



# RSL VICTORIA

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT  
JANUARY – DECEMBER 2018**





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## Returned & Services League of Australia (Victorian Branch) Inc ACN A0028777L

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**Patron:** Her Majesty the Queen

**State President:** Dr R S Webster OAM

**Chief Executive Officer:** Brigadier M H Annett CSC

**State Senior Vice President:** Mr Lee Webb JP

**State Vice President:** Mr D Callaghan OAM BJ JP

**State Honorary Treasurer:** Mr J F Cullen OAM

**Chief Financial Officer:** Mr L Gilholme CPA

**Members of State Executive:** Messrs D Crocker, Goldie JP\*, M Fielding^, G Ferrarotto, B Lowe, D Martin OAM^, S Thorn\*, P McMahon^

*\*to July 2018    ^from July 2018*

# Victorian Branch Corporate Plan 2012- 2020

## Statement of Purpose

The RSL was founded in 1916 to provide comradeship and support to Australia's veterans and their families. That core mission has never changed but has continued to evolve to meet the needs of each generation of service men and women.

We have a branch network that covers Australia and any veteran who needs help will get it – every serving ADF member and veteran will be warmly welcomed at their local RSL.

We advocate for the best possible conditions for our serving men and women and for those who have served the nation in the past.

We foster respect and thanks from the nation for all those who have made sacrifices in Australia's name and we will provide a strong voice on issues of national unity and security.

## Vision Statement

In 2020, the Victorian Branch of the Returned & Services League will continue to be the most relevant and recognised ex-service organisation in the State with sustainable membership and an enhanced profile and standing in the community.

## Mission Statement

To promote the well-being and betterment of our members, serving and ex-serving men and women of the ADF and Allies and their dependants, with the provision of welfare and commemorative services, comradeship and where appropriate contribute to worthy objectives within the broader community.

## Objectives

- Ensure that serving and ex-serving personnel and their dependants have ready access to Welfare, Pensions and appropriate Health Services.
- Facilitate appropriate high-quality care and accommodation for those members in need of such consideration.
- Promote and conduct appropriate commemorative activities.
- Optimise the availability and use of technology and resources to deliver our services to Sub-Branches, members and the serving and ex-service community.
- Further develop appropriate strategies incorporating best practice to achieve:
  - a. growth of our membership in a contemporary and inclusive way.*
  - b. enhancement of our profile and relevance to the wider community.*
  - c. an inclusive approach to policy making and the delivery of advice and support to Sub-Branches to optimise the performance of the Branch.*
- Maintain the integrity of the RSL.
- Embrace other Ex-Service Organisations.
- Foster Pride in Australia and Loyalty to our nation.
- Engage the younger members of the Community in the affairs of the League.
- Encourage "Mateship".
- Develop appropriate strategies to optimise the availability of facilities for our members from the available resources.

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# State Executive



## 2018 State Executive Members left to right:

### Seated:L-R

Des Callaghan OAM BJ JP  
Vice President, Lee Webb JP  
State President, Dr Robert Webster OAM  
Chief Executive Officer, Brigadier Michael Annett CSC  
Honorary Treasurer, John Cullen OAM

### Standing:L-R

State Executive Members Dal Crocker, David Martin OAM, Luke Gilholme,  
Barry Lowe

### Absent:

State Executive Members P McMahon, M Fielding, G Ferrarotto

# Message from the State President

Dr Robert Webster OAM



## State Conference 2018

At State Conference last year, Mr Des Callaghan OAM BJ JP was elected as the Vice President, other officers were re-elected unopposed. Also elected were four new State Executive members; two country - Mr Paul McMahon (Geelong) and Mr David Martin OAM (Rutherglen); and two metropolitan - Mr Glen Ferrarotto (Montmorency/Eltham) and Mr Marcus Fielding (Camberwell). My thanks go to those retiring members of the State Executive. In November Mr Ian Goldie JP resigned from the State Executive due to health concerns.

## Address by Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC)

During the Conference Acting Assistant Commissioner Ms Prue Monument provided a general address to the Conference on the ACNC and its role in the regulation of charities in Australia. Ms Monument encouraged delegates to review the current practices within their own Sub-Branches in the following key areas:

1. Check that your Constitution (Rules and By-laws) - is it fit for purpose and update if necessary. Are the charitable objectives in the Constitution clear and are you delivering on them?
2. Ensure there are adequate financial controls in place as well as strong financial oversight and for individuals and committees, to have a clear understanding of the financial condition of the Charity and that includes the flow of funds between different entities e.g. different trusts / different funds. Ensure that financial control delegations are in place to mitigate the risk of misuse of funds. Ms Monument also clarified that all funds held by registered charities are charitable funds irrespective of the source of those funds. Whether they come from gaming revenue or whether they come from the Poppy Appeal etc. all funds are charitable funds and need to be applied in accordance with the charitable purpose and need to be justified in terms of supporting and promoting the charitable purpose.
3. Ensure all Responsible Persons of the Sub-Branch are adequately trained and supported by an understanding of their responsibilities.
4. Identify and manage conflict of interest. She stated that Victoria is unique in that the State Branch already does a great deal of work around good governance and she was aware that a Charity Manual was rolled out in 2016 and that the State Branch engages with Sub-Branches to encourage good governance practices. Sub-Branches should ensure that they have a Conflict of Interest Register in place and that these issues are properly managed.
5. Look at practices in relation to gifting, honorariums or any payment to directors or committee members that could be deemed to be remuneration or affording an individual a private benefit. This is a very high risk and problematic area and these elements need to be looked at very carefully. No doubt when RSL Victoria receives its formal advice from the ATO in relation to honorariums, that too will be shared across the network.

Ms Monument stated that these are the five key things that she would like looked at from a Sub-Branch perspective to make them well placed if the ACNC engage with their Sub-Branch during the next 12 months in relation to what good governance should look like.

She advised that as a committee they are each equally liable for the decisions taken, be confident that the right decision is being made for the right reasons. It is important to be able to question one another but also to assess each other's abilities and limitations. Being transparent, don't withhold information,

don't cover up for failures of others, call it out. Also consider diversifying board composition and bring in external expertise if necessary.

She advised that she has been really impressed by the commitment and dedication of the volunteers within the RSL - the passion, commitment and time that people give to the organisation is exceptional, second to none. We can't have dedicated and committed volunteers being exposed to unnecessary risk because they don't understand their roles and their obligations. There are great training courses available, whether it be with the Governance Institute, The Australian Institute of Company Directors among others, to ensure that the leaders of the RSL and the committees are well placed to understand their responsibilities. RSL Sub-Branches should make sure they have an induction process in place so when there are changes of leadership people are getting the support they need.

With respect to the RSL Victoria Compliance Agreement, Ms Monument indicated that was not a formal use of the ACNC powers and was reflective of the fact that RSL (Vic Branch) Inc. made voluntary disclosure of issues and were proactive in reporting to the ACNC. A number of the failures had already been addressed and RSL Victoria has also demonstrated its improvements to internal governance practice more broadly.

The compliance agreement set out the steps that RSL Victoria needed to take to improve its governance over a specified period of time and these covered financial management practices, a review of the practice of honorariums, including that RSL Victoria seek advice from the ATO in relation to the treatment of honorariums and also building the capability of the board. During the latter part of 2018 the State Executive addressed the issues raised in the Compliance Agreement and undertook work in addressing each of the concerns of the ACNC.

