 2007 proved popular with Art Union supporters. Along with traditional waterfront prestige homes, multiple property games such as the Golden Treasure Art Union® and Ultimate Trifecta™ were well received. Property locations were also quite diverse and included Emerald Lakes, Benowa, Upper Coomera, Hope Island, Biggera Waters, Mermaid Waters, Caloundra, Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne.



Customers continue to provide their support through sales channels that offered them maximum convenience and flexibility including VIP auto debit, call centres, prize home, internet and retail agents. The robust architecture of Art Union lottery systems enabled high levels of customer service to be offered across all channels.



Girl in a Million



The Quest underwent a number of changes during 2007. These included, the current quest year being extended to June 2008 with State Finals being held on the 19 July 2008; the Lady Mayoress of Brisbane, Mrs Lisa Newman, accepted the position of GIM Patron and a new logo was introduced.

In addition, variable sponsorship levels were introduced to encourage sponsors to increase their sponsorship amounts which resulted in greater exposure for their products and services throughout the RSL.



Reining GIM
Kelly-Anne Taylor



Reining Golden Girl
Alison Stewart

General Fundraising

General Fundraising includes merchandise sales, the annual Poppy Appeal and raising funds via the Eternal Flame Foundation.

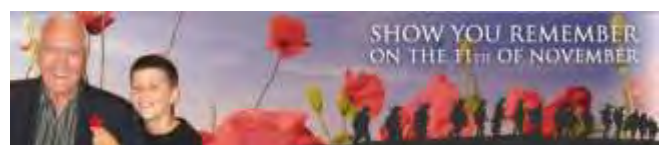
- Merchandise Sales

The introduction of the 60th anniversary Peacekeepers Badge and reworked Long Tan Cross proved popular and sizeable orders were received from Sub-Branches, ESOs and other States. In 2008 we will introduce a 'One Stop Shop' which will enable members of the League throughout Australia to order items off the web or by telephone. Stock lines will include memorabilia, clothing and corporate gifts. The products will include branded items with the RSL logo and the three Australian Services.

The 'One Stop Shop' will enable members to access a greater range of products which will be updated regularly. A separate flyer will be included in RSL News prior to opening.

- Poppy Appeal

The Poppy Appeal was again very successful with the Premier, Anna Bligh, and Brisbane Lord Mayor, Campbell Newman, both in attendance at the launch. The highlight was a competition between the Defence Forces to scale a vertical wall. Surprisingly the comp was won by a Navy Petty Officer.



New South Wales Branch Report – 2007

90th Anniversary

On February 17th 1917, 18 months after the first formal meeting of returned soldiers had taken place in Sydney, the NSW Branch of the Returned **Sailors' and Soldiers' Imperial League of Australia** agreed to affiliate with Branches in the other States. As a result, 2007 was marked as the 90th anniversary year in NSW of what is now the Returned and Services League of Australia.

A Wreath Laying Ceremony at the ANZAC Memorial on June 1 and a Thanksgiving Service at Christ Church St Laurence two days later provided the most solemn occasions. The Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service was most impressive, with a Service flag party provided by the ADF and music from the choir of Christ Church. NSW Branch Chaplain Monsignor Brian Rayner officiated, assisted by chaplains from the three services.

State President Don Rowe presented the NSW Branch Original Charter to Monsignor Rayner. It was placed on the high altar throughout the service before being handed back to the State President at the conclusion.

A special commemorative issue of the NSW Branch magazine 'Reveille', surveying the history of the RSL in NSW and reflecting on the many achievements over the past 90 years, was produced and distributed to all members. 2007 also marked the 80th anniversary of the first issue of 'Reveille', and the commemorative issue provided a fascinating view of history through its articles and illustrations.



Special Commemorative Issue of Reveille

State Congress - Constitutional Reform

The most significant decision taken at the 91st State Congress, held at the Rooty Hill RSL Club on May 29 and 30, was that the State Branch constitution needed reform. During debate it was pointed out that State Council had been doubled in size after WWII when membership was at its peak, and that it was unrealistic to maintain the same structure now that numbers had fallen by 50 per cent. A proposal was put that the number of State Councillors should be halved, and the number of committees slashed from the current list of 35.



The last of the super-size State Council

As a result of that decision, an Extraordinary State Congress was held in Sydney on November 25 to amend the constitution. It is the biggest change to the NSW Branch in 60 years. From the rising of the 2008 Annual Congress the new State Council will have 14 members – a dramatic reduction from 29. All positions were opened to election. Nominations were called for State President, Honorary State Treasurer and 12 State Councillors; 6 of whom will represent metropolitan membership, 3 the northern country sub-Branched and 3 the southern country sub-Branched. Those elected will serve a three-year term.

More responsibility will be placed on District Councils, giving State Councillors more time to work on strategic long term planning for the State Branch as a whole.

Membership

Sadly, and despite energetic recruitment campaigns, the number of members in NSW continues to decline. At the end of 2007 there were 57,760 members, a fall of almost 3,000 in

12 months. There were 28,060 members in metropolitan sub-Branches, 28,480 in country sub-Branches, and 1220 unattached.

Twenty years ago membership stood at 117,777, and ten years ago at 89,568.

The State Recruiting Officer has travelled throughout NSW, attending many functions and public events to publicise the League and its benefits, and membership forms are given to serving and retiring ADF personnel. By the end of 2007 more than 500 honorary memberships had been added, but age is now cutting deeply into the ranks of our World War II members.

Welfare And Benevolent Institution

During 2007, the Institution provided financial assistance for 19 funerals and to 25 veterans and their dependants. This assistance included the payment of utility accounts, rent, medical expenses and repair costs.

The Institution's net assets totalled more than \$6.6 million, an increase of \$415,366. The surplus for the year was \$457,674 compared to \$535,582 for the previous year.

Effective communication was maintained through articles in 'Reveille' and the 'WBI Newsletter', and visits to sub-Branches, District Councils and other forums have provided the opportunity to interact **with those who can benefit from the Institution's services.**

Pension and Advocacy services are being utilised increasingly by serving members of the ADF as well as by the broader ex-service community. Information Section staff make regular visits to Defence establishments in the Sydney area to inform serving members of the assistance that is available. Pension Officers provide advice on **entitlements under the Veterans' Entitlement Act, the Safety Rehabilitation and Compensation Act, and the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act.** Advocates prepare and represent claimants **at the Veterans' Review Board.**

During 2007, **the RSL Women's Auxiliaries** donated \$271,466 to the Welfare and Benevolent Institution. This was despite a tougher year for fund-raising because of economic and drought conditions.

At year's end, there were 200 financial Women's Auxiliaries with a membership of 4,551. During the year six Auxiliaries closed down, mostly through age and the inability to recruit new members.

Commemorations

ANZAC Day services in Sydney were held in heavy rain, although most of NSW remained parched. Several thousand people attended the Dawn Service at the Cenotaph, and 19,418 people took part in the March through Martin Place and along George Street. At the Commemoration Service at the ANZAC Memorial in Hyde Park, NSW Premier Morris Iemma told those assembled it was worth remembering that one in every three ANZAC Days since Gallipoli has taken place with Australian men and women serving overseas.



The 'Under 16s' on ANZAC Day

The first Sydney service to recognise the contribution that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander veterans have made to this country was held at the ANZAC Memorial in Hyde Park on May 31. Although a conventional wreath-laying ceremony took place, an unusual feature was the floating of a wreath in the Pool of Reflection, by Uncle Jimmy Little and Aunty Mavis Halvorson, assisted by Reece and Shari Russell from East Hills Public School, who waded out to anchor the wreath.



Reece and Shari Russell from East Hills Public School

The deaths of two Australian soldiers in Afghanistan during the previous month added a poignant note to the Remembrance Day Service

at the Cenotaph in Martin Place. About 500 people gathered to hear guest speaker Colonel Roger Noble, a veteran of East Timor, Iraq and Afghanistan, evoke the memory of the 1917 Charge at Beersheba by the Australian Light Horsemen.

Scholarships and Awards

The 32nd award of the Sir William Yeo Scholarship went to Ms Tiffany Cole of Cooranbong, who will study for a Bachelor of Veterinary Science at Sydney University. The scholarship provides an allowance of \$600 per annum for a student enrolling for a degree in the area of Rural Science, Veterinary Science or Agriculture.

The Sir Colin Hines Scholarship, available to children of Vietnam Veterans, was awarded to 12 students: Kathleen Basman, Marcus Brown, Michael Chiem, Katie Clarke, Deborah Cleland, Nicholas Cleland, Zachary Gazzard, Leigh Hoang, Lynden McGuiggan, Jillian Mason, Chinh Nguyen and Garry Pham. Each received a cheque for \$1200 to assist with their tertiary education.

The F S Maher Memorial Scholarship was established in 1972 to honour the memory of a former State President. The scholarship assists in nurses training and education for those working with ex-servicemen and women. One scholarship for \$1000, two for \$500 and two for \$250 were awarded in 2007. The recipients were Tracy Lee and Jocelyn Wright (Concord Hospital), Sue Forty and Ronald Fraser (Lady Davidson Private Hospital) and Erris Mullins (RSL LifeCare).

The George Quinsey Trust pays for enrolment or tuition fees for University or TAFE students in accountancy, business, commerce or economics or in an Arts degree incorporating those disciplines. In 2007 scholarships were awarded to eight students.

The Australia My Country competition is run by sub-Branches across the State in co-operation with public and independent schools in their area.



Australia My Country Winners

The 14 categories from Years 3-10 include essays, poetry, artwork and electronic media. The winners were presented with their certificates in a ceremony at Government House by the Governor of NSW, Professor Marie Bashir, and State President Don Rowe.

The Cadet of the Year competition is conducted annually by the NSW Branch in conjunction with the ADF and the National RSL to find the top Cadet in each of the three Services. Cadets are assessed in Drill, First Aid, General Knowledge, a presentation on a military subject, and a personal interview. The 2007 winners are Cdt AB Danielle Cahill (TS Sirius, from Kogarah); Cdt WO2 Ben Mathwin (211 Army Cadet Unit, from Adamstown); and Cdt Sgt Benjamin Hoiles (331 Squadron, from Coffs Harbour). They will join cadets from other States and Territories on a tour of Vietnam in May 2008, including participation in commemorative services at the sites of the Battles of Coral and Balmoral.

Day Clubs and Youth Council

RSL Day Clubs were started in NSW 20 years ago as a joint venture between the League and the Department of Veterans' Affairs. There are 70 clubs in the State, each sponsored by an RSL sub-Branch. New clubs commenced during 2007 at Albury, Woy Woy and Earlwood/Bardwell Park.

The Day Clubs are run by volunteers to help socially isolated older members of the local community who are unable to take part in more active programs available to the public. Each club is autonomous in operation and financially independent, with the sponsoring sub-Branch providing ongoing support. At its formation, each club receives a donation from State Branch and the sub-Branch, and members pay a nominal sum each time they attend. DVA provides an establishment grant to purchase equipment, furniture and games.

Volunteers organise transport to and from the club venue, club activities and financial arrangements. Mr Ted Richards has been the State Co-ordinator throughout the past 20 years but regrettably has announced that he will retire in 2008.

The NSW RSL Youth Council is elected by the State Council to administer and control the Youth Movement. It assists and advises Youth Clubs, introduces sporting and cultural activities, and promotes good citizenship, observance of the law and healthy sportsmanship.

There are 48 RSL Youth Clubs in NSW, providing diverse activities such as swimming, ballroom dancing, gymnastics, netball and soccer. Reciprocal visits are held with RSA Youth Clubs in New Zealand. The Youth Club movement has not only survived but has thrived for more than 50 years.

Retirement Villages

A major development for the RSL ANZAC Village, **best known as the RSL Veterans' Retirement Village**, at Narrabeen was the opening of a magnificent complex of apartments, officially dedicated and named as Villers-Bretonneux. Constructed on the site of the former nursing home, the residences take advantage of the sun, ocean breezes and glorious views across Collaroy Plateau and Narrabeen Lake. The opening ceremony in April was attended by the Minister **for Veterans' Affairs**, The Hon Bruce Billson MP, the Consul-General of France, Lionel Majeste-Larrouy, and representatives of French veterans and the town of Villers-Bretonneux.



Villers-Bretonneux Complex at Narrabeen

In December, RSL LifeCare took over the management of Myall Lodge, a recently extended and refurbished aged care facility at Hawks Nest on the northern shores of Port Stephens. Myall Lodge, a joint venture between the Tea Gardens sub-Branch and the Community Retirement Association, was opened in 1992 as a 10-bed facility to support veterans in the Great Lakes region. The complex now has 24 beds.

Victorian Branch Report – 2007

2007 has been a busy and productive year for the Victorian Branch, with the privilege of hosting the RSL National Congress one of the highlights. The Branch has continued to extend and refine the way in which we deliver welfare support. A review of our Strategic Plan, in the wake of our Future of the League Forum in late 2006, also occurred. The introduction of two key support and guidance documents, the Welfare and Aged Care Manual and the Corporate Governance Compliance Manual, reflect the contemporary **nature of the Branch's mix of our core business of** welfare, and the commercial and regulatory framework which supports it. David McLachlan was returned unopposed as President in 2007, but we farewelled Mal Bugg after 24 years serving on the State Executive. Rob Webster was elected as Senior Vice President and George Logan as Vice President. **The State President's profile and** standing across government, commerce and the veteran community, ably supported by his Vice Presidents, other members of the State Executive and the ANZAC House staff, continue to sustain **the League's reputation and open up new** opportunities for our work in both the veteran and wider community.

Welfare And Related Activity

Jeff Jackson, the State Branch Manager of Veterans' Welfare and Entitlement Support, together with his outposted Advocates, continue to do good work in support of veterans and dependants seeking DVA support and entitlements. Their expert advice underpins the efforts of our mostly volunteer Welfare and Pensions Officers across the sub-branch network. Jeff and the Advocates are also steadily building their own experience and training in SRCA and MRCA as the number of cases involving post VEA veterans build, **and Jeff's personal move to** a more accessible 'near the street' location on the ground floor of ANZAC House has worked well. His own high degree of interaction and integration with Aged and Health Support, managed by Robyn Pritchard, provides a very holistic approach to veterans' and dependants' needs and is setting an example of how we would like to see a fully Integrated Welfare Model functioning across the State over the next couple of years.

Our Aged Care Coordinator's work is well regarded, and two more regions established the service with initial DVA Grant funding in late 2007. Our Ballarat based ACC has now extended her footprint into the Horsham area to support

many of our smaller sub-branches in the Southern Wimmera. The transition to ACCs being locally employed by a larger licensed sub-branch, and regionally funded by surrounding sub-branches is underway as the initial DVA grants have now run their course. A high degree of interaction now occurs between the ACCs and the Welfare Coordinators that some larger sub-branches also employ. This interaction is complemented by the dedicated support provided by ANZAC House staff on the training and retention of volunteers, and our partnership with the VVAA in the Veterans Centre Project. These are a generic network of TIP trained advisers who assist all veterans and now number 24 centres state wide, often, but not always, co-located with RSL sub-branches. This network will also play a significant part in providing specialist support and advice to serving men and women, as we establish our presence on the major ADF establishments in Victoria as part **of the RSL's role in the Integrated Personnel** Support Strategy announced in August 2007.

Appeals

Our sub-branch network and our 'army' of volunteer sellers have had another outstanding year, raising \$2,178,976 during our ANZAC Appeal and setting a new record for our Poppy Appeal, of \$1,560,394.



State President, Major General David McLachlan AO (Retd) with Professor Blainey at the Lest We Forget Art Exhibition.

Once again the selling effort at the MCG on ANZAC Day was a fantastic one, with our young volunteer sailors from HMAS Cerberus gathering over \$70,000 in a couple of hours. The launch of our Poppy Appeal at ANZAC House was another stand-out event, with local school children who entered the Lumina **Gallery's Lest** We Forget Art Exhibition displaying and discussing their artwork. We were also privileged to have the historian

Geoffrey Blainey provide the Opening Address on the significance of Remembrance Day.

Our Director of Appeals, Clive DeJussing and his team provided superb administrative and logistics support, together with some innovative improvements, such as re-vamped selling trays and a card for all sellers explaining how the money raised is used, which were well received. Clive DeJussing will retire in 2008 and we will miss his energy and quiet efficiency a great deal but his team will provide great support to his successor. That person will face a big challenge in the next few years as we must continue to market our Appeals in a contemporary way and find new and innovative ways to connect with the public and raise funds as our Second World War seller ranks continue to thin.

Membership

At the end of 2007, our total membership stood at 61,858 which is comprised of 34,537 Service Members and 25,365 Affiliates, together with Life and Life Subscriber Members. Affiliate growth continues to be strong, but the challenge of ensuring we retain a strong nucleus of Service Members, particularly from the post 1975 demographic, will be a priority in 2008. The bedding in of our new reciprocal rights card, the electronic data base that supports this, and the timely distribution of cards from our supplier to new members have all been areas of improvement this year. In the latter part of 2007 an emphasis in those sub-branches close to Reserve units on increasing the support and links between the two, and the active support the RSL gave in supporting the Victorian Reservists who formed the mid-year rotation to the Solomons, gained us many new Service Members who are currently serving Reservists. Continuing this approach will be part of our ongoing strategy as we embark on a concerted Service Member recruiting drive in 2008.