As noted above, a major component of the Compliance Agreement was to seek a ruling from the ATO regarding State Branch honorariums and the tax treatment of honorariums in the hand of the State Officers. That private ruling was received late in November and adopted by the State Executive at its December meeting. Subsequently, State Branch By-Law 9 was withdrawn and a new By-law regarding honorariums was drafted, adopted and issued to Sub-Branches in February 2019. A report was provided to the ACNC at the end of the year detailing the work undertaken. Recently the ACNC acknowledged the completion of the work required under the agreement.

## Commemorations

Our major commemoration event is held on ANZAC Day. The Dawn Service saw an estimated crowd of 35,000. The Dawn Service was followed by the traditional breakfast and then the ANZAC Day March. The changes made to the March in 2018 with more recent veterans leading the March will be continued in 2019. In 2018 it was estimated that about 5,500 veterans and 3,700 descendants marched. There are further changes planned for 2019 and by Conference I should be able to report to you on them.

In addition to ANZAC Day commemorations, the State Branch co-ordinated the annual VE (Victory in Europe) Day on 8 May and the VP (Victory in the Pacific Day) on 15 August. For the VE Day service Jack Bell was the guest speaker. Jack talked of his time as a POW in Germany and the feelings of relief at the European end of WW2. At the VP Day service Keith Hearne spoke of his time in the jungles to our near north and his jubilation at the end of the war and the chance to come home to his family.

An additional service was conducted on 19 August for the 77th Anniversary of the Relief of the 9th Division by the Polish Carpathian Brigade at Tobruk. We were honoured by the presence of the President of the Polish Republic, Mr Andrzej Duda, as our Guest Speaker. Mr Duda spoke of the bonds between the Polish and Australian Rats of Tobruk and our nation's continuing ties. The service had particular significance to both the remaining Australian Rats of Tobruk and their Polish counter-parts - many of whom had subsequently migrated to Australia after WW2 to work on the Snowy Mountains Scheme and Tasmanian Hydro-Electricity schemes.

## Montbrehain

I was invited to Montbrehain, France, for the centenary of the liberation of the town by Australian troops of the 21st and 24th Battalions and the 2nd Pioneer Company, in their last infantry action of WW1. During the battle of Montbrehain, Lt George Ingram for the 24th Bn was awarded the last Australian Victoria cross from WW1 and Private George Blyth (also 24th Bn) was awarded the Military Medal. I attended the three services held at Montbrehain on October 5th accompanied by a detachment of the Shrine Guard who provided the ceremonial support for the various services on the day. About 250 visiting Australian descendants of those who had fought in the battle were present. The link with the Shrine Guard is that both Ingram and Blyth went on to become members of the first Shrine Guard detachment in 1935. The day showed that 100 years on, French people still have a high regard for the Australian troops and their service during World War 1.



## Centenary of Armistice

Across the state many Sub-Branches conducted major commemoration and other activities associated with the Centenary of Armistice. These services were well attended and supported by the broader community.

## Appeals

The ANZAC and Poppy Appeals collected over \$6.85 million in 2018. This achievement is testament to the ability of Sub-Branches to motivate their volunteers to get out onto the streets to collect for the appeals. The introduction of new Electronic Funds Transfer technologies to interact with the public in the emerging “cashless” society was important for the recent Poppy Appeal and will increasingly be the way of public appeals in the future. I encourage Sub-Branches considering the use of this technology for their appeals collections to liaise with ANZAC House staff to ensure that appropriate protocols and internal controls are applied to this style of collection.

## 10A Sub-Branches

Sub-Branches are charities in their own right. With the latest figures available being from the audited 2017 financial reports, it is important to note that the 10A group of Incorporated Sub-Branches spent more than \$9.5 million from their Sub-Branch accounts on welfare and charitable matters during 2017 (\$8.5 million, 2016). Importantly this is more than collected in the ANZAC and Poppy appeals in 2017. Additionally, their members and staff contributed more than 350,000 hours in volunteer work during 2017 compared to 325,000 hours in the previous year. The volunteer hours for 2017 are valued in excess of \$12.5 million.

## Strategic Planning

Work on a new Strategic Plan for the Victorian Branch commenced in late 2018 and sessions continued into 2019. This is an important exercise as we plan for the coming decade. By the time you read this, the Strategic Plan should have been adopted and implementation under way. An update on the Strategic Plan will be given at State Conference.

## Veteran Services Hubs (Plan 2020)

We currently have two trial sites at Warrnambool and Frankston. We are developing protocols for them to interact with the Sub-Branches and the broader regional networks. The development of processes and procedures is important before the roll out of this project is continued. An external review is to be conducted during 2019 to evaluate their impact and inform the future roll-out.

## Sub-Branch Centenaries

During the course of the year I, and other Branch Officers and Senior staff, have attended a number of Sub-Branch centenary events. We congratulate all those Sub-Branches who have reached this

magnificent milestone and reflect on the 100 years of volunteering, community work and looking after their mates that has gone on in those locations. There was an article in the final edition of Mufti in 2018 highlighting a number of the Sub-Branch centenaries and we look forward to celebrating even more Sub-Branch centenaries in the calendar for 2019!

## Volunteers

The work of our volunteers across the network continues to amaze me – with the hospital and home visits, the work for appeals, the commemoration services in schools and aged care facilities, the day to day pastoral care that goes on in Sub-Branches are all magnificent examples of how we look after our own where there is a common bond of service. The work in programs like RSL Active, and aged care co-ordinators the volunteer advocates and welfare offices might go unsung in the broader community but the letters and messages of support that are received at ANZAC House from veterans and their families are constant encouragement to maintain our high level of volunteer involvement. The wider adoption by Sub-Branches of the Better Impact System will allow the capture of all volunteer hours across our network.

I thank all our volunteers for their tireless work they undertake on behalf of the League.

## Thanks

I am constantly amazed at the work that the CEO Mike Annett and the staff at ANZAC House undertake – for many it is a labour of love and they work to ensure that our veterans are looked after, and the network works as well as it can. I can only thank them for their continued support and friendship. A particular thank you is also due to my Executive Assistant Rosemary Kennedy.

To the State Officers and members of the State Executive my thanks for your day to day commitment to the RSL, your own Sub-Branches and the various Regional Forums which you attend. I thank you all for undertaking representative work on my behalf when the invitations keep rolling in to attend a range of functions and activities across the RSL network in Victoria.

Finally, a big thank you to my family for their love and support during the past year.



Dr Robert Webster OAM

# Chief Executive Officer's Report

Michael Annett CSC

The Victorian Branch of the RSL closed 2018 with a number of significant outcomes being achieved. Positive compliance feedback had been received from the ACNC on a number of issues that the Victorian RSL had raised with the Commission as a matter of good governance. We had provided good input to the Productivity Commission review into the future of the DVA and veteran services generally and also the separate studies into Advocacy and Veteran Transition, and work had commenced on the refreshed Branch Strategic Plan that we expect to have finalised with State Executive approval in early 2019. Finally, we were well into the pilot period of two new Veteran Service Hubs at Frankston and Warrnambool, and the consolidation of ANZAC House staff providing advocacy and veteran support on Level 5 of ANZAC House. These were significant initial steps on the implementation of the Veteran Services Model, Plan 2020, endorsed at the 2018 State Conference.



The entire Sub-Branch network also responded magnificently to the close of the Great War Centenary period, with very appropriate commemorative occasions around the 11th November, across the state, with strong support and acknowledgement from local communities.

This all gives an indication of how busy and productive 2018 as a whole has been and how for the Victorian Branch this has been a year of dealing with some governance and compliance issues in a transparent and effective way, but equally getting on with the core business of the League here in Victoria, supporting the veteran community and looking to the future.

In doing this I believe we have further strengthened our position as the leading collegiate partner for both the government and other veteran / service organisations in any endeavour to better support our Victorian Veterans and their families.

In addition to the outcomes and initiatives mentioned above the Branch has also taken steps to expand our professional Advocacy service, as well as buttress the existing Regional Veteran Centre Project as we commence the transition to the holistic hubs envisaged under Plan 2020. RSL Active as an adaptive sports and group activity outreach programme, to connect younger veterans and mitigate social isolation / transition difficulties, continues to go from strength to strength. The Victorian Branch also led the way in partnering with Defence, eventually taken up by all State Branches, in supporting the ex-serving component of the Australian Invictus Games Team. The Games, held in Sydney in October, was an inspiring event for all Australians, showcasing the character and capacity of our veterans, and it was great to see the RSL so prominent in supporting this group.

Work also commenced on planning the best results for the new commercial arrangements for our Licensed Sub-Branches who operate Gaming, which will commence in 2022. This work will need to be closely aligned with the resourcing needs of the mature Plan 2020 structure, especially the sustaining of the Veteran Service Hub network. A related effort is extending the volunteer take-up of the 'Better Impact' volunteer management system, which will provide both more accurate data and consequently the means to better support all our Branch volunteers. While there has been a lift in participation during 2018, we need all our volunteers involved and this will be a focus in 2019.

There are of course no shortage of critics of the RSL currently, largely due to issues outside the RSL Victoria's direct influence or control, and there are some who find our commercial hospitality mix challenging given social issues associated with alcohol and gambling.

The Branch must face these issues squarely and be able to articulate that as a responsible provider of these products, in a commercial hospitality mix that has served us well for many years, we do more far more for the veteran community in the way of services and support than we could if we relied purely on Appeals funds and all volunteer effort- important though they are, now and into the future.

Additionally, of course, this commercial hospitality is present in any Sub-Branch that has as a focus comradeship and social interaction in a safe and welcoming environment, on a large scale. We always need to stress that Sub-Branches often only remain viable due to a level of well-run commercial activity and especially in many parts of regional Victoria many smaller Sub-Branches only stay open and active due to the support they receive from these same Sub-Branches. Further, the viability of these commercial RSL Sub-Branches gives a strong and sustainable presence, as the RSL in local communities, where a range of other worthy community work is performed, which would otherwise not be associated with the League.

In looking to 2019, we should be proud of what we currently deliver as the Victorian Branch and be confident that if we are transparent and effective in our governance and accountability and tell our very good story effectively to the public, we can continue to be the rock on which the evolving Victorian Veteran Community can rely in the years ahead.

I would like to acknowledge the strong leadership of the State President and Executive, and the tremendous team of staff at ANZAC House, who are full of talent, experience and dedication to support the Sub-Branch network throughout Victoria and by extension our mission to help any veteran that needs it.



Michael Annett CSC



# Pensions, Advocacy & Welfare Support

Manager: Jeff Jackson OAM

## Welfare Support

The RSL's mission is to ensure that programs and services are in place for the benevolence, well-being, care, compensation and commemoration of both serving and ex-serving members of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and their families. In everything we do, the RSL is mindful of the service and sacrifice that veterans and veterans' families make for the freedoms we enjoy in this country.

2018 was another busy year for the Victorian Branch of the RSL in terms of the delivery of Compensation and Welfare Support to members of the serving and ex-service community throughout Victoria.

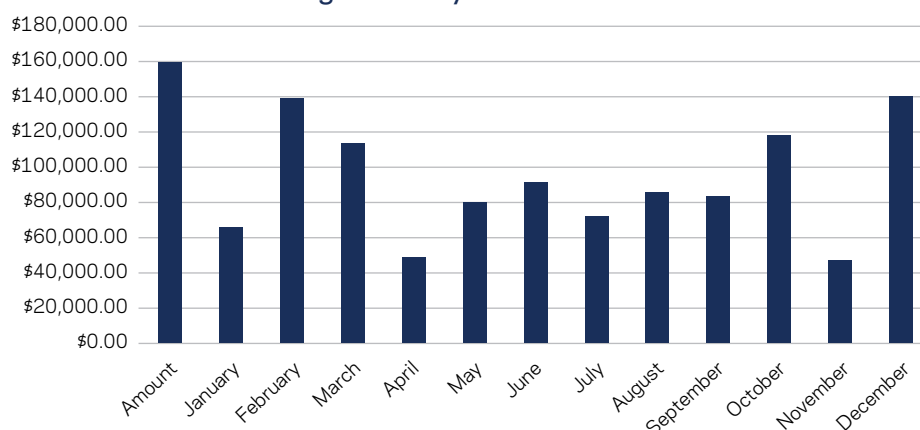
I would like to thank all those wonderful volunteers who give freely of their time to help provide support to the veteran community. Without volunteers the RSL would not be able to provide the level of support required on behalf of the serving and ex-service community throughout Victoria.

In terms of welfare support throughout 2018, financial difficulties can affect anybody for any reason. One of those reasons can be a reduced or loss of income resulting from ill health. The requests for support and/or assistance to the Victorian Branch were many and varied. Housing assistance continues to be an ever-increasing aspect of enquiries to the welfare section. This combined with the escalating cost of living pressures and the slow increases to pensions, is putting pressure on household budgets.

In 2018, the Branch received over 7,000 email and telephone enquiries and attended to 320 individual requests for support and/or assistance. The Branch provided in excess of \$1,000,000.00 in grants-in-aid to members of the serving and ex-service community in Victoria. Below is a breakdown of expenditure by month for 2018.



Wellbeing Grants by Month for 2018



On the 27th October 2018 the Minister for Veterans' Affairs announced that the Australian Government will develop an Australian Veterans' Covenant that would be enacted in legislation in 2019 so the nation can recognise the unique nature of military service and support veterans and their families.

Like the United Kingdom Armed Forces Covenant, the Australian Veterans' Covenant is for the Australian community to recognise the service and sacrifice of the men and women who commit to defend the nation and pledge their commitment to support veterans and their families.

As part of this Veterans' Covenant, a new Australian Veterans' Card and an Australian Veterans' Lapel Pin will make it easier for all Australians to recognise and respect the unique contribution that veterans have made to Australia and for our veterans to reconnect with others who have served.

## Compensation - Advocacy

It has also been a very busy year for our Compensation Advocates. Their workloads continue to increase, and a couple of advocates are also aiding those Sub-Branches without any in-house advocacy support.

2018 has seen several reviews being announced or commenced with an eye to the future members of the Australian Defence Force.