Finance And Quality Assurance

The financial affairs of the State Branch remain transparent and well managed through the continued diligence of the Branch Honorary Treasurer John Cullen and the CFO Mark Sherlock, and his team. Our property portfolio, insurance and audit assistance areas have been especially active. The potential to access new sources of government regional and community development funds to assist many of our older rural and regional sub-branches to upgrade buildings has also been an area of much effort in 2007.

Improving the transparency of both State Branch and sub-branch financial performance and accounts, which significantly assists us in providing support to smaller sub-branches, remains an area of focus. The work of Quality Assurance in ensuring our licensed sub-branches are meeting their obligations to make a significant contribution to **veterans' activities** and wider community programs and good works from their trading revenue, is also ongoing.

Much work was also done in 2007 in establishing a central pool of funds based on contributions from some of our larger commercial sub-branches. This will assist in supporting both Aged Care Coordinators in remote parts of the State and help smaller sub-branches with modest means to undertake essential repair and facilities improvement for the benefit of their membership.

Licensed Sub-Branch Association

Commercial activity has been strong in 2007 but also well managed and promoted through our Corporate Governance initiatives, and the launch, in late 2007, of our Community Benefits booklet which highlights the important role our licensed sub-branches play in providing both financial and volunteer resources in support of our Veterans and also wider social projects and initiatives in local communities.

Major events in the LSBA network have included support to the ANZAC Day Gunfire Breakfast, the AFL Grand Final Luncheon and Brownlow Dinner, the LSBA Hall of Fame Dinner, which emphasized the role of volunteers, and the AGM which was held in Mildura this year. In 2007 a new event, the RSL Family Race Day, was held at Moonee Valley in late March. It was an opportunity for our ANZAC Appeal sellers to tackle punters, as well as providing a free day at the races for our members and families. The support shown was sufficient for us to plan on continuing the event in 2008. Within the LSBA team, Michelle Jones, our LSBA Liaison Officer has left and will be missed. The opportunity was taken to expand her role into one of providing pro-active advice on commercial analysis and strategic business development. Rohan Lawson has come on board in this new role, reporting to Mark Johnson in his wider Chief Operations Officer role.

Commemoration

Great Ocean Road Memorial

Just prior to ANZAC Day, the State President delivered the keynote address at the unveiling of a splendid statue at the entrance of the Great

Ocean Road near Lorne to mark the 75th anniversary of its opening. This occasion reinforced the fact that the Great Ocean Road is **in fact the world's largest War Memorial**, and the RSL was instrumental in supporting the project in the post WWI period as a means of building a significant community infrastructure project while also assisting in the employment of ex-servicemen, and commemorating the fallen. Wide media coverage of this significant commemorative event also highlighted the support the RSL provided in the design work and research that the sculptor undertook in creating the memorial statue, which was of two ex-diggers working on the Road.

ANZAC Day

Once again estimates were of a record number attending a fine and dry Dawn Service at the Shrine of Remembrance. The numbers, which could have been as high as 40,000, are now beginning to spill onto the Southern side of the Shrine, so provision will need to be made for this next year. The traditional Gunfire Breakfast, which is a great training activity for the ADF Catering School, was well attended and supported.



Light Horse contingent at the ANZAC Day March

The March itself went very close to time this year thanks to adjustments based on the experience of 2006. Key changes were the circulation of a Protocol Card to participants prior to the March setting out some basic rules to maintain decorum and momentum. We also had extra Marshal support from Defence, particularly Reserve junior officers and NCOs from 4 Brigade who did a great job, golf buggies from Australian Seniors Finance to assist flagging veterans, and parking access at Federation Square right next to the March form up points. These measures will be further refined and improved for next year. **The Governor's** excellent speech was the centre piece of the Official Service that immediately followed the March, with his focus on the impact of war service on the partners and families of veterans. The

traditional Collingwood and Essendon ANZAC game at the MCG drew a record crowd of over 90,000 people. A thrilling match was eventually won by Collingwood, with the State President presenting the trophy to the Collingwood Coach and Captain, and the award of the ANZAC Day RSL Medal presented to Heath Shaw of Collingwood as the Best Player.

This year was also significant in that our hard working team of volunteers who co-ordinate the March, under the auspices of the ANZAC Day Commemoration Council, received First Prize in the City of Melbourne Community Events Award – a very well deserved honour. This was received by the Chief Marshal, Lieutenant Colonel Paul Riley.

Our traditional State Branch ANZAC Church Service, always conducted on the Sunday prior to ANZAC Day was also well attended this year, with the Governor present as the principal guest. The Service is always conducted at one of the major city churches and Wesley Church was the venue this year.

- ANZAC Reception

Our reception in the President's Room this year was again graced by the presence of the Governor, Professor David de Kretser and Mrs de Kretser. This proved one of our largest gatherings for many years. A change this year was to invite many of our corporate and business friends as well as the traditional Defence, ex-service and government invitees. This proved to be a good mix of people who enjoyed a convivial evening but also saw first hand the range and **diversity of the RSL's activity in Victoria, in a** setting that emphasises our continuing focus on our core objectives of welfare, commemoration and education.

Remembrance Day Ceremonies

- State Branch Remembrance Day Service - Springvale War Cemetery

This year the Minister for Veterans Affairs, The Honourable Bruce Billson MP, delivered the keynote address at a well attended Service in brilliant sunshine. The Service attracted its usual excellent turnout of Federal and State MPs, Local Government representatives, Defence Force senior representatives, senior officers of the State Branch, and many members of the ex-service community. The Melbourne Welsh Male Choir was again in fine voice, with the Box Hill City Band providing the music. Participation from local schools in the Service was again a high

point, with poppies laid at the headstones of each of the 611 servicemen and women interred in the Cemetery. Mounted troopers from the Light Horse/Field Artillery Museum, as well as personnel in First World War infantry dress from the Australian Great War Association, provided atmosphere and, of course, this year the Service fell on 11 November. All who attended were able to enjoy an afternoon tea kindly provided by the Springvale Necropolis Trust immediately after the Service.

- Remembrance Day Service – Shrine of Remembrance

The Service at the Shrine was particularly well attended. The Governor spoke on the after effects of war service most movingly. The large crowd was then encouraged to remain and enjoy a series of wartime readings by the well known actor Steve Bisley and accompanying music. This was a new initiative for the Shrine and was well received given the fine weather. Our traditional **bugler presence at CBD intersections at 11 o'clock** was extended to the South Bank shop and restaurant precinct this year, and this was also well respected and observed.

2007 State Conference

Our 2007 State Conference was opened by the Minister for Veterans Affairs, The Honourable Bruce Billson MP, and significant speakers included Josephine Baxter of Drugs Free Australia, with official guests including the National President, the Shadow Minister for Veterans Affairs Mr Alan Griffin MP, the Secretary of DVA, Mr Mark Sullivan, and Professor Ken Donald of the RMA. In recent years the number of delegates has been decreasing, but this year saw the trend reversed. Caulfield Racecourse again provided a very accessible and appropriate venue for the Conference.

The declaration of the State Executive election results saw the State President returned unopposed, and Rob Webster and George Logan elected as Senior Vice President and Vice President respectively. John Cullen was returned unopposed as State Branch Treasurer. Mal Bugg, who retired from State Executive this year, spoke with feeling about his commitment to the League and the highs and lows of his many years of service at the State Branch level. Mal continues in business of course as the President of our Morwell Sub-Branch and Regional Committee Chair. Steve Nativo was recognised with a Certificate of Appreciation for his 20 years of service as an employee of State Branch at ANZAC House in a variety of roles. Others who were

recognised for their service to the RSL and veteran community included:

Meritorious Service Medal

Mr Edward Brogan
Mr Ray Scott
Mr Robert Webster

Life Membership with Gold Badge

Mr Ted Richards
Mr John Printz
Mr Doug Higgins
Mr Mal Carson

Honorary Life Membership

Mr Tony Charlton

National Certificate of Appreciation

Mr Tony Bowers
Mr Paul Copeland
Mrs Anne Davies
Mr Steve Nativo
Mr Tom Nichols
Ms Alison Roadley
Ryebuck Media
Watsonia Sub-Branch

State Certificate of Appreciation **St Margaret's School Berwick**

ANZAC of the Year Award

Mrs Sue Arthur

At Conference, the 129 remits discussed had the following results:

Carried	87
Lost	20
Withdrawn	18
Referred	4
Referred to National	42

Through there were several motions that, if passed, would have resulted in significant changes to the composition of State Executive and the continuation of the State Advisory Council, the feeling of the Conference was to maintain the current arrangements and structure. Since the State Conference, the State Advisory Council has been given a number of tasks to provide advice or recommendations to State Executive and draft policy. Regional committee elections in 2008 also present the opportunity to enhance the interaction between these bodies and the State Executive.

The strength of the League is never more apparent than during a well attended State Conference, with robust discussion on a wider range of issues concerning both League structure

and governance, and on how to meet our core welfare objectives in the future. As always, Veterans Affairs matters and broader national issues were also well represented on the Conference Agenda.

2007 National Congress

This is fully covered elsewhere in the National Report but the Victorian Branch officers and staff and our sub-branches were pleased to be able to showcase Melbourne and surrounding areas to the Congress delegates and invited guests. Our sub-branches also strongly supported the Congress Dinner which both the Prime Minister, The Hon John Howard MP and the Leader of the Opposition, The Hon Kevin Rudd MP attended. Our facilities at ANZAC House were ideal to support the various stages of Congress, and the proximity of the Shrine and Melbourne Town Hall assisted in the conduct of appropriate and impressive wreath laying and opening ceremonies. Likewise, the Sofitel, directly opposite ANZAC House, provided a great venue for the Congress dinner. We were most appreciative of the thanks expressed by the National Headquarters and were honoured to **have assisted them with this year's important Congress.**

Young Veterans Forums

The Victorian State Branch has conducted two more Forums which were well attended by both serving personnel and the relevant ESOs. The focus for the first Forum was what type of services the post 1975 generation of ADF servicemen and women wanted to see the ESO community, and specifically the RSL, providing. The second Forum concentrated on our Reserve servicemen and women. We have received much valuable information from both as we look to 2008 as the year we embark on a major effort to boost our service membership from this demographic. Anne Pahl, who chaired these Forums, has also been able to feed outcomes and insights from these gatherings directly back into the National Younger Veterans Consultative Forums, and in this vein the Repatriation Commissioner, Brigadier Bill Rolfe will attend one of our 2008 Victorian Forums.

Cadet Of The Year Program

In Victoria we again invited the three Services to allow the RSL to recognise outstanding cadets. Those selected were :

Navy	Able Seaman Katrina Smith
Army	Sgt Kylie Lawrence
Air Force	Cadet Warrant Officer Carl Johnson

They were presented to the Governor at our Remembrance Day Reception and each received a bronze statuette and a book, which was much appreciated by them, their proud parents and the cadet staff who were invited to attend. As there was no overseas trip confirmed at this time for 2008, the Victorian Branch decided on choosing one of the three, through an interview process, to participate in a Young Endeavour training voyage. Kylie Lawrence was chosen and we intend to continue this approach of offering leadership and character development opportunities to the Victorian Cadets of the Year in the future.

Conclusion

2007 has been a year of steady progress in our business of welfare delivery in all its forms and comradeship, as well as developing the area of funds creation and corporate governance of our extensive sub-branch network. The latter is critical in providing a sustainable base into the future for our welfare and community support activities.

Our commemorative and conference activities have been most successful this year from both an organisational and attendance perspective, culminating in the National Congress, which of course saw positive announcements from Government on benefits for the veteran community.

Finally our work with younger veterans has given us the insights we need to have confidence that our efforts in boosting Service Member numbers in 2008 will be met with the same success we have had in our affiliate campaign. Together we trust these new members will give us a strong and active membership base to sustain our objectives and most of our existing sub-branches into the foreseeable future.

Victoria extends its best wishes to our sister State Branches and the National Headquarters for a very successful and positive 2008.

South Australian Branch Report - 2007



Jock Statton OAM
State President

This year saw the RSL in South Australia achieve an increase in membership for the first time in a number of years. This has resulted from sub-branches actively renovating and generally cleaning up their premises, as well energetically promoting the RSL within their district.

I have been working with several sub-branches with the view of rebuilding and/or amalgamating, and talks with these sub-branches have been very encouraging. It appears that 2008 will see the RSL in South Australia taking another step to secure the League's future for years to come.

The first of the National Executive Meetings for 2007 was held in Darwin to coincide with the 65th Anniversary of the Bombing of Darwin on the 19th February 1942. The National Executive also took advantage of their time in Darwin to attend the opening of the newly relocated Palmerston RSL & Sports Club. I also attended Darwin North Sub-Branch and the AGM of Darwin Sub-Branch. It is gratifying to see the Northern Territory is actively gaining much needed younger members.

In March, the Executive Director, John Spencer OAM RFD and I visited the West Coast towns of Wallaroo, Moonta, Tumby Bay, Port Lincoln, Cowell, Whyalla, Port Augusta, Port Pirie and Crystal Brook. This gave the members the opportunity to meet representatives of Headquarters and to also put a face to the people for whom we are working.

In the period before ANZAC Day, I, like many members of the League, took the opportunity to address schools and Service Clubs (ie: Rotary, Probus and Lions). I believe it is important to promote the history and sacrifices made over the many conflicts by members of the Australian Defence Forces. I am also involved with the Migration Museum in supplying guest speakers to address students on different conflicts, in particular the Vietnam War.

The State Library this year established an 'Oral History of the Vietnam War' program. The Library sought assistance on how this could proceed, and after discussions with researcher Susan Mann, I encouraged a number of RSL members to take part in the program. Members, representing not only the Navy, Army and Air Force but also nurses, wives and partners, were interviewed.

As a result of a submission from my office to the State Government, the Premier introduced a youth 'ANZAC Study Tour' this year. Our submission addressed several items that the RSL believed would benefit today's youth and which would allow them to acknowledge the service of veterans. The inaugural Study Tour was led by Her Excellency Marjorie Jackson-Nelson AC CVO MBE and culminated with the Dawn Service at Westminster Abbey. The students Ms Emily Cock, Ms Elise Ganley, Ms Jemima Nicholas, Mr Ankur Verma and Ms Alannah Williams were exceptional young Ambassadors for both the State and the Ex-Service community.

On Sunday the 27th May, the Inaugural Indigenous Memorial Service was held at the State National Memorial on North Terrace. This was followed by a reception hosted by Her Excellency The Governor at Government House. The Service was well represented by current serving and ex-service Indigenous members and their families.

In July, the Poppy Day Trust Maintenance Officer, David Milligan and I visited the South Eastern Sub-Branches, Tailem Bend, Tintinara, Keith, Bordertown, Naracoorte, Lucindale, Penola, Port MacDonnell, Mount Gambier, Millicent, Robe, Kingston, Meningie, the Wellington Memorial and Strathalbyn. The number of members we met at the Sub-Branches was encouraging, noting some Sub-Branches have never before been visited by a State President.

The Government of South Australia hosted a luncheon on behalf of the RSL State Branch for His Royal Highness the Duke of Kent KG GCMG GCVO ADC FRS during his visit to South Australia. His Royal Highness is the President of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and the luncheon was attended by representatives of Ex-Service Organisations. His Royal Highness made a special point of speaking with Bill Schmitt AM (Ex-POW Changi and a Past Chairman of the Consultative Council of Ex-Service Organisations).

Besides the above mentioned events, Headquarters has been involved with several other significant projects, including the Cadet of the Year, the South Road Underpass on ANZAC Highway, and a number of proposed Memorials (the Aboriginal & Islander War Memorial Torrens Parade Ground, the Eternal Flame and the **Atatürk** Memorial Pennington Gardens, as well as the Simpson and his Donkey Memorial at the Royal Adelaide Hospital). We have also conducted negotiations with relevant Ministers to discuss the appointment of a State Minister for Veterans and commenced discussions regarding revised governance arrangements for the Repatriation General Hospital.

The RSL was represented at numerous Ex-Service, State and Adelaide City Council events, including the farewell of Marjorie Jackson-Nelson and the swearing in of both her successor His Excellency The Governor, Rear Admiral Kevin Scarce AO CSC RAN (Retd) and the Lieutenant Governor, Mr Hieu Van Le.

During the year, the Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey, Mr N. Murant Ersavci, and the Consul-General of Greece in South Australia, Mr Dimitris Hatzopoulos, were received at the State Branch Office.

Given the success of 2007, I look forward with anticipation to another year of achievement in 2008.

Membership

The Membership Committee is extremely active and continues to encourage new initiatives as well as contributing to well proven recruiting activities.

The positive outcomes of its recruiting campaign and the benefits of the introduction of a new membership database provided a much needed boost to the Membership Committee in 2007.

Service membership increased by a modest 21 members, however, taking into account the natural decline in our WWII membership, this figure was pleasing since it covered those losses as well as attracting younger members.

Additionally, there was an increase of some 300 Affiliates who will be the sub-branch administrators of the future.

Probably the most positive outcome of 2007 was the decision taken by the Royal Australian Regiment Association to establish its own RSL Sub-Branch - the first in Australia. The views of the RAR will benefit the League by providing a

perspective on the needs and expectations of those still serving in the Regiments and of those recently discharged.

The use of the State Branch recruiting trailer and welfare vehicle (Registration Numbers RSL 001 and RSL 002) provide a centre of attraction at Field Days and Sub-Branch Open Days.