In 2018, the then Treasurer, the Hon Scott Morrison requested the Productivity Commission undertake an inquiry into the system of compensation and rehabilitation for veterans. A draft report of that inquiry, titled, 'A Better Way to Support Veterans' has now been released for comment with the final report being submitted to the new Treasurer by the 1st July 2019. The RSL Victorian Branch Headquarters has appeared before the Commissioners and also lodged a written submission addressing the recommendations made in the draft report.

Also in early 2018, the Hon Darren Chester MP, Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Minister for Defence Personnel and Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Centenary of ANZAC on 5 March 2018, requested a study into improved advocacy services for veterans and their families. The Study commenced in April 2018 and was to be completed by December 2018. The Study will incorporate various forms of research and include the views of relevant policy and technical stakeholders (in Australia and overseas), including community consultation with the veteran community, appeal bodies including the Veterans' Review Board and the Administrative Appeals Tribunal. It will also include new stakeholders from the legal, community, health and disability sectors.

The Department of Veterans' Affairs are undertaking major transformation process with the taglines 'putting veterans and their families first', 'delivering tailored and efficient services in a timely manner' and 'recognising those who sacrificed for their country'. As part of the DVA transformation process, all veterans are now automatically issued with a White card on transition from the Australian Defence Force, providing immediate access to mental health services if needed.

Also in April 2018 due to the closure of the RSL Advocates Office located in the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) building in Latrobe Street, Melbourne, we have now aggregated our inner-city veteran support services onto the 5th Floor at ANZAC House. The Veteran Services Support Hub will enable the RSL to better coordinate and deliver the various veteran services the RSL provides to veterans and their families throughout Victoria.

The Branch Advocates continue to play a vital role in support of veterans throughout Victoria. The compensation support provided by the advocates is provided free of charge to all members of the serving and ex-service community in Victoria.

All Branch Advocates are trained to the appropriate level under the Training & Information Program (TIP) and continue to undertake Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) as required to convert their skills and qualifications across to the Advocacy Training & Development Program (ATDP).

The Branch supports the Advocacy Training & Development Program model as the way forward into the future, but does understand the impact such a change will have on many volunteers who have been providing compensation assistance to veterans for many years, but feel that they are now being left behind or pushed out. It is always difficult when a new way of doing things is introduced and there will always be those who are affected by change, regardless of when the change is introduced.

What the Branch is focused on is supporting those volunteers who want to continue to provide compensation or welfare assistance to make the change over to the new procedure. The RSL believes that the new ATDP should be and is flexible enough to accommodate all those volunteers regardless of age and experience.

The role of the Branch Advocates is to provide information and/or assistance on compensation matters in relation to the *Veterans' Entitlements' Act 1986 (VEA)*, *Safety & Rehabilitation Compensation (Defence Related Claims) Act 1988 (DRCA)* as amended by the *Military Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 1994 (MCRA)* and the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004 (MRCA)*.

The Branch employs seven (7) full-time compensation/welfare advocates and one (1) part-time compensation advocate. We have Bruce Turner and Bruce Dunlop who work primarily from the Frankston RSL Veterans Support Centre.

In our Melbourne Office located at ANZAC House we have advocates Bob Buchanan, Tim Whitford, Jo Baful, Shane Ellison and Office Administrative Assistant, Linda Mancuso.

In the Warrnambool RSL Veterans' Support Centre we have one (1) full-time advocate Adam Kent and one (1) part-time compensation advocate Anthony Geyer.

We also have Anne Pahl who has taken on the role of coordinating compensation support with her team on base at HMAS Cerberus each Wednesday. The workload from HMAS Cerberus continues to grow.

Tim Whitford and Bruce Dunlop also provide out of office support as required with Tim looking after the military base at Puckapunyal on an as required basis whilst Bruce lends his experience at HMAS Cerberus as required. Tim also provides compensation support to Sub-Branches in Broadford, Seymore, Kilmore and Shepperton as required, whilst Bruce Dunlop looks after support to our Sub-Branches in Leongatha and Phillip Island.

*The Advocates Office data base recorded the following activities for 2018:*

NEW APPEALS	CERTIFICATES OF READINESS	APPEAL CASES LISTED	S31 SUBMITTED	WITHDRAWN APPEALS
159	29	78	-	34

*Decisions from the Veterans' Review Board included:*

SET ASIDE	AFFIRMED	ADJOURNED s.151	ADJOURNED s.152	POSTPONED	WITHDRAWN AT HEARING
31	24	6	5	4	5

*MRCA Appeals to the Veterans' Review Board :*

MRCA APPEALS	54
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The following Level 3 Advocates participated in the following number of outreach hearings before the Veterans' Review Board in 2018:

Bob Buchanan	174
Tim Whitford	50
Bruce Turner	139
Bruce Dunlop	108

There were 13 weeks of scheduled hearings at the Veterans' Review Board during 2018.

In times past the Victorian Branch Advocates were solely responsible for appeals before the Veterans' Review Board. Over more recent times and with the advent of on base support, the Advocates are being called upon to do more and more primary level claims work. Listed below are figures for primary level claims assistance during 2018, a combination of off the street, referrals and on base support :

*Primary Pension Activity-Advocates:*

VEA	MRCA	DRCA	INTERVIEWS
331	301	131	1,852

When you look at the numbers of compensation work being done by the Branch Advocates and when you consider how much more work is required over and above just helping to prepare and submit claims, the Advocates are kept very busy. I would like to thank them for their continued hard work, dedication and commitment to the serving and ex-service community throughout Victoria.

Finally, the Victorian Branch of the RSL continues to enjoy a very good relationship with the Department of Veterans' Affairs in Victoria. On behalf of all RSL Compensation and Welfare Advocates I would like to thank the Deputy Commissioner and all the staff of the Victorian Office of the Department of Veterans' Affairs for their continued ongoing support and assistance.

On behalf of the Victorian Branch Advocates I would also like to thank the Principle Member of the Veterans' Review Board and her staff for their advice and support throughout 2018.



# Aged & Health Support

Manager: Wendy Bateman



Reflecting on 2018, there were a few new things that occurred. To start, we moved! Early in 2018, Aged & Health Support together with Jeff's team of Advocates and Anne and her RSL Active team, all moved to the 5th floor, creating the Veteran Services Centre. In the second half of the year we excitedly added a new member to our team, Kerry Burns, who assumed the role of Manager, Volunteer Support. Toward the end of 2018 we were very fortunate to have a new financial counselling service to veterans commence, thus adding to the types of services we can offer veterans and their families. Lastly, at the very end of 2018, the Prime Minister announced a Royal Commission into Aged Care - while this is not something we instigated, it will certainly have impact going forward into 2019 and beyond.

The types of requests for support/assistance received by Aged & Health Support continue to follow the same pattern as the last two years with more 'health support' than aged care. Yet the ongoing Aged Care Reforms kept us busy to ensure we consistently provided updated advice around the network.

## Support provided

**Telephone support:** Data indicates that the telephone support service was again well utilised in 2018 with 1,710 requests recorded. While this was higher than 2017, it was lower than 2016 (although that was a significantly busy year). The types of requests for support/assistance continue to be varied, although requests in relation to health, including mental health, tend to be around access to services, or the difficulty thereof. Homelessness or risk of homelessness unfortunately again remained a constant in 2018, with drug/alcohol addiction also being problematic. As such, the number of veterans we assist who have very complex problems is certainly not diminishing.

**Education:** While we continue to receive requests for education, we delivered less education in 2018 than previous years. Despite delivery being lower, requests for education on 'veteran care' were still received from providers of Veteran Home Care, Commonwealth Home Support Program, and residential aged care. As we would expect, there were also requests from our older cohort for presentations on 'aged care'.

**Health advocacy:** Advocating on behalf of individual veterans in relation to healthcare/care services continues to be a requested and needed service. In 2018 this also included attending regular specialist medical appointments with two clients, one veteran and one war widow. Aside from the two mentioned above, our data shows that between Linda and I, we conducted 25 home visits to ascertain services required, and visited veterans and war widows in inner Melbourne hospitals on 36 occasions (both higher than in 2017).

**Accommodation:** Over the 12 months, there were 27 homeless, or at risk of homelessness, veterans where we took an active role in searching for affordable, secure accommodation. While the majority of the 27 were post '75 veterans, we also needed to assist three 90+ year old veterans. With much work we were able to find/assist with accommodation for all. In relation to the 90+ year old veterans, only one went to aged care, the other two remain happily living independently.

Of course, we know that finding affordable, secure accommodation is not an easy task, so for some the locations are not necessarily where they would prefer to be. For the majority of those we assisted, the accommodation has worked out; however, for one of the veterans leaving the Richmond transitional accommodation units, the location away from inner Melbourne/CBD was just too difficult, with the veteran moving out of new accommodation within a few days, going back to insecure (and unsafe) circumstances.

**Veteran Transitional Accommodation Project:** The transitional accommodation in Richmond continues to be a much-needed program; however, it certainly wasn't all beer and skittles in 2018, with two incidents requiring police presence. Despite the program keeping Jeff and I very busy, it really cannot be overstated how fortunate we are to be involved in this accommodation program. While the units only opened late 2015, by the end of 2018, 18 veterans had resided at the units.

The Victorian State Government, having funded the creation of the veteran transitional accommodation project, has organised a review of the program. Introductions to the consultants occurred early 2019. We are very aware that there are positives and negatives in this program, so we look forward to seeing it from an external perspective, together with their recommendations of where to next. But the highlight for me was the overwhelming response I received from the current and past tenants wishing to be part of the review.

**Meetings:** As Jeff and his team had planned to run ADTP update training forums in 2018, we only held one Welfare & Aged Care Forum, that being the annual expo. As a result, we have certainly received much feedback requesting the forums recommence. It's a difficult dilemma, attendances had become very low when we ran the forums, yet interest is high when we don't. Forums will be on the drawing board for 2019, just a question of how many. VAWACCC continues to be the main welfare meeting for us to communicate to the Regions and vice versa. As Anne Pahl will discuss VAWACCC in her report, there is nothing more for me to add.

Nationally we continue to represent the RSL on aged care committees and forums, such as the National Aged Care Alliance and the Department of Veterans' Affairs National Aged & Community Care Forum, as well as on other veteran related forums, such as Veterans' MATES.

**Financial Counselling:** As highlighted in the introduction, this is a new service that is being offered in the Veteran Services Centre. The financial counselling service is being provided by Nexus Health as an outreach program they are offering specifically to veterans (via the RSL). While the service only commenced at the very end of 2018, we are very excited to see what the program may achieve in the future, and the impact on improving the lives of veterans and their families.

## Volunteers

The Aged & Health Support unit plays a significant role in supporting Victorian Sub-Branches to attract, train and retain volunteers. Erica continues to process the required police checks for welfare related volunteers, and to keep record of those undertaking working with children checks. In 2018, Erica processed in excess of 300 police checks, being either new or 3-year renewal checks for volunteers working in the welfare area.

For the first half of 2018, despite only working 2-days per week, Martin continued to provide training, information and guidance to Sub-Branches engaged, or wishing to engage with the volunteer database. With the employment of Kerry in the second half of 2018, roll out of the volunteer database again became more of a focus. At the end of 2018, 60 Sub-Branches were actively engaged with the volunteer database, with a further 30 Sub-Branches sending some data to Aged & Health Support for inclusion.

While not a full year's worth of data from all Sub-Branches engaged, over 2,340 volunteers had logged volunteer hours in 2018, equating to 310,966 hours of support to the RSL mission. This is significant, particularly as the majority of Sub-Branches engaged with the volunteer database are the smaller traditional Sub-Branches. As such, while an outstanding job, we know this is still just a small percentage of the hours that are really being completed in Sub-Branches around Victoria.

To all the wonderful people volunteering with the RSL around Victoria, my sincerest appreciation. You all give so much of your time to ensure veterans and their families are supported; without you it just wouldn't be possible for the RSL to carry out its mission.

## Regional Coordinators

The four regional coordinators, Sharon Armstrong (Watsonia), Maree Jane (Geelong), Lynne Redman (Ballarat), and Deirdre Bidmade (Warrnambool), continue to provide essential support to veterans and their families in their respective regions. The high workload of all four regional coordinators demonstrates that the need for professional staff is not diminishing. While we needed to increase Deirdre's hours at the end of 2017, likewise Sharon's hours have needed to be increased in 2018 to meet the number of requests for assistance being received.

Words really cannot express my appreciation for the work undertaken by these four wonderful women.

## Appreciation

A special thank you to all the amazing Sub-Branch Welfare Officers, paid or volunteer, who are always willing to help. With the complexity of some of the clients in 2018, the work undertaken by volunteer Sub-Branch Welfare Officers has been incredible and well beyond what they have been previously tasked with, yet they have willingly gone above and beyond. Thank you also to the paid Welfare Coordinators who we consistently rely on, in particular Faye (Box Hill), Sylvia (Bentleigh), Janet (Waverley), Vlad (Dandenong), and Kyme (previously Springvale).

To my wonderful team in Aged & Health Support, Linda, Erica, Martin and Kerry, thank you for the wonderful job you do and for making my job a lot easier. To Jeff and Anne, such incredible colleagues, together we solve more than we ever think we can.

# Veterans Affairs, Welfare & Aged Care Coordinating Committee

Chair: Anne Pahl



The Veterans' Affairs Welfare and Aged Care Coordinating Committee (VAWACCC) met several times during the year of 2018. VAWACCC is an important meeting as it discusses the core business of the RSL. It is always well attended by regional representatives and observers who come together wanting to exchange information, seek advice and be educated about everything to do with Advocacy training, Pension support and providing welfare assistance.

At each VAWACCC meeting, members are required to deliver reports from their respective regions in relation to pension matters, the delivery of welfare support and aged care services. The role of the chair is to then report any recommendations to the State Executive. Topics regularly discussed during 2018 have ranged from issues regarding the new training regime titled, Advocacy Training & Development Program (ATDP), Veterans Mental Health, RSL Active, Veteran Accommodation and the RSL volunteer management database. On occasion, guest speakers are arranged which are always well received, keeping everyone who attends, with useful and current communication from outside government agencies such as DVA and Open Arms - VVCS.