Welfare Activities

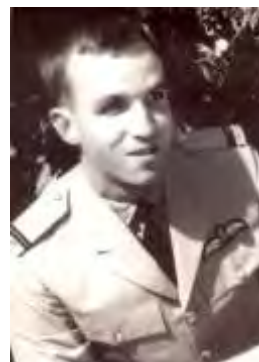
RSL Villas

Ten years ago, the RSL Aged Care Villas were opened at Trafford Street, Angle Park. The event marked years of planning, building, dedicated fund raising, expectations and doubts.

In July 2007, new extensions were opened by The Hon Christopher Pyne MP, Minister for Ageing, providing more accommodation for the ex-service community.

The fully accredited facility is professionally run by dedicated management and staff and is home to 55 residents. High quality care and a range of activities and services ensure that the residents enjoy a friendly, comfortable and independent lifestyle. The hostel is separated into villas interconnected by a large living activity and administration area. Each villa has its own private entry, lounge, dining room and kitchen. All units have en-suite facilities and open out onto landscaped courtyards. An individual lifestyle is encouraged, as is social interaction between residents and the community, with a reliance on continued family support. The special needs of those with dementia is addressed, along with the provision of respite care.

One of the new wings was named after Flying Officer Michael Herbert, a South Australian RAAF pilot who, along with his Navigator, Pilot Officer Robert Carver, went missing in their Canberra Bomber in South Vietnam during a night mission on 3 November 1970. No trace of the crew or aircraft has been found and the men are among the Australians still listed as Missing in Action from the Vietnam conflict.



Flying Officer Michael Herbert

The other wing was named after distinguished local soldier Major Len Opie DCM RFD ED, who served in the Pacific Region in WWII, Korea, Vietnam and the in the CMF. Len was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal whilst with 3rd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment in Korea and in Vietnam he served two tours with the Australian Army Training Team.



Major Len Opie DCM RFD ED

These latest additions enhance the capabilities of the Villas and have expanded the number of places available in the dementia wing by 14. In conjunction with this building project, the RSL management worked with the local Council and the developers to establish a Memorial Park alongside the Villas. The Park includes a Remembrance Wall, Campaign Path, gazebo, playground and open space.

Darby & Joan Cottages

Maintenance and upgrading have continued at the five separate locations of the Darby & Joan independent living units. Much of the monitoring of the requirements of the tenants is now being undertaken by the State Branch Maintenance Officer (David Milligan), under the guidance of the Welfare Officer (Hans Broweleit). The residents have expressed gratitude for this personal contact.

Pension Activities

During the year, the State Branch Office was approached to assist with the selection of a Clerical Support Officer to work at the TIP Office of the Department of Veterans' Affairs. Philip Boys was appointed and has provided professional assistance to the TIP Training Officer, Paul (Titch) Tyson.

This has placed the RSL name prominently within the ex-service community as well as providing

timely access by the State Office to all recently introduced TIP initiatives.

Attendance at Transition Seminars continues to allow contact with those Defence Force members leaving the Service and has proven to be a positive advertisement for the RSL in this State.

Commemorative Activities

The year was marked by a number of significant Anniversaries and the State Branch was heavily involved both in representation and in planning to ensure their success.

Commencing with the refurbishment of the State's earliest Memorial, the South African War Memorial, other activities included the following :

- 65th Anniversary of 'When War Came To Australia'

Commemorative activities to mark the 65th anniversary of the first attack on Darwin were held around Australia and the Northern Territory was the focus for major events.



In the trenches –'Zeros' above

Over 3000 people attended a Commemorative Service at the Darwin Cenotaph. The service included a flyover by two RAAF FA18 Hornets. Over 100 people per day visited a display staged by the Darwin City Council. Veterans also took part in tours to the Adelaide River Cemetery and other significant WWII sites, the Aviation Heritage Centre and the East Point Military Museum.



All that remained!

State President Jock Statton OAM and Executive Director John Spencer OAM RFD attended the Commemorative Service as well as attending the RSL National Executive meeting held in Darwin to coincide with the Anniversary.

The Darwin Defenders SA Branch conducted a service at the Repatriation General Hospital Chapel, Daw Park, on 18 February. The service was well attended and included the Premier of South Australia, The Hon Mike Rann MP, and Service representatives. Chaplain John Virgin, the son of a Darwin veteran, officiated at the service. The scriptures were read by Chris Halls, whose father was killed in the Darwin Post Office on the 19th February 1942, and Fay Hunt, a Legacy widow whose husband served in Darwin.

Mrs Kathy Milligan OAM, the State Branch representative on the Darwin Defenders Committee attended and also represented the State President at the Service.

- Commemoration of 'Charge at Beersheba'

The 90th Anniversary of the Charge was marked by a Commemoration Service at the Light Horse Memorial in Adelaide in the evening of Wednesday 31 October. The Service recalled the events of that significant moment in Australia's history which was described as follows:

"Stones and dust flew as gallant men and their horses galloped across the plain towards the enemy garrison. Hooves thundered and wagon wheels rattled as supporting units followed the attacking Light Horsemen in the last successful mounted charge by Commonwealth Forces. Squadrons of Soldiers, with rifles slung across their backs, bayonets in their hands and Emu plumes in their hats made a late afternoon charge over 3000 yards to capture the Turkish held town of Beersheba".

On the afternoon of Saturday 3 November, on the Torrens Parade Ground, a mounted Ceremonial Parading of the Regimental Guidons (Trooping of the Colours) by the 3rd/9th Light Horse (South Australian Mounted Rifles) took place.

The Colours



3rd L/H



9th L/H

This was followed by a re-enactment display of Light Horse tactics - ride, dismount and assault - supported by artillery, and concluded with a march-past by the South Australian Mounted Rifles Association.

At McLaren Vale Sub-Branch, a new Memorial commemorating the 90th Anniversary of the Battle of Gaza-Beersheba and honouring the service of the men from the Fleurieu Peninsula region who enlisted and served in the Australian Light Horse during the First World War was unveiled. The Memorial was erected in the McLaren Vale Memorial Park and dedicated on Remembrance Day following the Service at 11 a.m. The Barossa Light Horse Historical Society supported the event by providing a section of mounted Light Horsemen in full period uniform.

- Anniversary of 60 Years of Peacekeeping by Australia Forces



Australians have been involved in many peacekeeping missions around the world since our first **United Nations' mission to Indonesia** in 1947. Service personnel, police and civil personnel have served in countries throughout Asia, the Middle East, Africa and the Pacific region and have continued the ANZAC spirit with their professionalism, skill, humanity, control and caring.

Missions have been conducted under the control of the UN, the Commonwealth and other Multinational Forces and the predominant tasks have been military observation, monitoring ceasefires, landmine clearance, humanitarian aid, and the repatriation of refugees. Humanitarian aid takes many forms such as medical aid, vaccination programs, engineering works, food and water supply, shelter, hygiene aid, evacuation and transport.



Ian Gardiner and John Poulsen representing SA Peacekeepers Sub-Branch

On 24 October, the SA Peacekeepers RSL Sub-Branch conducted the Service of Remembrance for Peacekeepers. The ceremony was well attended both by Service, ex-service members and the community.

Members from the Sub-Branch were also prominent at a number of ANZAC Day sporting events where they recited the Ode of Remembrance or took part in other ceremonial functions.

We have every right to be proud of the servicemen and women and those of other administrations that represent Australia in hotspots around the globe. Their training and professionalism shows why we have personnel presently serving in Sudan, Iraq, Afghanistan, Kuwait, Timor-Leste, Solomon Islands, Sinai, Israel/Lebanon. They get the job done!

Honours & Awards

Many of our members were honoured throughout the year by various awards and are to be congratulated on their service and devotion to the League.

To single out a few is always difficult and should not be seen as lessening the efforts of others, however, South Australia was proud to see amongst the recipients that the following having been acknowledged:

Medal of the Order Of Australia

Mrs Margaret Douglass OAM
The Rev Brenton Daulby OAM
The Rev John Kinsman OAM
Mr Frank Owen OAM
Mrs Kathleen Milligan OAM
Mr John Spencer OAM RFD
Mr Leonard Whittenbury OAM
Mr Thomas (Tim) Young OAM

ANZAC of The Year

Mr Will Clough
Mrs Jacqui Clough

Australia Day Council Medallions For Achievement

Ms Jill Phillips	State Branch
Mr Sydney Pelling	Millicent Sub-Branch
Mr Mel Tilley	Mount Gambier
Mr Ray Deane	Hospital Committee
Mr Kevin Crowden	Red Shield Sub-Branch

Vale - Peter Fleming MBE

It was with regret that we learnt of the passing of Past State President and Honorary National Vice President Peter Fleming MBE on 22 June 2007.

Peter was State President from 1985 to 1990, having previously served as a State Councillor from 1956 to 1960 and as State Vice President from 1961 to 1971.

During the latter part of his life Peter was an active Board Member of the War Veterans' Home Myrtle Bank.

He will be sadly missed.

Jock Statton OAM
State President

Western Australia State Branch Report - 2007

In reviewing the operations of the WA Branch I am able to report that significant achievements have been made that will ensure the prosperity of the League for years to come. The years of planning has resulted in the establishment of an ethic that is focussed on service and a commitment to excellence.

Our organisational structure is compatible with the corporate environment in which we now operate, yet we have been able to zealously guard our traditional role, that of serving the veteran community.

Our current governance model continues to develop. The Corporate Plan provides direction and goals that allow us to meet our commitment to the organisation. It is regularly reviewed by both internal and external agencies that measure our performance against our stated outcomes and, using such information, provide future direction..

The Branch is administered on behalf of the members by an elected State Executive and Board of Directors. They are elected for three years and are committed to the operation of the League for the benefit of members and the veteran community. Working in harmony with them is a network of volunteers and sub committees that strive to achieve positive results in our activities. All officers work in a voluntary capacity and give freely of their time and expertise to achieve outcomes that are consistent with our Charter and Corporate Plan. A feature of their involvement is a strict conformity to the values of the League and compliance with the **State Branch's Code of Conduct**. This has resulted in the formation of a clearly focussed team approach to the governance of the League in Western Australia.

The RSL demonstrates strong leadership in the veteran community and contributes responsibly with comment on many social and community issues. Without hesitation, the RSL regularly challenges decisions that have or could impact on veterans and at all times have stood steadfastly for those traditional values that are essential in our society.

In that context we continue to maintain a strong a-political position and as such have enjoyed the on-going support from both sides of parliament at Commonwealth and State level. Through our Sub-Branch structure we also enjoy an excellent

and supportive relationship with the many local authorities throughout Western Australia.

Our responsible comments, coupled with a willingness to address controversial issues places us in high esteem with the media and the general public.

Through the esteem in which we are held in the community the State Branch and, I am pleased to say, our Sub-Branch office bearers, are regularly consulted on topical issues and are often invited to make public comment on social, **commemorative, security and veterans' affairs** matters. It is pleasing to note that, without exception, all comments and representations are made with a high degree of professionalism.

We are determined, at all levels of our operations, to present a good public image by encouraging our Sub-Branches and members to present the RSL as a caring organisation that takes the welfare of veterans and the future security and development of our country seriously. I am convinced we do this well.

Welfare

Since the **RSL's foundation in 1916 the welfare of the veteran** has been its priority. Throughout its 91 years it has distinguished itself in this field of operation. Today its commitment is none the less.

As part of an on-going program of improvement the review of welfare services provided to members and veteran community continued. The representative group of stakeholders under the chairmanship of State Trustee Wayne Tarr recommended some sweeping changes to make our welfare services more focussed and responsive to the needs of the individual. Those recommendations were carefully considered by the State Executive and those adopted are now in the process of implementation

When fully implemented it is anticipated that members who are in need of welfare assistance will be afforded ready access to appropriate funding to relieve their necessitous circumstances.

Funding sources for veterans' welfare is generated by grants from Lotterywest, bequests from supportive donors and from the Returned **Sailors, Soldiers & Airmen's Imperial League of Australia Trust Fund**. Allocations from these

sources allow us to service the operations and fund veterans accordingly.

Collections from the Annual Poppy Day Appeal resource a large portion of our welfare operations at State Branch and the Amelioration Accounts at Sub-Branches allow for on site welfare grants to be issued in accordance with the provisions of the Trust Fund Act. An extensive review of welfare operations at Sub-Branch level is currently being undertaken with the purpose of making the distribution of welfare funds more responsive to those in need. It is considered that personal contact at the local level will be more effective in providing support to those in need. However, as it is not always financial support that is required, immediate personal contact, at the local level will always provide a better understanding of the needs of the individual.

Veterans' Affairs

The Veterans' Affairs Committee with representation across all services and key ESOs has developed positive relationships with officers of the Department of Veterans' Affairs. This has provided a valuable communications link that has facilitated the prompt resolution of problems. Our participation on consultative committees has permitted input to programs and processes that have been of benefit to both administration and the veteran.

There has been careful monitoring of the quality of health services offered to veterans and of the service delivery by the Department of Veterans Affairs consequent upon its ongoing restructure. I am pleased to comment that in general terms, no major problems have been encountered and those that have been noted have received prompt attention.

Through the State Veterans Affairs Committee we have input into the establishment of League priorities for budget consideration by government. For years, the RSL has been actively lobbying for the Government to redress the many inequities evident in veterans' welfare and now at long last, we are able to see significantly enhanced support **to Australia's veteran community.**

While being mindful of the achievements realised, there are other issues that need to be dealt with and again, our input to the National Veterans' Affairs Committee will be considered as we re-order our priorities for future budgets.

In recent times there has been a demand for the RSL to become involved in ADF Transitional programs. Our participation in a pilot program at

HMAS STIRLING, although in its embryonic stage, will enhance the assimilation of Service personnel leaving employment with the ADF back into civilian life. On the wider scene consideration is being given for the Veterans' Affairs Committee to address matters relating to conditions of service in the Australian Defence Forces.

Advocacy

Our Advocates provide a first class service to veterans who seek their assistance. A highly trained group of volunteers are rostered to provide a daily service that is used to capacity. This has resulted in a significant increase in the amount of Advocacy work being undertaken by the Senior Advocate and volunteers operating out of ANZAC House. It appears this increase is occurring because a number of Advocates either in the RSL or other ex-service organisations are not available for consultation at the local level. Furthermore, active referrals from the Department of Veterans' Affairs and TIP training obligations has added to the current situation.

The State Branch is currently undertaking a survey of all Advocates and Welfare Officers who practice under the RSL delegation to ensure that the skill levels are being maintained and that Officers are current in their information and operational procedures. Where operators are in need of updates, refresher courses are being offered. It will, however, become necessary in the future for Advocates and Welfare Officers to remain current and attend refresher courses every three years. This will become a requirement to remain accredited and to operate as an RSL Advocate.

Advocacy has become more complex, particularly **with increasing variations to operative veterans' legislation**, and therefore the skills necessary to act in the best interests of the veteran need to be improved. The RSL is covered for insurance for any possible negligence claim made by a veteran but this insurance cover could be deemed invalid if an Advocate has not actioned accreditation renewal.

RSL Care WA

The RSL WA Retirement and Aged Care Association (Inc) trading as RSL Care WA operates the State Branch's Aged Care facilities in WA. The operational team under the leadership of State Vice President, Graeme Sherriff and General Manager Linda Jackson are backed by a supportive Board of Management and have developed the entity into a viable operation and

have shed many of the inhibiting factors that prevailed in the past.

The Menora Gardens facility continues to develop with the 118 bed Aged Care Facility nearing completion and planning for the five floor, 24 apartment development well under way.

To accommodate veterans in regional Western Australia, RSL Care WA is working with local communities to determine areas of need for Aged Care facilities. At Dongara, in the mid-west, RSL Care is working with the Shire of Irwin at Dongara relative to the construction of a 55 bed Aged Care complex alongside the town's Medical Facility.



Independent Living Units

Further south at Jurien Bay, construction of a 106 Independent Living Unit Retirement Village next to the existing Medical Facility is about to commence, with completion due early in 2009.

At our existing Aged Care facility at Meadow Springs in Mandurah planning for an additional 30 rooms has begun so increasing its capacity to 85 beds. At Geraldton, the construction of 13 additional independent living units is also planned.

The Aged Care industry is not just about bricks and mortar. RSL Care WA is proactive in servicing veterans and the community through Home Care Packages in both country and metropolitan locations. With Government Aged Care policy moving in that direction, we are keen to see we are looking after our aged veterans wherever we can

There is no greater cause than the care of our veterans.

Finance

The League's financial position is sound, but over recent times the cash operating base has been considerably eroded through cost increases attributed to salaries, cost of service delivery and generally operating a small business in the

current economic climate. Strict adherence to the budget and constant reviews of income and expenditure profiles have limited the loss but additional income is needed if we are to maintain the services required by the membership.

The Branch is in receipt of financial grants that assist State and Sub-Branches. Through the generosity of Lotterywest, the Department of **Veterans' Affairs and ANZAC Working Committee**, we are able to support our many veteran and community activities. All these bodies value the sacrifices and contribution veterans have made for their country and are always willing to support needy causes.

ANZAC Club

The refurbished ANZAC Club is enjoying a marked increase in patronage. The enhanced environment has attracted not only league members to the facility but also members of the general public. We have also been able to promote the use of the Gallipoli Room as a conference venue and this is proving popular with local business as a training course venue.

The VC Library facility is well on the way to being operational. The collection houses many rare books and will be a valuable source for research, internet and recreational reading. There will also be a newspaper section available to members.