Finally, I must recognise and acknowledge the support and work of my colleagues in the Aged, Health, Welfare and Advocacy/Pensions delivery teams on Level 5 at ANZAC House. Thank you, Wendy, Jeff, Linda, Martin and especially to Erica, who provides me all the support assisting me always keeping this forum relevant and such a pleasure to Chair.



# RSL Active

Manager: Anne Pahl

RSL Active is a program from RSL Victoria, supported by the Victorian State Government, providing a range of events and activities for the younger veteran community. RSL Active provides a way to connect with other veterans and develop social networks, share ideas, tell stories, enhance support circles, and improve physical and mental health.

Now in its second year, RSL Active has seen a growth in the number of Sub-Branches being involved in the program and hosting events, as well as events coordinated by RSL Victoria. Sub-Branches conducting regular RSL Active events in 2018 were Altona, Geelong, Melton, Phillip Island, Sale, Warragul, Warrnambool and Waverley.

## Some of the events and activities held in 2018:

- A small group of Victorian veterans attended a winter sports camp in Canada, hosted by Soldier On Canada.
- Phillip Island RSL hosted two four-day camps, with activities including surfing, mountain bike riding, and exploring the Grand Prix track.
- RSL Active fielded a team for the Wheelchair AFL national tournament which was held in Melbourne. Following this competition, four veterans were drafted to the inaugural Victorian Wheelchair Football League, with veterans playing for Collingwood, Essendon and Hawthorn.
- Weekly yoga at Waverley RSL has continued. Yoga programs also commenced at Altona RSL and Warrnambool RSL.
- Warragul RSL and Warrnambool RSL partnered with local gyms to run a regular fitness program.
- Geelong RSL cycled to Canberra.
- RSL Active partnered with Soldier On and entered teams in the 2018 Round the Bay in a Day cycling event, comprising 50km, 100km and 210km distances.
- Three RSL Active participants represented RSL Active in archery the Pan Pacific Games in Queensland.
- Barefoot bowls has been a popular activity, with events held by Melton and Ocean Grove / Barwon.
- Other events held in 2018 included paintball, golf, virtual golf, tennis, and horseriding.

RSL Active Manager, Anne Pahl, spent a large part of 2018 consulting to the Sydney Invictus Games Family and Friends program, managing and training all the Family and Friends Liaison Officers of every participating nation. Anne met some amazing people along the way and especially congratulates all the incredible volunteers who selflessly gave up their time to deliver a spectacular seven days of inspirational competition and were as much a part of the Invictus family as the competitors themselves.



# Corporate Governance Compliance Committee

Chair: Dalwyn Crocker



The RSL Victoria State Branch recognises the importance of ensuring that the State Branch and Sub-Branches are fulfilling their responsibilities to members. The integrity of the RSL brand is paramount to ensure it is protected and maintained for generations to come.

In 2018, the face-to-face Governance training program for 10A Sub-Branch Committee members continued. During the year, five training sessions were held with a total of 98 attendees. This included a session which was held on a Saturday to accommodate Committee members who work during the week. Since the inception of the Corporate Governance training program in 2015, a total of 35 training sessions have been held with over 650 Committee members undertaking the training across the 10A Sub-Branch network. The year also contained a tailored face-to-face Governance session for General Managers of 10A Sub-Branches, which was attended by 36 Managers across 32 different Sub-Branches. In addition, 2018 produced a face-to-face Governance training session specifically for Committees members from 10B Sub-Branches, whereby 38 attendees across 16 10B Sub-Branches were present.

2018 saw the development and implementation of a tailored Charity & Governance manual for 10C (Traditional) Sub-Branches. This Governance & Charity Manual is provided to assist Traditional Sub-Branches to gain a better understanding of good governance practices and the law in relation to charity. The recommendations outlined in this guide are designed to practically assist with fulfilling the Sub-Branch governance commitments and charitable objects. It is encouraged that this Governance & Charity Manual is printed and read by all Committee members.

In August 2018, the Governance Committee initiated for the first time an RSL Governance eLearning module designed specifically for Committee members of all Sub-Branches. The module is tailored to be specific to the type of Sub-Branch of which the Committee member belongs to, i.e 10A, 10B or 10C. The module has been developed for easy navigation and will take approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour to complete. The module includes an assessment and a library that contains various resources to assist with the running of the Sub-Branch. To date there has been over 200 Committee members from RSL Sub-Branches in Victoria register to complete the module. I trust that each Sub-Branch will support this project as an investment in your own Sub-Branch governance and the continued success of the League.

Looking forward to 2019, the Governance Committee will be focused on providing continued training, advice and support to RSL Sub-Branches. This will involve the establishment of an RSL Sub-Branch Treasurer Manual to practically assist the Sub-Branch Treasurer on financial management and best practice. Also, the establishment of an RSL Best Practice Risk Management Guide for applicable Sub-Branches.

There has never been a more important time than now to ensure that Sub-Branches are operating in line with the RSL Objects and are leading the way as community based charities. Good governance needs to be continued throughout the league and the tools that have been provided by this Committee, will enhance that aim.

As can be seen, the Governance Committee has completed a very busy and productive twelve months. I wish to thank Clint Brewster and his team, particularly Rose Mitchell, along with all the other members of this Committee, for their efforts during 2018.

# Appeals

Manager: Peter Smith OAM

## RSL Fundraising in 2018

The RSL Victoria network of Sub-Branches dedicated themselves once again to the task of raising much needed funds to finance the RSL's principal objective of providing support to veterans and their families when they need help. The generosity of our amazing volunteers, who give so freely of their time and energy to raise money through the ANZAC and Poppy Appeals, is a modern-day reflection of the mateship which has been a characteristic of the RSL since its foundation and still guides us today.



*"We raise money everywhere, so we can help veterans anywhere"*

In local RSLs across the State, whether in urban areas or rural, large Sub-Branches or small, commercially active or traditional, Appeals Officers, committees, volunteers and members pitch in to engage their communities in this united and altruistic effort in support of veterans.

Our hardworking Appeals volunteers are connected and engaged and are drawn from our committees, RSL members, local community groups, schools, sporting and service clubs and businesses large and small. Their service to the work of veteran welfare is valued and very much appreciated. I encourage residents and organisations in Victorian communities to make contact with their local RSL to participate in this valuable and rewarding work, even if you only have a couple of hours to spare.

**WW1 Centenary Period.** The period of national reflection and commemoration of the centenary of WW1 drew to close in 2018. The extra attention resulting from this period of remembrance was, overall, beneficial to our fundraising efforts, in particular for the 2018 Poppy Appeal.

**ANZAC Appeal 2018.** The ANZAC Appeal raised a grand total of \$3,686,786.82 of which \$3,248,793.80 was raised by our state wide network of RSL Sub-Branches. We are grateful for the efforts of our volunteers and, of course, the generous members of the public who donated to the Appeal.

**Poppy Appeal 2018.** The 2018 Poppy Appeal raised a record \$3,091,666.54. This is the first time our Poppy Appeal exceeded the \$3,000,000 level. The magnificent effort by our Sub-Branch network deserves credit for making this record result happen. Their contribution was \$2,766,650.82. The \$10 Handmade Poppies, sourced from the 5,000 Poppies Project, were very well received.

**Appeals Forums.** The Appeals team from State Branch conducted information exchanges and training sessions (Appeals Forums) in many locations across the State in 2018. These forums reached many Sub-Branches, Appeals Officers and committees in or very close to their home communities and facilitated the reinforcement of existing relationships and the establishment of new ones. Feedback on the value of these forums means that they will continue in 2019 and beyond. Appreciation is due to the Sub-Branches which hosted the forums.

## Appreciation

Thank you to the many people who in 2018 did so much to make the ANZAC and Poppy Appeals successful including the State Executive, Sub-Branch Committees, Appeals Officers, Staff and their teams, our amazing Appeals volunteers, staff at RSL Victoria and last but by no means least, I must make special mention of my colleagues in the Appeals team at RSL Victoria – Penny Gressieux, Kirsty Kennedy, Anthony Mays, Ben Ahearn and volunteers John Cowie, Debbie McLeod and Michael Mihaljcek.



# Corporate & Business Services Committee (CBC)

Chair: Lee Webb



On behalf of the Committee I am happy to provide the following report to the RSL membership.

The C&BSC has seen a busy 2018 with a continued focus on growing RSL membership across the Branch with an increase of 3% on 2017 and finishing with 196,500 financial members across our RSL Sub-Branch network. It is incredibly pleasing to continue to see a large number of our RSL Sub-Branches building their membership bases across all categories of membership particularly in many regional locations where this is critical to the ongoing delivery of veteran services, commemoration and Appeals fundraising. It is clearly apparent that a growing number of our RSL membership now very much enjoy the opportunity to move around the State and visit other Sub-Branches with full membership reciprocity extended for all Life, Service, Affiliate and Social members. Whilst our Service member numbers were down marginally (1%) we still continue to hold a very strong Service membership base of 26,185.

The Committee had a strong focus on ensuring that all of our Licensed Sub-Branches continued to operate commercially sustainable businesses and there were a number of training initiatives undertaken throughout the year to improve our staffing skill base. This included ongoing Corporate Governance training for all Licensed RSL Sub-Branch Committees members including on our new online E-learning platform and our congratulations must go to our Charity & Risk Manager Clint Brewster for the work he does in this area to continue to improve Committee knowledge and good governance practices.

During 2018 the RSL State Branch in partnership with the Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation volunteered to pilot a new staff 'self-care' training program working in collaboration with local Venue Support Workers. The feedback from RSL Sub-Branch Managers and staff who participated in this trial program initiative was most positive and the Foundation was extremely grateful to the RSL Sub-Branches for their participation in the pilot training and its outcomes.

In keeping with our efforts to continue keep Sub-Branches up to date and informed there were eight Regional Combined Business Forums conducted across the State where State Branch Officers met with Sub-Branch representatives to discuss any matters concerning their Sub-Branch operations. These Forums were very well received by the RSL network and provided a wonderful opportunity for smaller groups of Sub-Branches to gather together and compare ideas and discuss common challenges across the RSL network.

Once again the annual publication of the RSL Community Benefits Report provided some wonderful insights into the great work that the RSL Sub-Branch network undertakes each year in their local communities. With more than 11,000 registered volunteers working tirelessly across the network equating to more than 710,000 hours in volunteer effort in supporting our veterans this is a wonderful testament to the efforts of our 'RSL Volunteer Army'.

I would like to extend my thanks to the RSL Sub-Branch network for their support and also to the members of the Committee for their dedication and commitment in their efforts to assist the RSL network in all facets of their operations.

# Property Committee

Chair: John Cullen OAM

I succeeded Bary Lowe as Chairman of the Property Committee and chaired my first meeting on 4th September 2018.

At the date of this report the members of the Property Committee are myself, Barry Lowe, Lee Webb, Michael Annett, Brian Cairns, Luke Gilholme, David Ridley, Sue Nicholson, Peter Merlo (from May onwards) and Sam Demeo.

We pay tribute to Tony Wilson AM who was a longtime member of the Property Committee and a previous Chairman. We also bade farewell to Bernard Churchill in his retirement who was also a longtime member of the Property Committee. Their collective expertise and knowledge will be sorely missed.

2018 was another very busy year for the Property Committee and I would like to acknowledge and thank the members for their continuing efforts and support.

We met on 11 occasions, discussed 122 matters and made 99 recommendations/decisions on various matters, including but not limited to the following:

- 52 property improvements to the value of approximately \$18 million
- 2 property sales to the value of \$1.1 million

A 'Property Checklist' has been circulated to all Sub-Branches to assist with formulating applications to the Property Committee for approval to carry out property improvements. I strongly recommended that Sub-Branches consult that Checklist and contact either Sam Demeo or Peter Merlo if they require assistance.

To prevent possible delays, applications should be lodged, together with all the required supporting documentation, a week before the next Property Committee meeting to allow the material to be circulated and for the members to properly evaluate each application.

The Property Committee usually meet on the first Thursday of the month.

I also strongly recommend that Sub-Branches contact Sam or Peter prior to submission of an application to ensure that they have undertaken their due diligence and have obtained all relevant documentation required for the Committee to make an informed decision based on the merits of the proposal.



# Mufti Magazine

Manager: Brad Swain



2018 saw the re-imagination of RSL Victoria's member magazine; Mufti. This transformation was as a result of a significant body of work spanning the previous two years that included a member survey and a comprehensive review and tender process for the future publication of Mufti. The State Executive agreed to the recommendation of late 2017 that RSL Victoria should take greater control in determining the strategy, business model, design and content of Mufti. As a result, in June 2018 Mufti was re-born with Sapper Curtis McGrath OAM adorning the cover.

The intent of our new and modern expression of Mufti magazine is for the content to be relevant to our broad demographic of Service and Affiliate members and to be a key two-way messaging tool for RSL Victoria. We are intent on the magazine providing readers with interesting articles about commemoration, volunteering and veteran activity whilst also being a source of entertainment.



As part of the review, it was determined that the best schedule for Mufti is now April, June and October. Throughout 2018 we increased the physical distribution of the magazine by 50% to 65,000 Service and Affiliate members. For the first time since its launch in 1934, Mufti is now also available online, with thousands more people reading it for the first time this year.

The re-imagined strategy for Mufti delivered for members this year also compliments our social media strategy, which is to expedite Sub-Branch news and events. We want members and the public at large to understand, enjoy and appreciate Sub-Branch effort and the fastest way to do this is through our strong presence on social media; in particular through the RSL Victoria Facebook page. This isn't the completion of our effort though, with further advancement in traditional media coverage, direct messaging to members, digital communications and reforms in the way we report State Branch and Sub-Branch activity all planned for 2019.



Thank you to members for the significant volume of feedback we have received on the new magazine and thank you to all veterans, volunteers, staff and suppliers that assisted to re-imagine Mufti.

We welcome story ideas for the magazine or social media to be submitted to [mufti@rslvic.com.au](mailto:mufti@rslvic.com.au)

# RSL Women's Council

State President: Yvonne Dent



It is my great pleasure, to present the 2018 Women's Councils Annual Report.

I think what I am about to say in the next two sentences is well tattooed into my brain, because, I say them every time I am required to address gatherings of Women's Auxiliaries and their members across Victoria.