Staffing the ANZAC Club has proved a challenge in the current economic boom times. Managerial staff in the hospitality industry are in constant demand but our current team of manager, chef, permanent and casual staff have formed a cohesive team that will serve the membership for quite some time to come.



Bar Area of the ANZAC Club

Membership

Our membership numbers are stable at around 13,000 members, including affiliates. The growth in new members is keeping pace with losses through death of our aged second world war veterans. We maintain our well resourced and aggressive recruitment program and this is paying dividends, particularly in country regions.

Our register shows we have 140 Sub-Branches in our network and there are currently several proposals before us for the establishment of new Sub-Branches. **The concept of 'Post Box Sub-Branches' has been welcomed by many smaller Sub-Branches in danger of closing due to small numbers.** This format will see an RSL presence retained in the district. A further refinement of operation of smaller Sub-Branches has seen a larger nearby Sub-Branch offering administrative support so achieving the same result.

Of prime concern is the fact that we are interested in knowing if there are veterans in need in the area so they can be serviced through RSL Welfare. We will continue to explore every option available to attend to the welfare needs of veterans living in country locations and while doing so ensure that appropriate commemorative services are conducted in cities and towns throughout Western Australia under RSL guidance.

Our recruiting and welfare trailer, proudly sponsored by Hollywood Private Hospital and Australian Defence Credit has been fully refurbished and is in constant demand as a resource to Sub-Branches, schools and communities to promote RSL and to provide an educational resource for veteran activities.



RSL's 'Trailer' is in constant demand by Sub-Branches as a Recruiting & Education resource

The Australian Cadet of the Year Program was hosted by the Western Australian Branch. This year the touring group visited Borneo and the site of the Sandakan Death Marches. The twelve interstate cadets joined three local cadets, their chaperones and a media representative and embarked on what they have described as the experience of a lifetime. The financial support from Hollywood Private Hospital and Sub-Branches, and the interest shown by numerous local supporters of the initiative, ensured the success of the program.

The Cadet Efficiency Trophy, supported by Australian Defence Credit and the RSL, is keenly contested among Service Cadet Units and results in the award of a perpetual and annual shield to the most efficient Navy, Army and Air Force Cadet Unit in Western Australia, together with a cheque for \$1000 to each of the winning Units.



Jubilant Members of TS PERTH receive the Navy Cadet Efficiency Trophy and \$1000 prize money

The RSL values the contribution the Cadet movement makes to the youth of our State and is a willing supporter of rewarding excellence in achievement.

The RSL Community Link Program is proving popular with Schools that assume responsibility for community war memorials. With the heightened interest in Australian military history we have seen a strong growth in the number of groups that have expressed interest in acting as wardens for town memorials where Sub-Branches no longer exist.

Affiliates

The number of Affiliates in our organisation continues to grow and they play a major role in Sub-Branch operation. Those citizens with empathy for the RSL and the values we hold are welcome to join us with that status. It is

essential that we accept a realistic position for Affiliates, and they should be part of the veteran family and enjoy the benefits of Sub-Branch life within the stated rules. The membership will need to be responsive to this challenge if we are to show this group of supporters their true value in promoting and progressing the League. In time, it is inevitable that Affiliates will play an even greater role at State Branch level.

Marketing

Marketing continues to be one of the least developed areas of League activity and one which, if sensitively handled, can deliver long term benefits to the League and the membership, at all levels.

Following last year's survey of members, a second survey was done this year as a 'live' exercise for students in the Marketing Department at Curtin University Business School. The recent survey showed that there was marked improvement made in outtarget areas of communication and service delivery, with positive ratings evident in all sections tested. Membership surveys are enormously helpful in determining what services and facilities members want, but they are only one part of the marketing challenge. We still need to do more in taking the RSL to the wider community. As with the previous survey, suggestions for improvement will be taken on board and strategies set in place to satisfy our members

To further progress the initiative, we have commenced an end-to-end examination of all **aspects of the League's activities to identify more business opportunities** than a purely membership funded enterprise can deliver. The League has developed excellent facilities and considerable expertise in several areas that are being brought together in a mutually supporting, integrated marketing plan, for example, ANZAC Club Facilities, Pensions and Advocacy, Welfare, Aged Care and Retirement Villages. Each of these areas has been the subject of careful study so that we can bring our products and services to specifically identified niches in the marketplace. For some of these product and service launches we have engaged outside professional marketing organisations to assist us in our endeavours.

A further innovation has been the formation of a number of strategic corporate alliances – some of which are commercially oriented while others are with other like-minded not-for-private-profit organisations. Essentially, we need a balanced mix of both if we are to be successful.

The obvious point of all our marketing effort is to increase League revenues from which we can continue to provide welfare, services and fellowship opportunities to our members.

Defence

The Defence Committee has not been active throughout the year under review. They have, however, met to consider urgent issues and made appropriate responses to Defence position papers. We are looking at a restructure of the Defence Committee. This will result in a more diverse role that will encompass deliberations on defence issues, homeland security and other related topics.

The membership continues to support our Defence Force personnel, both those on deployment and in the Reserve. Sub-Branches in close proximity to Defence Force Bases have established supportive relationships with personnel and their families and honour that commitment when troops are on deployment. The RSL Australian Forces Overseas Fund that regularly sends gift parcels to our troops on deployment is fully supported by the State Branch and the wider membership.

Communications

The **RSL's bi-monthly publication 'The Listening Post' is our main link with the membership.** The magazine has a distribution of around 10,000 copies and is widely read by members, sponsors and supporters. It has developed into a first class publication and, thanks to the hard work of a dedicated production team, presents the reader with timely and topical information. It is costly to produce and distribute to the membership but it is well worth the price we pay to keep the membership fully informed of League activities.

The monthly newsletter, **the 'Sub-Branch Signal'**, keeps those who attend Sub-Branch meetings informed on the activities of State Executive and the Board of Directors with respect to policy and other matters affecting the day to day running of the Branch.

We are currently planning to upgrade our website. The web is a powerful medium to communicate and inform not only the membership but the wider community. With corporate sponsorship we hope to have our site fully operational early in 2008.

Undoubtedly the best communication is through a personal approach. In the period under review State Executive members had the opportunity to

personally visit many country Sub-Branches. The travel schedule included much of regional Western Australia. The warmth of the welcome and the diverse range of issues discussed certainly gave the travellers a greater insight to how country RSL operates.

Our challenge is to see that our organisation continues to be represented in these rural communities and that the values we support are not lost.



Lake Grace Sub-Branch President receives their refurbished Charter from State President William Gaynor OAM RFD during a Country Liaison Visit

Corporate Alliances

The research project 'Remembering the Wars' is now in its second year and the information collated from books, records, minutes and many other sources is forming an interesting pattern that will provide local communities with an historic link to the families whose relatives appear on town war memorials. It is an exciting project, facilitated by Curtin University, and will furnish us with many recommendations that we trust we will be able to implement. Publication of findings and of a booklet providing local government authorities with guidelines and protocols for the management of Community War Memorials will be a positive outcome from the study.

Our Membership Card initiative has produced a value-add bonus for the membership. A range of discounts is available upon the production of a valid RSL Membership Card and this is set to expand in future years.

Commemorative Services

The State War Memorial continues to be the principal place for RSL commemorative services. Apart from the RSL conducted ANZAC Day Dawn Service and Remembrance Day Service, the War

Memorial and its precinct are used by Ex-Service Organisations and community groups to honour their fallen.

ANZAC Day services continue to be well supported with reported increases in attendances throughout the State. The pleasing feature is the family participation that is emerging. If this trend continues, the future of ANZAC Day as a time when we can honour our fallen is assured.

The generous local community support and the financial assistance from Lotterywest in funding ANZAC Day Services is acknowledged. In particular, Lotterywest's commitment to further enhance services in regional areas is a most welcome gesture that is certain to be taken up by rural groups.

The support given to schools and community groups by Sub-Branches is also acknowledged. That support is valued by the younger generation who have a thirst for knowledge of the sacrifices made by their parents and grandparents in the defence of their country.



War Memorial at Kings Park

Sub-Branches

Our Sub-Branches do a magnificent job in servicing the needs of the veteran. The RSL caters for all veterans of all conflicts and our charter requires us to service veterans whether they are members or not. On that basis, our work is truly humanitarian. Our Sub-Branches are the public face of the RSL and we are proud of the manner in which our organisation presents itself in the community.

The administration of a Sub-Branch can often be seen as an onerous task. Members are sometimes reluctant to take office for fear of the work and procedures involved. To overcome this barrier and give new officers some confidence in what they are doing, we developed Training Modules for Sub-Branch officers. They have

proved very popular and have been presented in Perth, regional Western Australia and in Tasmania.

Working in association with Sub-Branches are the **ladies of the Women's Auxiliary**. This dedicated group have for years supported the RSL in social activities, fund raising and caring for and visiting our elderly and sick veterans. Although diminishing in numbers they still fulfil a vital role and their work is very much appreciated.

National RSL

The RSL National Executive meets quarterly and is the policy making group of the organisation. Through its various sub committees it is active in attending to veteran affairs matters with Government. Its professional approach to issues is its strength and in this manner it invariably produces good outcomes. The leadership shown by our National President Major General Bill Crews AO is strong and through his endeavours good outcomes have been achieved for veterans.

State Branch

In keeping with our policy of improving service delivery, an administration restructure has been finalised. While elements of the review are still underway, certain changes to staffing and procedures are starting to take effect. All such changes are being made to improve the quality of service provided to members. We constantly seek strategies that will reduce the response time to member queries and improve the quality of advice given on specific matters.

The Way Ahead

The next twelve months will be challenging for the League in Western Australia as we continue to implement our Corporate Plan.

Priority initiatives will be:

- To provide focus on our Welfare and Advocacy services for veterans;
- Consolidate RSL Care WA as a leader in the aged care industry;
- Continuation of strong alliances with Corporate entities;
- Establish positive relationships with all ESOs;
- Support Sub-Branch operations through regular visits and training modules; and
- An enhancement of our leadership role in the veteran community.

Acknowledgments

To the State Executive and League Trustees, thanks are expressed for the commitment made to the League and loyalty to the State Branch. The task of serving on committees and representing the membership is demanding but also rewarding. In particular, the country representatives do a magnificent job in keeping our country Sub-Branches in touch. The reports that are furnished provide the State Executive with a good overview of happenings at our many country outposts.

Late last year we lost the services of our State Secretary, Shane Seers. After eight years of service to the League he accepted a managerial position in the Pilbara. We thank Shane for his commitment to the RSL and look forward to him remaining active in League.

The work of assistant State Secretary's Gary Sutherland, Geoff (Blue) Dunne and Denis Connolly is also valued. Their loyalty, professionalism and willingness to undertake tasks at short notice are very much appreciated.

The Branch further acknowledges the support given to the League by our Patron, Dr Ken Michael AC Governor of Western Australia. His Excellency is a willing participant in League activities and we value his patronage. We take this opportunity to wish His Excellency & Mrs Michael well for the future.

Conclusion

The State Branch is in a healthy state. It is well administered and enjoys the commitment of a dedicated group of willing workers. We still have challenges ahead but with the determination of elected representatives and the support of the Sub-Branches there is a bright future for the League.

WILLIAM E GAYNOR OAM RFD
State President

Tasmanian Branch Report - 2007

State Congress

The 92nd Annual Congress was opened by the Premier of Tasmania, the Hon Paul Lennon MHA and was attended by delegates representing 38 Sub-Branches. The Premier presented Life Membership of the League to Mr Rodney Dean, Mr Robert Fitz OAM, Mr Stephen Cocker, Mr Maurice Hallam and Mr Bruce Scott. Life Memberships were awarded separately to Mr Eddie Marlowe and Mr John Van Der Hoek.

Others to address the delegates were; Minister for **Veterans' Affairs**, the Hon Bruce Billson MP; **Shadow Minister for Veterans' Affairs**, Mr Alan Griffin MP; Alderman Ivan Dean, Mayor of the City of Launceston; Mr Mark Sullivan, President of the Repatriation Commission and Secretary of the **Department of Veterans' Affairs**; Major General Bill Crews AO, RSL National President; Mr Doug Formby, RSL (Queensland) State President; Major General David McLachlan AO (Retd), RSL (Victoria) State President; Mr Bill Gaynor OAM RFD, RSL (WA) State President; Commander Mark Burling CSC RAN, Senior Naval Officer – Tasmania; and Mrs Anne Drake, State President, **RSL (Tasmania) Women's Auxiliary**.

Presentations were given by Mrs Josephine Baxter of Drug Free Australia, and the 2006 Frank MacDonald MM Memorial Prize winners, Tom Vautier and Michael Latten.

Special presentations were made to Mr Kevin **O'Sullivan, the outgoing Deputy Commissioner for Veterans' Affairs** – Tasmania, Mr Bill Holmes AFSM OAM JP, Honorary National Vice President and former State President, in recognition and appreciation of his attendance at 50 consecutive State Congresses and to Mr Bernard Hodgman OAM in recognition for attendance at 40 State Congresses as a delegate and also for serving 39 years as the Sub-Branch President on King Island.



Mr Bernard Hodgman OAM and Mr Tony Scott OAM JP

There were 23 motions debated. The 16 motions carried were submitted to National Congress.

Frank MacDonald MM Memorial Prize Tour 2007

The State Government of Tasmania is to be congratulated by the League for its ongoing commitment to the Frank MacDonald MM Memorial Prize. The Prize consists of a 16 day tour to Gallipoli and the Western Front. The 2006 tour, conducted during April/May 2007 was led by the Hon Doug Parkinson MLC, representing the Premier of Tasmania. The RSL was represented by Mr Tony Scott OAM JP, State President RSL (Tasmania Branch), Mr Geoff Mainwaring and Mr Peter Harley.



Frank MacDonald MM Memorial Prize Tour 2007

The 2006 student prize winners were Casey Turner, Michael Latten, Tom Vautier, Kathryn Willis, Matthew Hennessy and Nicholas Jones.

RSL (Tasmania) Defence Cadet of The Year 2007 – Spirit of ANZAC Award

The RSL (Tasmania) Defence Cadet of the Year and Spirit of ANZAC Award for 2007 was awarded to Cadet Chief Petty Officer Darren Watkins of TS Argonaut in St Helens.



Darren will participate in the Spirit of ANZAC Tour in April 2008 to Vietnam. A close second to Darren was Cadet Under Officer Emily Ridge who was awarded RSL (Tasmania) Army Cadet of the Year 2007.

Mr Tony Scott with Cadet CPO Darren Watkins

ANZAC Day

ANZAC Day drew huge crowds in Hobart at both the Dawn Service and at the main parade. Particularly evident this year was the large volume of children at both services.



12th /40th Battalion, Royal Tasmania Regiment at the Hobart Parade

Leading the main parade in Hobart were soldiers from the 12th/40th Battalion, Royal Tasmania Regiment. Around the State all our Sub-Branched reported larger crowds than last year. It is very pleasing to see the younger generation in Tasmania taking such a huge interest in the military history of our nation and more so, in the veterans from their local communities.



Children at Zeehan join their local ANZAC Day Service

Scottsdale Sub-Branch Sponsoring **Narcissa 'Betty' Goncalves**

Background

The population of East Timor is about 1 million, yet it has a land mass of only a quarter the size of Tasmania. Damon Smith is the local Policeman at Bridport, North East Tasmania. Damon's father

was a Vietnam Veteran and he had heard about how the East Timorese had helped the Australians so much in Timor in the Second World War. So when the opportunity came to go to East Timor with the UN peacekeeping force Damon went to repay the East Timorese for the help they had given Australia.



Betty Goncalves

Damon was assigned to the Bobinara district and the Village of Lolotoe – a mountainous area between East and West Timor to train the East Timorese border guards. While working there he was billeted to live with one of the local families in Lolotoe – Juliano and Virginia Goncalves. One of the Goncalves children Narcissa, aged 18, or more commonly known as Betty, was very intelligent and wanted to become a nurse and help her people. Chances of this happening in Timor were very remote, so the seed of the idea was born to bring her to Tasmania to train here at University.

Back in Scottsdale, Damon approached the Scottsdale RSL Sub-Branch to help with getting Betty a visa. A letter of support was written to the Australian Ambassador in Dili. A month later, Damon and representatives of the Scottsdale Sub-Branch travelled to East Timor to provide support to Betty in her application for a visa. The visa was granted a few weeks later. Betty is now attending University in Hobart and stays with **Damon's mother in Mornington. She is supported** by fundraising and the generosity of the people of North East Tasmania. RSL (Tasmania Branch) is proud to recognise the community spirit of the members of the Scottsdale Sub-Branch and the wider community in their generous support to Betty Goncalves.

Australian Capital Territory Branch Report - 2007



State President
Gary Brodie OAM

It is my pleasure to present this report which will, in fact, be my last Annual Report. At the time of publication, I will have completed four years as the ACT Branch President and will be in a position to welcome a newly elected Branch President.

Australia Day Medallions

In accordance with established procedure to present Australia Day medallions to very worthy Branch members, three were presented at a morning tea held at ANZAC House in January 2007 to:

- Mr Clive Mitchell-Taylor JP - Barton-Capital Sub-Branch
- Mr John Giersch - Tuggeranong Sub-Branch
- Mr Ray Leister - Gungahlin Sub-Branch

Commemorative Events

The ACT Branch arranges or participates in many commemorative activities in Canberra and the surrounding region. Naturally, ANZAC Day forms the major commemorative event in the yearly calendar but other events involve Branch members just as much.

ANZAC Day activities

- Pre-ANZAC Day wreath-laying ceremony. **Once again, the Department of Veterans' Affairs** and the Australian War Memorial arranged a special wreath-laying ceremony in the Western Courtyard of the Memorial to allow aged veterans, war widows/ers, who otherwise may not be able to attend ANZAC Day services, an opportunity to commemorate this significant anniversary.

- Dawn Service

A very cold Canberra morning and the occasional light rain showers did not deter the estimated 26,000-28,000 people who were in attendance. This nominated record figure surpasses all previous Dawn Service attendances in Canberra. The solemn laying of two wreaths on the Stone of Remembrance during the ceremony by Mr

Stephen Howard of Campbell-Russell Sub-Branch and Air Commodore Gavin Howse ONZM AFC, Military Attaché attached to the New Zealand High Commission, symbolised the unity of ANZAC. Piper Constable Stephen Ladd of the Australian Federal Police Pipes & Drums Band played the **Pipers' Lament during the wreath laying.**

- 92nd ANZAC Day March & Commemorative Service

The **attendance at this year's** event was estimated **at around 18,000 (similar to last year's figure)**, including Their Excellencies Major-General Michael Jeffery AC CVO MC, Governor-General of Australia, and Mrs Marlena Jeffery; The Hon John Howard MP, Prime Minister of Australia, and Mrs Howard; His Excellency Dr John Larkindale, New Zealand High Commissioner, and Mrs Larkindale, amongst other VIPs and dignitaries. The Governor-General took the salute with the March being led by Mr Gary Brodie OAM, ACT Branch President, and Air Commodore Gavin Howse ONZM AFC, New Zealand High Commission Military Attaché.

- ANZAC Day Memorial Service – Embassy of France

Again this year, following the commemorations in ANZAC Parade, the Ambassador of France held a memorial service, where wreaths were laid by the National President, Major General Bill Crews AO (Retd), and by the Branch President, Mr Gary Brodie OAM. Mr Brodie also delivered a formal address as part of the ceremony.

Our sincere thanks go to the Dawn Service coordinator, Vice-President Jan Paulga; the ANZAC March coordinator, Derek Roylance AM; and the Senior Parade Marshal, Kevin Noon CSM. Also, we wish to thank the Chairman, Director and staff of the Australian War Memorial committees, who give unstintingly of their time and expertise in providing the finest venue in Australia to commemorate ANZAC Day.

Other Commemorative Events

- Chief of Defence Force Parade – Australian Defence Force Academy

This annual parade for the incoming Year 1 Squadrons of Midshipmen and Officer Cadets was addressed by the Chief of the Defence Force, Air Chief Marshal Angus Houston AO AFC. The Squadrons were supported by 2nd and 3rd Year Squadrons and the Band, Pipes and Drums of the Academy.

- **Battle of the Coral Sea Commemorative Service**

The annual commemoration service was again held at the Australian-American Memorial in the Russell Offices complex. The function as usual was hosted by the local Division of the Australian-American Association. It should be remembered that 2007 marked the 65th anniversary of the Battle of the Coral Sea, which was very significant for Australia. Following the ceremony, a reception was held for all attendees at RSL National Headquarters, Campbell.

- **Royal Netherlands & East Indies Forces Remembrance Service**

Since the end of the Second World War, the people of the Netherlands have observed 4 May as a day of reflection to honour the victims of war, with special honour being paid to Dutch civilians and members of the armed forces who have lost their lives since in other wars and peacekeeping operations. The service was held at the Royal Netherlands & East Indies Forces Memorial, which is located adjacent to Russell Offices in Canberra. After the ceremony, a reception for attendees was held at the residence of the Netherlands Ambassador.

- **National Indigenous Veterans Commemoration Ceremony**

A ceremony was held during 2007 Reconciliation Week to commemorate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders who have served in all wars, conflicts, peacekeeping and peacemaking operations in which Australia has been engaged since Federation. The ceremony was held in the Western Courtyard of the Australian War Memorial, and was supported by the Department of Veterans' Affairs and the Australian War Memorial.

- **Vietnamese Memorial Service**

The annual Vietnamese Memorial Service, organised and run by the Vietnamese Sub-Branch, was held as usual towards the end of June. The moving ceremony was attended by representatives from the ACT Branch and Sub-Branches, the Vietnam Veterans' Association, the Vietnam Veterans' Federation, other ex-service organisations and senior representatives from the Vietnamese community. The Vietnamese Sub-Branch Secretary, Nang Do-Quang, is again to be congratulated on his organisation of this significant event.

- **Memorial Ceremony Commemorating the Battles of Greece and Crete**

As in previous years, senior representatives from the allied nations that fought in the above campaigns supported the local Greek Orthodox community at this annual ceremony held each June at the Australian Hellenic Memorial in ANZAC Parade. 841 Australian soldiers from the 6th Australian Division lost their lives during the Battle of Crete and some 3,000 Australians were captured, ending up as prisoners of war.



VIPs and dignitaries attending the service at the Australian Hellenic Memorial

- **Korean War Veterans' Day**

The annual Korean War Veterans' Day commemorative service was again held in July at the Korean War Memorial in ANZAC Parade, Canberra. This well attended service commemorates the allied forces from countries including Australia, Belgium, Canada, Colombia, Denmark, Ethiopia, France, Greece, Italy, India, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, the Philippines, Sweden, Thailand, Turkey, the Union of South Africa, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, who combined to defend South Korea from invasion. As in previous years, the service was **complimented by the Korean Ladies' Choir** dressed in their beautiful and colourful National costume.

- **Vietnam Veterans' Day**

On Saturday 18 August, the annual commemorative service for Vietnam veterans was held at the Australian Vietnam Forces National Memorial, ANZAC Parade where the principal Guests of Honour were Their Excellencies Major General Michael Jeffery AC CVO MC (Retd), Governor General of Australia (himself a SAS Vietnam veteran) and Mrs Jeffery, and Chief of

the Defence Force, Air Chief Marshal Angus Houston AO AFC and Mrs Houston. The Honour Roll, naming a representative group of ten Australians who made the supreme sacrifice throughout the Vietnam War was read by Vietnam veterans Mr Ross Smith (6RAR 1966-67) and Mr Brian Hewitt (161 Bty RNZA 1969-70).

- Reserve Forces Day

The Canberra Region Annual Reserve Forces Day Parade and Commemoration Service was held at the Australian War Memorial and was a well attended and supported event.

- Remembrance Day

As in previous years, 11 November, Remembrance Day, is observed at the Australian War Memorial and also afterwards at the French Embassy. Apart from the laying of wreaths by principal dignitaries, representatives of Federal Parliament, the ACT Government, Service chiefs, ex-service organisations and the Diplomatic Corps, a part of the service which has become **important and meaningful is the 'Laying of Flowers' at the Stone of Remembrance.** The flowers, in the form of a poppy, are carried and placed by individual school students representing the youth of Australia.

Branch Congress

The ACT Branch Congress was held at the Hellenic Club, Woden on Friday, 29th June 2007, commencing with a memorial service and wreath-laying at the Tomb of the Unknown Australian Soldier at the Australian War Memorial.

The Guest of Honour and Keynote Speaker this year was Services Member of the Repatriation Commission, Brigadier Bill Rolfe (Retd) who formally opened the Congress and presented League Awards to well-deserving recipients. Other speakers included The Hon. Bruce Billson **MP, Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Minister** Assisting the Minister for Defence; RSL National President, Major General Bill Crews AO (Retd), Mr Alan Griffin MP, Shadow **Minister for Veterans' Affairs**; Mr Mark Sullivan, Secretary DVA, and Queensland RSL State President, Mr Doug Formby.

These speakers were complemented by other VIP guests including the RSL National Secretary, Mr Derek Robson AM; The Hon. Bob McMullen MP, Federal Member for Fraser; Mrs Annette Ellis MP, Federal Member for Canberra; Senator Gary Humphries; Mr Brendan Smythe MLA, representing the ACT Government Opposition; Major General Clunies-Ross AO MBE, Chairman of the Australian War Memorial Council; Mr Gary

Collins, Deputy Commissioner DVA; Mr Ed Killestyn PSM, Deputy President of the Repatriation Commission, together with ACT Past Branch Presidents Ron Metcalfe OAM, Derek Roylance AM and Brigadier Peter Evans (Retd) and representatives from Kindred Ex-Service Organisations.

Branch Executive

The following members were announced as being elected unopposed to offices as follows:

Branch President	Mr Gary Brodie OAM
Deputy Branch President	LTCOL John Merrick (Retd)
Vice President	Mr John King
Vice President	Mr David Millar
Vice President	Mr Jan Paulga
Branch Treasurer	Mr Mickey Michaelis
Assistant State Secretary	Mr Bruce Tunnah OAM JP

League Awards

The following were presented with League Awards and Certificates:

- Meritorious Service Award
Mr Colin Berryman OAM
- Life Membership
Major General Bill Crews AO (Retd)
Mr Peter Tsikleas
- Certificate of Appreciation
Canberra Centre Management
Mr Reginald Gillard
Mr Bill Harkness
Dr John Lonergan OBE
Mrs Suzanne McGuinness
Mr Kevin Noon CSM
Mr Adrian Roberts
- Long Service Award
Mr Thomas Bailey
Mr Stefan Pala
Mr Lindsay Wood



Mr Colin Berryman OAM receiving his Meritorious Service Award from BRIG Bill Rolfe (Retd)



RSL National President, MAJGEN Bill Crews AO (Retd) receiving his award of Life Membership of the League from BRIG Bill Rolfe (Retd)

Australian Defence Medal

Following the gazettal of this new medal, two separate presentations were arranged by local Federal members, Mr Bob McMullen (Fraser) and Mrs Annette Ellis (Canberra) at which medals were presented to several veterans and ADF personnel from their respective electorates.

Formation of New Sub-Branch

On 7 June, the Branch Executive approved a Charter for a new Sub-Branch to be formed at the Subic Bay area in the Philippines. This Sub-Branch now complements the other Philippines Sub-Branch in Angeles City.

RSL – ADF Involvement

The strong bonds formed over many years between the Branch and the Staff, Officer Cadets and Midshipmen of the Australian Defence Force Academy and the Royal Military College of Australia, Duntroon continue unabated. The Branch provides prizes for nominated personnel at the respective graduation ceremonies. Branch personnel are continually invited to (and attend) Prizes & Awards Ceremonies, Graduation Ceremonies, Trooping the Colour and other significant occasions.

'Stand To' Newspaper

The first issue of the revitalised ACT Branch '**Stand To**' magazine was issued in November, both in electronic form and in hard copy. The electronic version is available on the Branch website – www.actrsl.org.au.

Membership

Branch membership continues to 'flutter' around the 1900 mark although there is a pleasant rise in the number of Affiliates joining the League. We should look at ways of attracting more serving members and thus retain our position as the peak national ex-service organisation. It is difficult in the ACT to persuade potential members that the RSL exists primarily for the welfare of serving and ex-service personnel and their dependants.

Welfare and Advocacy

As stated above, the welfare of veterans and their dependants forms the foundation of the League, not just those who are RSL members. Arthur Craig and his wife Kathleen ably assist all applicants with initial claims, the preparation of **cases for the Veterans' Review Board and liaison** with the Branch Solicitors in presenting cases at the Administrative Appeals Tribunal.

Finances

Our financial position continues to improve, if more slowly than we would like. Thanks are due to the excellent response to our ANZAC and Remembrance Day appeals, which were supported by Sub-Branch members, veterans, serving ADF members together with local schools and the ACT public. We have developed a very **positive 'can do' attitude and we are very successful** in doing more relevant work of value to the veteran community at large.

Overseas Sub-Branches

Overseas Sub-Branches of the RSL are managed by the ACT Branch. They continue to provide valuable service to the veteran community by raising the profile of the RSL in a number of overseas countries in liaison with other ex-service organisations, offering advice on general welfare aspects, not only to our ex-pat veterans and their respective dependants, but also to numerous charities in their sphere of influence.

In relation to the latter, I am most appreciative to the Port Moresby Sub-Branch in PNG, for their ongoing splendid work in arranging the ANZAC Day Dawn Service at the Bomana War Cemetery, the allocation of educational scholarships from the Wally Lusuck Trust Fund and financial assistance from the Fund for doctors to attend Port Moresby from Australia for specialist operations/treatment on PNG patients, together with attendance of PNG doctors to undertake further study at the Royal North Shore Hospital, Sydney.

The Angeles City Sub-Branch in the Philippines is also very pro-active in fundraising and welfare provisions for some orphanages and in their ongoing charitable work offering commendable assistance to the poor and needy in their area.

Comments of Appreciation

My term of office as ACT Branch President will be completed on Friday 13th June 2008. I take this opportunity to offer my sincere thanks to the following people as individuals, and in some instances as a collective, for the support given to me during my four terms as Branch President.

My appreciation firstly to the Branch Patron, His Excellency Major General Michael Jeffery AC CVO MC (Retd), Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia. As with his predecessors, he graciously accepted the position of our Patron.

My sincere thanks to the RSL National President, Major General Bill Crews AO (Retd); RSL National Secretary, Mr Derek Robson AM; the respective RSL State Presidents and the staff of RSL National Headquarters for their always wise counsel and comradeship shared through the numerous National Executive meetings, the necessary Committee work and RSL activities shared during my time as Branch President.

My sincere thanks also to our own Branch Executive for their strong support to me in our successful endeavours to promote worthwhile projects and activities here in the ACT for the veteran community we serve.

Again my sincere thanks to the ACT Sub-Branch Executives and their membership for the excellent work they continue to carry out in such a dedicated manner in the important areas as Trustees, on various Committees, with the Day Clubs, Hospital and Home visiting and the ongoing work as Advocates and Welfare Officers. And also importantly, my thanks as always to the Office Assistants, who attend to the day to day matters of our Branch and Sub-Branch Office locations.

I owe a special thanks to the ACT State Secretary Mr James Davidson, who at all times has been a most professional and dedicated colleague, always on hand to advise and to offer guidance to myself and others when required on the complexities or subtleties of the RSL Constitution or other important RSL issues that have been raised from time to time.

Conclusion

I consider it an honour, indeed a privilege, to have served as the ACT Branch President over the last four years. I have valued the opportunity to serve for and with so many fine people, united in their dedication to do our best for the Veteran Community and their dependants.

GARY I BRODIE OAM
ACT Branch President

National Conditions Of Service Committee – 2007

The Committee continued to meet on a regular basis to both monitor Defence conditions of service and to action representations from individuals and State Branches.

Defence Force Remuneration Tribunal

During 2007, Group Captain Phil Morrall AM CSC (Retd) continued to represent the League as an intervenor at the Defence Force Remuneration Tribunal (DFRT). In addition to a range of pay and allowance cases applying to individual mustering or groups, the major DFRT cases related to the placements of Officer groups under the new General Officers Pay Scale and resolution of the graded pay structure for Warrant Officers.

Other Matters

The Committee considered and received briefings from Defence representatives on a range of issues including the Nature of Service Review and the new transition from Service arrangements.

Additionally, the Committee was actively involved in the formulation of the RSL submission to the Review of Military Superannuation Arrangements. The Committee discussed with the Defence Force Welfare Association (DFWA) the ramifications of the proposed review and, in the event, both organisations submitted complementary views.

In late December 2007, the Committee undertook similar co-operation with DFWA in formulating a **joint response to the Review's report released by Government.**

The Committee wishes to encourage both individual League members and Branches to represent matters of concern and more general feedback in order that the League might maintain an informed view on issues affecting current and former ADF members.

PHIL MORRALL
Chairman

National Defence Committee Report - 2007

General

The ADF continues to be deployed in many parts of the world most significantly in Iraq, Afghanistan and Timor, but also in smaller numbers in other locations. Although it is claimed by some that all three services are over stretched, the total numbers committed are less than 4000 which on any reasonable estimate does not appear excessive. There are of course advantages in maintaining a definite operational focus provided appropriate support is available, which is the case, but also disadvantages in that those deployed come from a comparatively limited range of specializations with the resultant strain not evenly spread.

On the wider international scene the question of North Korea's nuclear intentions appear to be at least in the process of clarification with a recent agreement brokered by the United States (US) for that country to renounce its nuclear weapons capabilities in exchange for economic benefits. In **the Middle East in contrast Iran's intentions** in this respect appear to be quite clear, that is that she will continue to develop her nuclear capability irrespective of any pressure from the West. Whether the ultimate aim is to develop a nuclear weapons capability or not, is unclear, although in all probability this is the case.

In Palestine the situation continues to deteriorate with Hezbollah now controlling Gaza and the more moderate Fatah confined to the West Bank. This situation can only further inflame the already fragile relationship with the Israelis and complicate relationships with both the countries of the Middle East and with the West.

The budget has again increased in real terms with the defence allocation now reaching 2% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Significant emphasis has been placed on retention and recruiting with a substantial allocation of resources for new initiatives in those areas. Capital equipment received emphasis, with the announcement of the purchase of Super Hornet fighters to cover any possible delays in the JSF project, and the decision to accept the Spanish contender for the Air Warfare Destroyer (AWD) initiative.

Iraq

On June 7 Overwatch Battle Group (West) 3 OBG(W)3 took over from OBG(W)2 and continued to operate from the Ali Air Base at Talil. The

force comprising two Combat Teams of light armour and mechanized infantry is ideal for the security operations being undertaken and the very light casualty rate emphasises the high state of training of the troops and the design of the vehicles being utilized. The aim remains the same, to support Iraqi Security Forces and local authorities in a broad range of security activities and also in crisis situations.

The latter role announced by Prime Minister Howard in August 2006 implied a potentially more aggressive stance than was originally envisaged, and the task of maintaining security in two provinces in support of the Iraqis appears to have been comparatively successful,

The Australian Army Training Team Iraq (AATTI) continues to operate from Talil, but from February with an increased presence of 100 personnel drawn from both the Army and the RAAF. The increased numbers provide for training instructors and a dedicated logistics team. The team is being relocated from Talil to the coalition base at Taz north of Baghdad.

An RAN frigate remains in the Gulf and provides protection as part of a multi national group for the major oil terminal through which flows product earning 60% of **Iraq's** GDP. The Air Force continues to fly Orions and Hercules in support of operations with the Orions providing overland operations including close support of ground activities.

It was clear that the previous Government had no intention of withdrawing all or part of the force in the foreseeable future and even the Oppositions plans only included the OBG and not the security detachment in Baghdad or the naval or air elements. In December, the new Government announced that it would in fact withdraw the OBG in June 2008 while leaving the rest of the force intact.

Afghanistan

The Reconstruction Task Force (RTF) comprising approximately 390 men, made up of engineers and an infantry company continues to operate in Oruzgan Province and by all reports has achieved significant gains in infrastructure development. The RTF operates in conjunction with a Dutch force of 1600 men. An RAAF radar surveillance unit has also been deployed to provide airspace control.

In May a Special Operations Task Group of approximately 300 men was deployed to Afghanistan in addition to the RTF. This group comprised commandoes from 7RAR (Commando) and SAS from 1SASR. This force replaces the Special Forces Task Group withdrawn in September 2006 and is more heavily weighted with Commandos, reflecting, in the words of the CDF Air Chief Marshal Houston, the lessons learned from the previous deployments.

The deployment of a larger and more combat **capable force is indicative of NATO's desire to** increase numbers of effective infantry in Afghanistan, but also an indication of the increased intensity of the conflict. In December, the new Defence Minister, Joel Fitzgibbon announced that unless some NATO countries provided more fighting troops, the war against the Taliban would be lost.

Timor

In December 2006 the ADF commitment in Timor was reduced to 800 men based on a battalion group. During the first half of the year a presidential election was held which had the potential to create considerable internal unrest, but ultimately both the campaign and the election were comparatively peaceful. A further general election was held in late June and again the potential for severe disruption existed but did not eventuate. The Australian contingents main tasks have been the maintenance of civil order in conjunction with a UN Police presence and at one time hunting down renegade elements from the Timorese police and Army.

The Australian commitment at this stage has been funded for a further year but it is likely that it will be extended as it is obvious that the Timorese government and the newly elected President Jose Ramos Horta are very keen for this to occur.

Solomon Islands

The most interesting news in relation to the ADF deployment to the Solomon Islands was the announcement in April that the rotational deployment to that country would be comprised of 100 Army Reservists from NSW based units. This is the largest independent deployment of NSW reservists since World War 11 and demonstrates that the previous Government was serious in providing opportunities for the Army Reserve to contribute practically to ADF capability.

Defence Budget

The budget of 2007-08 saw a further increase in defence spending to a record \$22 billion, \$2.1 billion more than the previous year.

The budget represents 2% of GDP a level that has not been reached since 1995-96. With continued growth over the next 4 years the budget is estimated to reach \$25.1 billion in 2010-11. New initiatives announced before the budget amounted to \$11 billion, with \$14 billion over ten years announced in the budget. The pre budget initiatives were:

- \$10 billion to raise and equip two new infantry battalions.
- \$260 million for operational supplementation for ADF deployments in Timor, Afghanistan, Iraq and Solomon Islands.
- \$1 billion to boost recruiting and retention by a series of measures to increase allowances, reform recruiting techniques, provide retention bonuses and fund the Military Gap Year enlistment.

An extra \$14 billion over ten years has been provided for, including \$7.7 billion over 4 years, broken up as follows:

- \$6.6 billion over 13 years to acquire 24 F/A18 F Super Hornet aircraft including weapons, support, personnel and operating costs.
- A further \$2.1 billion over 10 years to increase recruiting and improve retention including increased pay, training, professional development, transition to civil life and funding of cadets.
- \$1.8 billion for additional funding to alleviate a range of equipment obsolescence and inventory shortfall and to enable enhanced maintenance refits and upgrades.
- \$1.3 billion to cover personnel operating costs of the C17 aircraft now entering service.
- \$1.3 billion for operational supplementation for Iraq for a further 12 months, Afghanistan for a further two years and a further year in Timor.
- \$954 million over ten years to cover additional payments to the Defence Housing Authority.
- **\$382 million to enhance Australia's security and intelligence capabilities.**

- \$135 million over four years for enhanced protective security for Defence property and personnel¹.

These initiatives and the money to support them are welcome and continue the growth in the Defence budget which has been a feature of the last few years; something for which the RSL Defence Committee has been advocating for many years. However rising personnel costs and escalating investment levels will reduce money available for operating costs from 2008-09 onwards unless more money is forthcoming in the years ahead.

Recruiting, Retention and Personnel

The initiatives in this area costing \$1 billion already committed and a further \$2.1 billion over the next few years show that for the first time this very real problem is being seriously tackled. The RSL Defence Committee has raised the issue with Ministers, military leaders and bureaucrats over many years and it is pleasing that the previous Government has committed substantial resources to what has been, is and will be, a matter of serious concern if the Defence Force is to maintain and enhance its operational capability.

It is also worth noting that the size of the ADF rose by 325 in 2006-07 to 51,476. The goals set by the previous Government are now 55,700 in 2010-11 and 57,000 in 2016-17 with another 1000 if the next stage of Army development is approved. This compares with a fall in ADF numbers of 929 over three years to 2005-06.

The budgeted strength from the ADF for 2007-08 is 52,505 representing an increase in all three services and with the \$3.1 billion now allocated for personnel issues the situation is a vast improvement on previous years².

Towards the end of the year, the ADF introduced a Gap Year Program which provides for enlistees **signing up for a year's full-time** military commitment at the end of secondary schooling, or for those having recently left school, or students enrolled in tertiary courses. Each Service provides basic military training together with specific to Service training and experience. When fully established, the scheme will offer 500 places in the Army and 250 to each of the Navy and Air Force each year. Rates of pay are attractive and initial responses have been encouraging. While all enlistees will benefit

personally from the experience, the ADF's aim is for the maximum number to commit to full-time military service on completion of the year.

Defence Management Review

In November 2006 the former Minister for Defence announced the appointment of a Review Team headed by Ms Elizabeth Proust to examine and assess organisational efficiency and effectiveness in the Defence Department and to make recommendations in a number of different areas. The RSL was asked to make a submission to the review and did so in late November. The Defence Committee expressed some scepticism concerning Defence reviews in general as there had been many in recent years with little practical benefit, however it was felt that some response should be made. Subsequently two members of the Committee appeared before the Review Team.

The report was released in March 2007 and after examination the Committee could find very little in it which would lead to significant changes in the structure and processes of the Defence organisation as the Terms of Reference were quite restrictive. The new Government has, however, expressed general support for the recommendations.

Senate Inquiry into Peacekeeping

During the course of the year, the Senate Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee announced an inquiry into Australian peacekeeping operations and called for submissions from interested groups, including the RSL. A submission was provided, and in September Major General Clunies-Ross and Rear Admiral Doolan appeared before the Committee to give evidence. The meeting was constructive and the RSL representatives were able to make the point **strongly, among others, that the ADF's success in** the various of peacekeeping operations was due to its emphasis on training and preparing for war.

Purchase of Super Hornets

In the Defence Budget \$6.6 billion was allocated over 13 years to acquire 24 F/A 18F Super Hornets for the RAAF. The commitment was made by government last year and was designed specifically to cover any gap in the delivery schedule of the F35 Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) which would have a detrimental effect on **Australia's air combat capability once the F111** was retired from service in 2010. This decision

¹ The Cost of Defence: ASPI Defence Budget Brief 2007-2008 pp vi, vii, viii.

² The Cost of Defence: ASPI Defence Budget Brief pp ix.

has been criticised in some quarters on the grounds that other more suitable aircraft were available, such as the F-15 Eagle and the F-22 Raptor, which would better meet the requirement. The RAAF however has strongly defended the decision and maintains that the Super Hornet is the best available aircraft, a view shared by the Defence Committee. The purchase has also received the support of the former Shadow Minister for Defence Joel Fitzgibbon. Assuming a gap in capability is going to occur the Committee's view is that although costly, the decision to purchase the Super Hornets is necessary and appropriate. In January 2008 the new Government announced that it would review this project, the implication being that it might be **scrapped. In the Committee's view this is highly unlikely.**

Air Warfare Destroyers – Amphibious Ships

In June the previous Government announced that the Australian Submarine Corporation (ASC) had the contract to build three air warfare destroyers for the RAN. These ships will be based on the Spanish firm Navantias F100 class destroyers. This decision determined by delivery dates and cost involves the rejection of the bigger and more costly US designed class favoured by the Navy.

It was also announced that Tenix in conjunction with Navantia would build the two 27,000 tonne amphibious ships for the RAN which will **significantly increase Australia's capacity to deploy troops and helicopters to any part of the world.** Both these decisions will result in large amounts of work for Australian industry in South Australia (SA), New South Wales (NSW), Victoria and Western Australia (WA) with SA gaining the largest share. Both these decisions have been strongly supported by the Defence Committee.

Australian Multi Role Helicopter

Following on the Tiger Armed Helicopter project, the assembly of the first Australian MRH90 Multi Role Helicopters began at the Australian Aerospace facility in Brisbane in May. This project for both the Army and the Navy will see the first 4 helicopters manufactured in France with the remaining 42 assembled in Brisbane. Crew training in Townsville should begin in 2008.

ADF Helicopter Training

HMAS Albatross at Nowra has been chosen as the **location for the ADF's Joint Helicopter School.** Nowra has been selected because it provides a

broad range of training environments for aircrew. Helicopter aircrew graduating after initial training will continue with advanced training in different locations; SeaHawk and SeaSprite at Nowra, with MRH-90 and Tiger training at Oakey and Chinook training in Townsville.

Acquisition of Tactical Unmanned Aerial Vehicles

Contracts have been signed with Boeing Australia for the delivery and support of a Tactical Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (TUAV) capability for the Army. This capability will allow continuous surveillance protection for a deployed force and for **target identification. The TUAV's will be** operated by 132 Battery of the 20th Surveillance and Target Acquisition Regiment (STAR) in Enoggera and should begin operational service in 2009.

Security of Defence Weapons and Munitions

There have been a number of reports during the year of the suspected theft of defence weapons. Initial information concerned the loss of M72 rocket launchers. In January an individual was charged with receiving and disposing of seven such weapons of which one was recovered which proved to be an old variant produced around 1990 and removed from stocks some years ago.

In February an audit team charged with examining security policies and practices applying to Defence weapons, munitions and explosives reported to the previous Minister for Defence that practices before 2000 were not as stringent as they are now. Sometime later an Army Sergeant based in Victoria was arrested and charged with multiple offences relating to the theft of weapons and ammunition. Whether this individual was caught as a result of good security procedures or not, it was clear that the offences had occurred over a long period of time without detection. The audit directed by the previous Minister is continuing and will result in more stringent control measures in an area of particular concern during a period of significant terrorist activity.

Meeting With the Former Shadow Minister for Defence

On 12 June the National Defence Committee had a lengthy meeting with the then Shadow Minister for Defence, Joel Fitzgibbon in Parliament House. The purpose of the meeting was to clarify aspects of the Oppositions defence policy in the lead up to an election. The Committee provided Mr

Fitzgibbon with a list of items which were or could be contentious and on which a statement of policy was required. These were:

- The Defence of Australia (DOA) concept **which was a central plank of Labour's** defence policy when previously in office, in relation to the current flexible expeditionary concept.
- The creation of a Department of Homeland Security.
- The creation of a Coastguard.
- The recent Defence Management Review.
- The purchase of air warfare destroyers and amphibious ships.
- The purchase of the Joint Strike Fighter and the Super Hornets.
- The raising of two infantry battalions.
- The recent initiatives on recruitment and retention.
- The relationship of the Minister with the CDF, Secretary and the Service Chiefs.

The discussion was constructive and in general the Committee was reassured that by the comments of the Shadow Minister.

Two areas where the Committees views differ from those expressed by the Shadow Minister, were in the raising of a Department of Homeland Security and a Coastguard which were part of Opposition policy and neither of which is supported by the RSL for good reasons. The meeting was worthwhile and provided clarity on a number of contentious issues.

Australia's National Security – A Defence Update 2007

The former Government issued an update on defence policy, the first since 2005, in early July. This continued the current practice of issuing updates rather than White Papers the last of which was in the year 2000. Two main factors **which determine Australia's defence outlook** which were identified in 2000 were the continued pre-dominance of the United States (US) in the Asia Pacific and in the world and the security impact of globalisation, were re emphasized. Immediate threats to Australian interests, identified in subsequent Defence Updates have not changed. These are the threat of terrorism, the potential for the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) and the risks presented by failed and fragile states.

While Australia does not face any direct territorial threats, conventional forces properly equipped are needed for the fundamental task of defending

Australia. However the most likely engagements for the ADF are counter terrorism and counter-insurgency operations, together with peacekeeping and humanitarian operations. The point is strongly made however that Australia must be able to maintain a qualitative edge in conventional military capabilities within the region, a proposition given practical effect by recent major equipment purchases and major contracts entered into.

The Update emphasizes the closer ties with Japan which is characterised as being **"no more valuable partner in the region" and has a blunt view on the pace and growth of China's military modernization.** Importantly the Update identifies a range of potential military contributions which cover the full range of ADF capabilities from the core task of war fighting to stabilization operations and humanitarian response missions.

On the whole the update was outward looking and emphasised the need for flexibility in both a **regional and global sense, in the ADF's force structure and capability** and provides a logical underpinning for current and projected defence initiatives.

Labor's Defence Policy

Not long before it was elected to government in November, the Labor Party issued a Defence Policy Statement that covered most areas of the Defence portfolio. This document, together with statements subsequently by the new Minister, Joe Fitzgibbon, give a fairly clear indication of the **Government's defence priorities.** In general, these are remarkably similar to the previous Government's, which is encouraging, but there are some differences of emphasis. One major policy difference concerns Iraq where the Government intends to withdraw the main fighting element, the OBG, by June 2008 while retaining all other elements in place. The logic of this decision is difficult to follow and appears to have more to do with politics than anything else.

The Government has said it intends to rectify two areas of neglect by the previous government, the first being the equipping of the Defence Force and the second the processes involved in major capital procurement. In the first case, the Defence Force is now better equipped than it has ever been in peacetime, but if this state of affairs can be improved so much the better. In the second case, the Government may find that the complexities of major capital procurement defy improvement, but any efforts in this area are worthwhile.

In January 2008, the Government announced a review of the \$6.6billion project to acquire 24 FA/18F Super Hornets for the RAAF. While this may cause trepidation in some quarters, the Defence committee is of the view that the project will not be scrapped for a number of very good reasons.

It is of interest that the policy paper supported construction of new air warfare destroyers and submarines, but did not mention the two amphibious ships. Whether this omission is significant or not remains to be seen.

It is also of interest that two former policies, the creation of both a Coastguard and a Department of Homeland Security appear to have been abandoned. If this is the case, the RSL will welcome the development as we have argued against these policies in the past.

Consultation with the Defence Committee

Apart from the meeting with the former Shadow Minister for Defence the Committee has had consultations with a number of ADF personnel and has attempted to obtain a viewpoint from lower down the chain of command. The consultations have included

- Vice Admiral Shalders, Chief of Navy on current naval issues.
- Major Stone on Timor Leste.
- Lt Col Mumford, CO 3RAR, on unit level issues.
- Major General Cantwell, Deputy Chief of Army on Iraq operations.
- Brigadier Robbins RM, Defence Adviser, British High Commission on the war in Iraq from a British perspective.
- Colonel Frewin, ARA on the war in Afghanistan.

Conclusion

The ADF continues to operate at a high tempo in many parts of the world. This has advantages in keeping the organisation focussed on its primary roles, but has the disadvantage in concentrating the commitment on the deployable elements of the force. The defence budget has once again provided for this level of activity together with the capacity to acquire major capital items, although real increases will be required in subsequent budgets if the level of activity and acquisition is to be maintained. One significant initiative has been an additional \$1 billion dollars for recruiting and retention, together with a further \$2.1 billion over the next ten years. This emphasis has already begun to pay dividends with increased recruiting figures in a number of categories and a take up in retention bonuses. Overall the ADF is probably in the best condition now than at any time since Vietnam and should remain so, if recruiting and retention initiatives continue to provide favourable results. The advent of a new government should not radically alter this state of affairs and if this is the case it will be to the benefit of both the ADF and Australia.

A CLUNIES-ROSS
Chairman

National Trustees Report – 2007

General

During 2007, the National Trustees were:

Brigadier John Sheldrick OAM (Retd) - Chairman, Major General Sir William Refshauge AC CBE ED (Retd), Mr Harold Fife OAM, Mr John Button OAM, The Hon Mr Justice Dennis Cowdroy OAM, Mr Eric Kay AM ED, Mr Derek Roylance AM, Major General Peter Day AO (Retd).

Meetings were also attended by Major General Bill Crews AO (Retd) – National President, Mr Gary Brodie OAM – President ACT Branch (National Executive Member), and Mr David Sinclair – National Treasurer. Mrs Helen Britten, the Assistant National Secretary of the RSL and Mrs Jan Ormerod, Business Manager, acted as Secretary to the Trustees.

Meetings were held on four occasions during the year. In addition, there were some out of session deliberations addressed pressing matters. Income for funds, included capitation payments to the Jubilee Fund, some gratefully received donations, and from interest earned from deposited funds.

The RSL Overseas Aid Fund

This Trust was established to accept donations from time to time, and particularly in support of special appeals, from the RSL, its members and the public to assist in relief of persons in developing countries, particularly those of the Asia-Pacific region, and which are recognised as developing countries by the Minister for Foreign Affairs. During 2007, no grants were made, nor special appeals launched.

The National RSL Welfare & Disaster Fund

This charitable Trust was established by the League to assist eligible persons in Australia who are in necessitous circumstances. During 2007, \$15,000 was distributed in grants.

The Australian World War I Veterans Welfare & Commemorative Fund

The primary purpose of this Trust is to provide assistance to World War I veterans and their dependants in necessitous or deserving circumstances. The Trust also permits

contributions to be made towards commemorating World War I service.

\$500 was granted to St Mary's Parish Church, Harefield, UK for restorative processes. This Church has had a continuing relationship with World War I Australian soldiers, including burials in the churchyard.

The Jubilee Commemorative Fund of the RSL

This Trust enables the League to promote understanding and friendship between Australia and neighbouring countries, particularly those in the Asia-Pacific region. The Trust also enables the League to assist the families of ex-servicemen in that region who are in need, and families of ex-servicemen in countries presently or formerly members of the Commonwealth of Nations (excluding Australia). The Trust also supports the RSL Reg Saunders Scholarship and RSL Scholarships, awarded annually for Australian **veterans' children in necessitous and deserving** circumstances, while undertaking tertiary education in Australia.

During the year, grants of \$US920 each were made for three RSL Kapyong Scholarships. (These scholarships are provided each year and include one each from the Australian Korean Society (ACT) and the Australian Korean War Memorial Fund.)

A grant of \$12,000 was made to support the exchange of medical students to PNG, Fiji and Vietnam through the Royal North Shore Hospital in Sydney and the Hoc Mai exchange program.

Two RSL Scholarships, each of \$3000 were **awarded to Australian veterans' children to assist** in undertaking tertiary studies. The 2007 recipients were Ms Emma Batkin, undertaking a Bachelor of Education degree at the University of South Queensland, and Mr Steven Lawler, who is undertaking a Diploma of Information Technology at the Gold Coast TAFE.

The RSL Reg Saunders Scholarship of \$3000 was awarded, but the recipient subsequently surrendered the scholarship on her decision not to continue with her studies.

The Reg Saunders Scholarship and the RSL Scholarships are administered through the **Australian Veterans' Childrens Assistance Trust**

(AVCAT) and the RSL again acknowledges their very competent assistance.

\$38,403 was paid as RSL Affiliation Fees to the Royal Commonwealth Ex-Services League from the Trust.

The Victoria Cross & Historic Medals Trust (including the Special Commemorative Plaques)

This Trust allows the League to assist in the purchase of historic medals for display to the public in museums and in particular the Australian War Memorial. No grants were made during 2007.

The Mountbatten Memorial Fund

This Fund, which was established in 1979, perpetuates the memory of Lord Louis Mountbatten. The invested capital of the Fund is maintained and the interest earned is provided annually to the Royal Commonwealth Ex-Services League (RCEL) to assist in relieving distress and hardship among disadvantaged ex-servicemen and women in countries presently or formerly members of the Commonwealth of Nations. A grant of \$6000 was made to the RCEL from the Fund during 2007.

The RSL & 6th Division Australian-Hellenic Educational Memorial Fund

This Trust Fund was established to hold the residual funds remaining after the completion of the Hellenic Memorial in ANZAC Parade, Canberra. Contributions from the 6th Australian Division Association and the Preveli Monastery Fund in Western Australia also contributed to the Fund.

Earnings from this Fund provide each year two scholarships awarded in Greece to assist Cretan students under the age of 25 to undertake tertiary education in Greece. One scholarship is named as the 6th Australian Division Scholarship and one name the Preveli Monastery Scholarship. As well, an annual donation is made to the Bishop of Spili's Destitute Fund.

Various donations, which add to the capital of the Fund and hence its earnings, are gratefully received each year. For 2007, the Trustees were pleased to increase the value of each scholarship to \$2750 and the donation to the Bishop of Spili's

Destitute Fund to \$1000. Again the Trustees were most grateful that the Australian Ambassador to Greece was present in Crete at the presentation of the Scholarships and donation.

It was with deep regret that the Trustees learned of the untimely death of Mr Kyriakos Maniatos, Deputy Greek Ambassador, who was the Greek **Ambassador's** representative on this Trust.

The Mona Tait & May Hayman Memorial Fund

This Fund commemorates the bravery of two Nursing Sisters, formerly of the Canberra Community Hospital, both of whom were murdered by Japanese troops during World War II. Sister Mona Tait was killed on the shores of Banka Island whilst attached to the 8th Australian Division and May Hayman was killed when she was attached to an Anglican Mission in Papua New Guinea. The Fund was initiated by staff of the old Canberra Hospital but after some time they requested it be transferred to the RSL National Trustees.

The Trust Fund enables books to be purchased from accrued interest and presented to the **Nurses' Library at the Faculty of Nursing at the University of Canberra** each year. In 2007 a grant of \$300 was made for this purpose.

The RSL War Veterans' Homes and Welfare Trust

This Trust was established in 1995 with a donation from the Queensland State Branch of the RSL. During 2007, grants amounting to \$42,000 were paid to RSL National Headquarters to meet a small proportion of the welfare costs it incurred.

RSL Foundation

The Trustees made a grant of \$18,000 from the RSL Foundation for welfare work carried out through the National Headquarters as reported by the National Secretary.

J A SHELDRIK
Chairman

National Veterans' Affairs Committee Report

- 2007



John Hodges
Chairman

Introduction

At the May 2006 National Executive meeting, my predecessor, Mr Ray De Vere MC OAM, indicated **that he would be resigning as National Veterans' Affairs Advisor** at the rising of the National Congress in September. Subsequently, the National Executive appointed me to serve as the National Affairs Advisor at their pleasure. In this **role I am also Chairman of the National Veterans' Affairs Committee (NVAC)**. Prior to this appointment I was the NSW NVAC Delegate and I am currently the Executive Officer of the NSW RSL Welfare & Benevolent Institution.

I would like to thank Ray De Vere for his service **as the National Veterans' Affairs Advisor and also** for his wise counsel and experience during the handover.

The Year in Review

2007 was a significant year in Veterans' Affairs with a change of Government and consequently a change of Minister for **Veteran's Affairs**. We welcomed the Honourable Alan Griffin MP as the new Minister whilst acknowledging the efforts of the former Minister, the Honourable Bruce Bilson MP. As the battle for the November election heated up, both sides produced a glossy **Veterans' Affairs Policy document** which outlined **both party's** election promises.

At the 2007 National Congress in Melbourne, attended by both the Prime Minister and the then Leader of the Opposition, along with the Minister and Shadow Minister, the Government announced that if re-elected it would increase payments for the General Rate of Disability Pension, the Special Rate Pension (TPI), and the Extreme Disablement Adjustment (EDA). The then Prime Minister also announced that all pensions would be indexed at the Male Total Average Weekly Earnings (MTAWE) rather than traditional CPI increases. This had been a longstanding argument put forward by the RSL. During his speech, the then

Opposition Leader matched the Government's promises.

Subsequent to the Congress, the Labor Party, in its Veterans' Policy document, promised that widows/ers of Veterans who died whilst in receipt of the Intermediate Rate and Temporary payment at the Special Rate (TTI) of Pension would be entitled to the War Widows Pension. Again, a longstanding RSL submission.

With a new Government in place the RSL, through NVAC, will consistently monitor the Government to ensure that all its election pledges for veterans and their dependents are implemented.

Senate Inquiries

In November, I represented the RSL at the Senate Committee hearing into the Australian Participants in the British Nuclear Tests (Treatment) Bill 2006. This Bill was to provide a White Repatriation Health Card for participants for cancer testing and treatment. A submission was prepared and was made available on the National RSL website. At the hearing, I took the opportunity to make the Senators aware of the RSL policy in the matter of participation in the nuclear tests, that this be declared **Hazardous Service for the purpose of the Veterans' Entitlement Act (VEA)**. However, despite my, and other interested parties, best endeavours -
"..... The committee notes the dissatisfaction with the response provided by the Bills. In particular, the committee notes the concerns raised by some submitters regarding the proposal that participation in the nuclear tests be declared non-warlike service for the purpose of the VEA.¹".

However, not all may be lost. In the Labor **Party's** 2007 Election Policy Document for **Veterans' Affairs** it was stated a Labor **Government** ".... will give further consideration to recommendations of the Clarke Review of **Veterans' Entitlements that were not acted upon** by the Howard Government. This process will also give early priority to recommendations relating to those Australian participants in the British Commonwealth Occupational Force in Japan and Defence participants in the atomic **tests in Australia.**" **The Clarke** Report considered

¹ Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Report-November 2007

it appropriate to recognise participation in the tests as non-warlike, hazardous service.

NVAC will continually monitor developments.

Budget Submission to Government

Arising out of each National Congress is the RSL's Budget Submission to the Government. At the conclusion of the debate on **veteran's matters** in the Congress agenda, a draft submission, based on the motions passed and RSL Standing Policy, is prepared. This submission is then presented to National Executive who then debates the Priority Listing of the proposals and the listing of all other proposals. After the listing order has been agreed and all rationales for the Priority Proposals have, if required, been expounded, it is signed off by the National President and forwarded to both the Government and Opposition. It is then made available to all members of the League via the RSL website.

The 2008/09 Budget Submission was delayed due to the National Elections and several motions that **were passed were overtaken by both parties'** election promises. The Priority Proposals are as follows:

1. Indexation

That the indexation of all components of Disability Pensions and Military Superannuation under the DFRDB and MSBS schemes be calculated at the Male Total Average Weekly Earnings (MTAWE).

2. Veterans' Aged Care

That the Government remove the barriers to veterans and war widows accessing higher levels of community aged care and thereby enabling them to make informed and appropriate choices regarding their ability to continue to live in the community. For nursing home accommodation, ensure that the Special Needs status of veterans is recognised consistently across all States in the annual advertising and allocation of new aged care places and packages.

3. Residential Care-Younger Veterans

That the Government develop a system to ensure access to appropriate accommodation for disabled veterans who require 24 hour supported living but are too young to qualify for aged care services.

4. Carers

That the Government formally recognise and foster the critical role that primary carers provide

for veterans. This recognition should include an increase in Carers Allowance and, where necessary, provide additional support services, particularly in respect of funding the infrastructure to support the DVA policy of placing more reliance on community health structures. For veterans in receipt of the Extreme Disablement Adjustment, who are still at home, **their 'carers' be automatically granted the Carer's Allowance.**

5. Mental Health Disorders and Rehabilitation

That the Government develop a national mental health rehabilitation scheme for veterans suffering with chronic mental health problems based on individual case assessment and management programs which includes, where necessary, accommodation assistance options for homeless veterans.

6. Pharmaceuticals

Those entitled veterans are provided with free pharmaceuticals for accepted disabilities.

MRCA SRDP & Voluntary Work

One of the concerns that have come about with the introduction of the Military Rehabilitation & Compensation Act (MRCA) is the issue of voluntary work of those members who are in receipt of the Special Rate of Disability Pension (SRDP). The SRDP is the VEA equivalent of TPI.

Under the VEA, the policy approach is that voluntary work does not have the same pressure or stress that exists in paid work and should therefore should normally be discounted when assessing eligibility for TPI.

However, under MRCA the focus of the Act is in rehabilitation and returning people to their pre-injury status both physically and psychologically. **Eligibility for SRDP depends on a person's** capacity to work at the same level as was the case prior to the injury. Consequently, if a person is undertaking voluntary work this may be an indication that they are able to work in a similar capacity as they were prior to their injury. This capacity to work may make a person ineligible for SRDP.

This will have a profound effect on the RSL in future years as the League is run almost in its entirety by volunteers and, as is the case now, **many of those volunteers are TPI's.** These volunteers are not only members of Sub-Branch committees but are also Pension & Welfare

Officers and Hospital Visitation Officers. If the goal posts are not changed, this work will stop.

NVAC will continue to bring this to the attention of the new Minister and hopefully the Military Rehabilitation & Compensation Commission will issue new guidelines to Claims Assessors to treat voluntary work, not only for the RSL but for the community at large, as part of an ongoing rehabilitation program.

Washington Visit

In June I made a private visit to Washington DC. Whilst there, I took the opportunity to call on the Director of Veterans' Affairs & Rehabilitation Commission, Mr Peter Gaytan, my counterpart in the American Legion (the American equivalent of the RSL).

We had a most fruitful discussion and he was most interested in our Gold Card scheme and our Defence Nationally Recognised Qualifications system. It is interesting to note that the **US Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA) have just implemented a scheme where veterans returning from the Middle East are eligible for free medical care from VA for any condition, not just accepted disabilities.** There is a catch however; it is only available for five years. We should continue to jealously guard and be grateful for our own Gold Card scheme.

I was also privileged to be able to lay a wreath on behalf of the RSL at the Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington National Cemetery. At the ceremony, I was accompanied by Peter Gaytan and Mr Ed Connor of the Washington RSL Sub-Branch. Also in attendance were Rear Admiral Raydon Gates AO CSM RAN, Head of the Australian Defence Staff Washington, members of the Washington RSL Sub-Branch, and staff of the **US Department of Veterans' Affairs.**



I would like to thank the National Executive for allowing me this honour.

Conclusion

The main focus of NVAC in the coming years will be to ensure that the new Government honours its election promises to veterans and that our hard won entitlements and benefits are not eroded either by budget restraints or the natural downsizing of DVA as the veteran population diminishes.

I would like to thank the fellow members of NVAC and all the staff at National Headquarters for their help and guidance throughout the year to the **'new boy'.**

JOHN HODGES

National Veterans' Affairs Advisor

Youth, Heritage and Citizenship Committee Report – 2007

The Youth, Heritage and Citizenship Committee (YHC) met only once during the year.

The **Committee's review of those sections of the** Standing Policy of the RSL pertinent to the YHC areas of interest were forwarded through the National President to be considered by National Congress.

The Committee discussed the incorporation of an amendment from National Congress on the section on Terrorist Activities and amended the paragraph on the subject.

The National President, who attended the meeting, recommended an editorial amendment to the section on Treasonable Acts, which was accepted by the Committee.

The President received an acknowledgement from the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Immigration and Citizenship Affairs for the League's comments on a discussion paper on the proposed Citizenship Test, since adopted by the

Government. The secretary stated that the RSL supportive views were appreciated and this was noted.

Press reports have stated that, in the light of a number of failures by candidates taking the test that the present, Government will consider reviewing the contents of the test. If this occurs it is expected that the League will be asked to comment.

The Chairman of the YHC Committee continues to represent the RSL on the Simpson Prize Advisory Committee. The Simpson Prize, sponsored by the Department of Education, Employment and **Workplace Relations and Department of Veterans' Affairs**, provides for an expenses paid trip for a secondary student from each State and Territory each year to the ANZAC Day Ceremony at Gallipoli.

JOHN MOYLE
Chairman

The RSL Captain Reg Saunders Memorial Scholarship - 2007

The Scholarship

The RSL established this tertiary level scholarship for drug and alcohol abuse studies in 1992 for students of an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background. The Scholarship provides a \$3,000 grant to assist with these studies

In the development of the Scholarship, consultation with ATSIC revealed the urgent need for qualified substance abuse professionals among the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. As such, the Scholarship requires an applicant to major or specialise in drug and alcohol abuse targeted courses. Where these courses do not specifically contain subjects or units dealing with substance abuse, the students must be able to provide scope for such studies in their elective subjects and field placements.

The closing date for applications is 31 October each year for studies commencing the following year.

This Scholarship is now administered by the **Australian Veterans' Children Assistance Trust** Limited, known as AVCAT.

More information about these Scholarship, including criteria and applications can be found on the AVCAT website at:
www.onmyweb.net/~vvt/index.html .

Contact details:

AVCAT
PO Box K978
HAYMARKET NSW 1240

Telephone: (02) 9281 7077
Facsimile: (02) 9281 9164
E-mail: vvt@accsoft.com.au

The 2007 Recipient

The 2007 Reg Saunders Scholarship was awarded, but the recipient subsequently surrendered the scholarship on her decision not to continue with her studies.

Captain Saunders

Captain Reginald Walter Saunders, a member of the Gunditjmara tribe, was born on 7 August 1920, in the small town of Purnim just outside the Framlingham Aboriginal reserve in the Western District of Victoria.

At the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939 he joined the Second Australian Imperial Force. This was part of his heritage, that of being a warrior. His people, the Gunditjmara, had fought many battles with the white settlers in trying to retain their land.

He then began his military career, serving in World War II and Korea. During World War II he was selected for training at an Officer Cadet Training Unit, where he graduated as a Lieutenant with men such as Tom Derrick VC. Later promoted to Captain, Reg Saunders served in the 6th Division and saw action in the Middle East and New Guinea.

In Korea he was the Officer in Command of 'C' Company of the Third Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment (3 RAR). This Battalion won a United States Presidential Citation for the Battle of Kapyong.

During the last 20 years of his life, Reg Saunders worked with the former Department of Aboriginal Affairs. Reg travelled widely and was able to meet with Aboriginal people from a variety of backgrounds. He was awarded an MBE in 1977. He died in 1990.

RSL AFOF Report - 2007

The RSL Australian Forces Overseas Fund (AFOF) provides packages to Australian Defence Force, and Australian Federal Police personnel serving overseas.

The majority of these personnel serve in peace-keeping or peace-making missions on a six month rotation basis, and to ensure that each receives the benefit of a package during his period of service, the packages are made available for delivery twice yearly. These packages are loosely referred to as the mid-year and Christmas packages.

In 2007, RSL AFOF provided packages to personnel serving overseas in Afghanistan, East Timor, Iraq, Israel, Middle East, Sinai, Solomon Islands and Sudan.

The packages contained various items to remind personnel of home, and included ANZAC biscuits, glucose confectionery, salted peanuts, dried fruit, muesli bars, cake, lollies, a selection of RSL newsletters, a letter of appreciation on behalf of all Australians, RSL State Branch and Membership contact details.

Australia has large numbers of personnel serving in these overseas missions. A total of 2599 mid year packages and 3540 Christmas packages were prepared in facilities kindly made available by the Deployed Forces Support Unit within Randwick Barracks which, in honour of those who served in the WWII Kokoda Campaign, has been renamed the 39th Personnel Support Battalion. The packages were prepared on the first Tuesday and Wednesday of May and November.

AFOF is supported by all Australians, and the ongoing personal monetary donations from the Veteran and general community ensure the **continuance of the Fund's activities**. We continue to promote the Fund through a wide distribution of the AFOF brochure which contains a brief history of the Fund and explains how it supports our personnel.

AFOF relies on the many volunteers who give so freely of their time to assist in the preparation of the packages, and in particular, the contribution given by personnel from DFSU Randwick (39th PSB), Directorate of Personnel Support Amenities in Canberra, the Malabar RSL Sub-Branch, RSL National Headquarters Staff, and friends of AFOF from the general community, was greatly appreciated.

RSL AFOF is proud to have been able to make this contribution to the welfare of our serving personnel on behalf of our grateful Nation.

We wish all those serving overseas good fortune and a safe return home.

DEREK J ROBSON
Executive Commissioner



RSL Awards - 2007

Meritorious Service Medal

ACT

BERRYMAN, K C J

QLD

IND, R S

McCULLOUGH, R L

PICKERING, K A

WA

CLINTON, B

NSW

BEVAN, C J
BURKE, T B
COLLINS, R R
COOKE, L W
CUNNINGHAM, A G

GARDINER, G J
HOLBURN, A B A
KEMISTER, A R
KITCHING, A T
LAW, R E

MARLOW, A J
NEALAND, P J
RICHARDS OAM, E J
ROBINSON, C R
SANDERS, G E

VICKERY, E
WEST, H F

Life Membership

VIC

ARCHMAN JP, AJ
ATYEO, L G
BAILEY, F A
BENSLEY, B V
CARPENTER, R T
CROZIER, W J
CULLEN, W J
FEWSTER, R J
GREEN, K E

HUTCHINSON, W
JOHNSON, H
LEVEY, G R
LYONS, F M
MASON, H A
McKENNA, W G
O'CONNOR, P K
PHILLIPS, V M
RAY, J E

RANDLE, P D
ROSSBOROUGH, F
SALTER, E R
SCOTT, A
SEABORNE, E E
SEARLE, J
SHALLUE, M
SIWES, H G
SMITH, G S

STAKELUM, E
STERPIN, J
VAN DER
SCHOOT, W
VOUTIER, F W
WALKER, K
WILLIAMS, A

QLD

BROWN, M J
BONE, F J
CLARKSON, J P
CLODE, A J
COFFISON, A E
COLWELL, I V
DAVIDSON, C W

GREENTREE, L S
HANNAH, R S
HUNT, W R
HUNTLEY, M
JONES, B E
KEMP, E R
KRIEDMANN, R

KEARNEY, W A
LOUGHTON AM DSM, G
McGRATH, P J
McCANN, J J
MENZ, R T
MURRAY, P J
NORMAN, W E

ROUHAN, R J
SMALL, A R
SNAPE, N G
STRACHAN, A
WADE AM, B

NSW

ANNESLEY, L S
CABLE, J B
CADDEY, B M
CAMERON, J L
CONNELL, B C
EICKENLOFF, L
GAYDON, R T
GLENNON, J E
GREEN, G S

HOAD, L
HOLLAND, G J
INGRAM, G W
JOHNSTON, K J
KEEFE, D P
LOYNES, B D
MARGINSON, J
MARSH, W J
MARQUET, G E

McCORMACK, M Mc
McINTYRE, M
McLENNAN, R G
MELIA, J
MOULES, P A
MUNDAY MM, D W
NOREEN, D
OLIVER, H E
O'RIORDIAN, P A

OWEN, O H
PERRIN, C P
PHILLIPS, P D
RAATZ, C L
RAYNER, A S
RICHARDSON, W
T
ROSSER, R T
ROYAL, J D

SCOTT, J L
SIMPSON, N
SMITH, G F
SPENCER, E R

SPRICE, J
TOBIN, B M
THOMPSON, G B
THOMPSON, J

VAN DYK, B
WILLETT, A
WOOLLEY, E J
WHITE, A L

WILLIAMS, F
YOUNG, K J
YOUNG, R G

TAS

COCKER, S J
DEAN, R

FITZ OAM, R
HALLAM, M

MARLOWE, E
VAN DER HOEK, J

ACT

CREWS AO, W J
TSIKLEAS, P

WA

BLINKINSOPP, P J
EADON-CLARKE, C

MULHOLLAND, I
POETT, E H

TRIMBLE, H W
WARD, R T

SA

ADAMS, C C
ANDERSON, R G
CHURCH, D K
HALL, A W
HANSON, G E

HEINICKE, D G
JAESCHKE, C A
JONES, B
KÖHLHAGEN, R D
MARTIN, J J

MUELLER, L G
ROBERTS, C N
ROSSI, N A
SPENCER OAM RFD, J
STEPHENS, J J

SWAFFER, M D
WILLIAMS, B H

Honorary Life Membership

TAS

The Hon Paul Lennon MHA, Premier of Tasmania

SA

His Excellency Rear Admiral Kevin John Scarce AO CSC RAN (Retd), Governor of SA

VIC

Mr Tony Charlton AM
Mr Kevin Sheedy

National

Corporal Bill Apiata VC (British Army)

NSW

John Gregory (Kinsey) McDonald OAM

Certificate of Appreciation

VIC

BRITTAN, K
DAVIES, A

FORDHAM, C
O'CONNOR, R

WILKINSON, L

SA

PIJANKA, S
WALFORD, A

WA

MILLER, E J
SEERS OAM, S M
TYRRELL, G W

TAS

BROWN, D COOPER, N MIDGLEY, A NORQUAY, W

NHQ

BOURKE, J

ACT

GILLARD, R E LONERGAN, J P NOON CSM, K
HARKNESS, A McGUINNESS, S ROBERTS, F A
The Canberra Centre
Australian Defence Force Academy
5 Combat Services Support Battalion (Canberra)
Canberra Irish Club

QLD

LUPULJEV, L

Certificate of Merit & Gold Badge

TAS

BYRNE, M CAMPBELL, J L ANDREWS, D

SA

MYHILL, H ROBERTS, J G SCHOLEFIELD, M J WINTERFIELD, M

QLD

LEACH, M

NSW

ARMSTRONG, D CAPP, M DOWNS, J KITCHNER, E
AUBURN, H E CHICK, R M FITZPATRICK, E MARVEL OAM, K
BOUQUET, H CLARKE, R HISCOX, J McINERNEY, J
BRIMBLE, D E CRAVEN, E JACKSON, R E NEILLY, S T

Women's Auxiliary Life Membership

TAS

ADKINS, B	COOPER, I	RISELY, B	THOMPSON, J
ARNOLD, P	QUANTRELL, E	SAUNDERS, D	

QLD

ARMBRUST, A	FRAHM, E	LARKIN, A M	TWIGG, S J
BIRD, I	GUINANE, N	LAWRENCE, G	
COMPASSI, B	HALCROFT, K M	MOORE, E	
DUNN, M	HOLT, E	TRIMINGHAM, B M	

VIC

CARRUTHERS, M B	NUTT, N E	UHR-HENRY, J K	
HERBERT, B	PETTIT, M E	WALSH, E	
LINDKVIST, E M	PHEENEY, L M	WHYTCROSS, W	

SA

ASHENDEN, D E	STANTON, R	WOITHE, A K	
HARTMANN, J M	WEBB, J		

NSW

BARNESLEY, S	COOMBES, M	GREENFIELD, D	RICHARDS, S
BERGHOUSE, H	DIGGINS, D	McDONALD, C	RILEY, S
BUCKLEY, E	DIXON, R	MORRIS, G	SWADLING, G
BUTT, E	ELLIOT, C	MOSS, I	WILMOT, M
CARLEY, Y	GIBBS, J	POWELL, O	WOOD, M

Long Service Award

ACT

BAILEY, T J	LANGAN, J G	WOOD, L C	
CHYNOWETH, N J	PALA, S L I		

TAS

AMES, A G	FIELD, J	SMART, C M	WILLMOT, R
BECKETT, E	RAWNSLEY, M	TYLER, S	

QLD

ANDREWS, P	HUTCHISON, J L	PARKER, G A	SLATER, D
CLEM, R J	LADLAY, E	PROVE, R E	SMITH, P D
CROFT, J F	METCALFE, J P	RUDGE, R G	STANTON, J A
FORD, R T	MOWEN, J P	SELF, D G	WALKER, J R
FRENCH, J W	NELMS, J K	SHEAR, V C	WILSON, I A
GARDINER, G L	NORMAN, W E	SINCLAIR, L N	WOODHAM, N G
HUGHES, K B	ORTON, J J	SINCLAIR, W H	

SA

KELLEY, H	MUNCHENBERG, A H	SAMPSON, D R	
McCORMACK, W	MITCHELL, H W		

WA

AMBLER, R C
BRADBURY, E A
BROCKMAN, B
CLAYTON, E A
COOPER, L
DAVIS, J A
DUNSTALL, E G
EADON-CLARKE, C

FLEAY, I N
FRY, G
FOOT, H R
JOHNSTON, E E
JOHNSON, W
JOHNSON, W J V
LYON, E J
MATHEWS, J

NALDER, F L
O'BRIEN, R F
RAE, R J
SCOTT, A G M
SHEPHEARD, J M
SHIPWAY, J A
SIMOUNDS, H T
SMITH, J F

STRETCH, W G
WATTS, K
WALTER, I
WILSON, H D
WRIGHT, L G

VIC

ABBOTT, E
BAILEY, L
BAKER, R
BEECHAM, A R
BELBIN, N
CARBINES, E R
CONNARD, N E
CORNELL, J
CORNISH, D
DAVIS, N
DAVIS, T
DEDMAN, G C
EDDY, A B
FINDLOW, W A

HAMPTON, D
HILL, R
HECKER, J
JORY, W B
KERSLAKE, L
LAWTHER, A D
LEE, J L
LEONARD, T J
LEWIS, L J
LOWNDES, H M
MacNEILL, A A
MALBERG, K
MATHESON, J
McDONALD, J A

MOBBS, J
MOORS, D W
NEEDHAM, J S
OULD, A
PAGE, L A
PAPWORTH, J R
PATIENCE, G
RANSOM, K E
RAY, N D
RICHARDS, J
ROBINSON, A
ROSE, J
SHALLUE, M
SHELLCOTT, E A

SMITH, G H
STUBINETON, W
STURGEON, G
THORN, G
TREACY, T P
VINCENT, D F
WADDELL, W
WALKER, D J
WALLACE, W
WARMAN, A
WILLIAMS, A
WISE, T C
WRIGHT, K I

NSW

JOSEPH, A W H

60th Anniversary Certificate

NSW

Berowra Sub-Branch

70th Anniversary Certificate

NSW

Dee Why Sub-Branch
Ryde District Sub-Branch

75th Anniversary Certificate

NSW

Windsor and District Sub-Branch
Richmond Sub-Branch
Bundanoon RSL sub-Branch

80th Anniversary Certificate

WA

Mt Hawthorn Sub-Branch

NSW

City of Parramatta RSL Sub-Branch

90th Anniversary Certificate

NSW

Redfern Sub-Branch

WA

Cambridge Sub-Branch

Albany Sub-Branch

Northam Sub-Branch

RSL Prizes - 2007

Awards to Service Colleges

Australian Defence Force Academy

RSL Sword for Service

Officer Cadet Elly Poyntz

Royal Military College of Australia

June Graduation - Staff Cadet Jarrod Turner

December Graduation - Staff Cadet Catherine Bartholomeusz

ANZAC Awards

ANZAC Peace Prize

The recipient of the ANZAC Peace Prize for 2007 is Mr Ian Simpkin. Mr Simpkin, from Mount Clear College, Ballarat received this award in recognition of his efforts to promote international understanding and peace by fostering an extraordinary bond between Australian and Turkish high school students through his development of a number of programs which evolved into a sister school relationship between Mount Clear College and Gallipoli High School.



ANZAC of the Year Awards

The 2007 ANZAC of the Year awards have been made to:

Mrs Susan Maree Arthur of Victoria - For her commitment to the formation of a Regional **Veterans' Welfare Centre to assist the veteran community of Bendigo to access the Service related entitlements from Department of Veterans' Affairs and Centrelink, as well as facilitation of health and welfare services.**

Mr William Clough and Mrs Jacqueline Clough of South Australia - In recognition of the research and investigation, recording and publication of all War Memorials within metropolitan and rural South Australia and the development of an accessible website – www.tributesofhonour.info.

RSL Scholarships 2007

The RSL Scholarships were introduced in 2006 by the RSL National Trustees. Two scholarships are awarded to children of veterans in necessitous and deserving circumstances while they undertake tertiary education in Australia.

This year's RSL Scholarships have been awarded to:

- Ms Emma Batkin
- Mr Steven Lawler

National Executive Members - 2007

National President

Major General William Crews AO (Retd)

Deputy National President

Mr Don Rowe OAM

National Secretary

Mr Derek Robson AM

Victorian Branch President

Major General David McLachlan AO (Retd)

Western Australian President

Mr William Gaynor OAM RFD

New South Wales Branch President

Mr Don Rowe OAM

South Australian Branch President

Mr Jock Statton OAM

Queensland Branch President

Mr Doug Formby

Tasmanian Branch President

Mr Tony Scott OAM

Australian Capital Territory Branch President

Mr Gary Brodie OAM



Back Row: Jock Statton, Gary Brodie, Tony Scott, Bill Gaynor
Front Row: David McLachlan, Don Rowe, Bill Crews, Doug Formby

National Officers/Advisors

National Treasurer

Mr David Sinclair

National Legal Advisor

Mr Brian Loftus RFD

National Defence Advisor

Major General Adrian Clunies-Ross AO MBE (Retd)

Veterans' Affairs Advisor

Mr John Hodges

National Headquarters Staff Members

- as at December 2007

National Secretary

Mr Derek Robson AM

Assistant National Secretary

Mrs Helen Britten (until October)

National Project Officer

Mr Herbert (Mickey) Michaelis

National Research Advisor

Mr Alistair Coe (from August)

Business Manager

Mrs Jan Ormerod (from November)

Personal Assistants

to National President:

Mrs Jan Ormerod (until November)

to National Secretary:

Mrs Denise Howard

Office Assistant

Mrs Linda Munro

Accounts Officer

Mrs Jean Xiao (until February)



L-R Helen Britten, Linda Munro, Bill Crews, Mickey Michaelis, Jan Ormerod, Derek Robson, Denise Howard, David Sinclair, Alistair Coe, Jean Xiao

Registered Offices

The Returned & Services League of Australia A.C.N. 008 488 097
is a company limited by guarantee and incorporated in the ACT.

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Fax: (03) 6223 1229

SA

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Torrens Training Depot
Victoria Drive
ADELAIDE SA 5000
Phone: (08) 8232 0322
Fax: (08) 8232 0377



The Returned & Services League of Australia maintains a strong relationship with the Australian Defence Force. The RSL recognises the generous assistance given by Defence in providing the Flag Party and Band for the Official Opening of the RSL National Congress.

Front page: ADF Flag Party at the RSL National Congress Opening Ceremony - Melbourne Town Hall 10 September 2007.

Inside Front ADF Flag Party at the RSL National Congress Dinner at the Sofitel Hotel, Page: Melbourne.

Back Page: The ADF Flag Party entering the Melbourne Town Hall for the Opening Ceremony of the 2007 RSL National Congress.

Inside Back Page: from left: Victorian State President, Major General David McLachlan AO (Retd), **Minister for Veterans' Affairs, The Hon Bruce Billson MP, Governor General of the Commonwealth of Australia**, Major General Michael Jeffery AC CVO MC (Retd), National President, Major General Bill Crews AO (Retd), Shadow Minister for **Veterans' Affairs, Mr Alan Griffin MP, Deputy National President (and NSW State President)** Mr Don Rowe OAM, at the Opening Ceremony for the 2007 RSL National Congress.