Women's Council have two very important objectives. Firstly, we are here to support the State Branch and the Welfare needs of our Service and Ex-Service personnel and their families, with the support from all sister Auxiliaries across Victoria. Without Sister Auxiliaries support, Women's Council would not be able to successfully fundraise for Projects that the Victorian State Branch request of Women's Council.

And Secondly, we at Women's Council are there to support and encourage our Sister Auxiliaries with their fundraising efforts, in doing this we always follow the guidelines as set out in our Constitution written in By-Law 6. On every occasion whether it is over the phone or at Area Meetings we inform the Auxiliaries that they work for their Sub-Branches and are answerable to their Sub Branches. The Sub-Branch is the Auxiliary's controlling body and they must be informed on the undertakings of the Auxiliary.

This year we have seen many of our ladies receive Meritorious Awards. We would like to thank their Sub-Branches for putting their names forward and we congratulate these ladies for their outstanding work.

We also congratulate the ladies who have received Life Membership Awards of their individual Auxiliaries, Gold Stars, and Silver Star Awards. Your hard work does not go unnoticed by Women's Council, we are very proud of the work you carry out for the League.

Our 2018 85th Conference at the R S L Box Hill venue was a huge success with 118 members and guests attending. Over the past few years our Auxiliaries numbers attending have grown. I must say just how much Women's Council appreciate all Auxiliaries support.

2018 witnessed all Auxiliaries rally in support of Young Diggers "The Digger Dog Project." Even though we didn't raise as much money as in the past 3 Projects, we understand times are a little harder at present for everyone. The raffle was drawn on the social evening before Conference and we are sure that the 4 winners were extremely happy with their prizes. We were able to present Carol Doyle from Digger Dogs with a cheque for \$8,000.00.

I had the pleasure attending the NSW Central Council of Auxiliaries 2018 Congress back in May where I had the pleasure of handing over 106 Laundry Bags that Auxiliaries in Victoria had made. I thank the many Auxiliaries who supported the Invictus Games initiative. The Invictus Games Committee issued certificates of appreciation and at Conference I was able to present them to the individual Auxiliaries.

Area meetings have been well attended in all Areas of Victoria. The three Areas that were amalgamated are working well, and Women's Council, are very pleased with this outcome.

We had one Auxiliary this year turn 100 years old, and Women's Council would like to congratulate Wangaratta on this achievement. 65 ladies attended the North East Area meeting, with all Auxiliary reports being outstanding with their fundraising events, we congratulate these Auxiliaries on their hard work, and towards the end of the meeting we celebrated with Wangaratta on their 100th Birthday. A wonderful day was had by all, with everyone coming away with some new ideas, and the interaction and catch ups of past and present friendships were experienced.

There have been many receptions held at ANZAC House which Lynese Goldie and I have attended. I attended Government House in November where Her Excellency Linda Dessau AC Governor of Victoria and Mr. Anthony Howard QC hosted the reception marking the 100th Anniversary of Armistice Day. It was truly a great honour representing Women's Council on this occasion.

Women's Council's Newsletter continues to be printed. We have produced 27 Bi-Monthly editions so far. Delegate meetings continue with good numbers attending.

Sadly, we have had far too many Vales during 2018. All these dedicated members will truly be missed.

State Secretary Lynese Goldie and I attend ANZAC House doing office duties on a regular basis. We both work incredible hours at home as well. To the rest of my committee I thank them all for giving their time so openly and freely. There is never a dull moment but certainly many laughs during our council meetings.

Myself, Lynese and the Committee would like to thank the State President Dr. Robert Webster OAM and Victorian CEO Brigadier Mike Annett, CSC for the support you both have given us over the past twelve months, we would also like to thank the staff at ANZAC House for their continuing support, it is much appreciated.



## Sporting Associations

Deputy Chair: John Cullen OAM

Staff of the Appeals Office administer the Sporting Associations and organise the delegates from each of our Sporting Bodies. The Sporting Bodies usually attend a bi-quarterly meeting and report individually on the activities of their particular Sporting Body, these are continually reported in the editions of MUFTI.

Membership of the Sporting Bodies for 2018 are as follows:

Ian Goldie JP who was replaced by Glen Ferrarotto due to ill health during 2018, John Cullen OAM, Peter Smith OAM, Penny Gressieux (Secretary) and representatives of the various RSL Victoria Sporting Associations.

Sports represented during 2018 include swimming, lawn bowls, indoor bowls, snooker and billiards, darts and indoor bias bowls.

A highlight of the 2018 season was the continued rivalry of the annual Billiards and Snooker interstate carnival between Victoria and New South Wales conducted in the best of terms by both States.

The 2018 Diggers' Golf day was conducted at the Long Island Country Club in September 2018. The weather was our way and the course was well prepared for the 112 Golfers. The 2019 Diggers' Golf day will be held on 13th September.

The Sporting Associations Committee requests that all Sub-Branches continue to support their internal sporting sections as a way of contributing to the continued wellbeing and welfare of their membership.

## ANZAC House Trustees

Chair: John Cullen OAM

The Trustees of the RSL Victoria House Building Fund (the Building Patriotic Fund that owns ANZAC House) hold primary responsibility for both RSL and other tenancies at the premises.

The Trustees in office at the date of this report: Mr John Cullen OAM (Chairman), Dr Robert Webster OAM, Major-General David McLachlan AO, Major Frank Bell OAM RFD ED, Mr Barry Jones OAM and Mr Jason Cooke. Mr Sam Demeo is the Secretary to the Trustees.

Jason Cooke was appointed by the State Executive at its meeting held on 29th November 2018. We look forward to working with him into the future.

At the time of this report the previous tenants of Level 4 of the building have just vacated and the process of finding new tenants is well and truly underway.

The space on Level 5 is now being utilised extremely effectively as a Veterans Services Hub where advocacy, aged and health support and RSL Active can share the space to provide a range of services to the veteran community.

There has also been a significant relocation of staff within the building to ensure that now and into the future RSL Victoria can satisfy its varied staffing needs to deliver the necessary support for veterans as well as to the wider Sub-Branch network.

The process to replace to refurbish the aging lifts in the building is underway and is expected to be completed by early 2020.

The Trustees are mindful of the need to maintain the property to ensure a safe and pleasant environment for all staff and tenants to work and to comply with all necessary building codes and OH&S requirements.

Finally, I would like to congratulate Mr Bernard Churchill on his retirement after his many years as Secretary of the Fund. I would also like to thank Mr Sam Demeo for his work as Secretary of the Fund and for his continued good work in supervising the property and building management.

# RSL Annual Remembrance Service

Convenor: Bruce (Stretch) Jarvis

The 33rd Annual State Branch Remembrance Service, marking the 100th anniversary of the signing of the Armistice that ended the hostilities of The Great War, was held at the Springvale War Cemetery on Sunday 4th November 2018 in fine weather. Being the 100th anniversary allowed us to change several things to enhance the occasion, such as parading over fifty WW1 Banners from the three services at the service. Being the 100th anniversary meant that the numbers were increased from last year to over 500 people in attendance an encouraging outcome.

This was my first service as convener and I was fortunate to have Malcolm Carson as a font of wisdom and a key figure in the administration and organisation of the event.

The address was delivered by Dr Rosalie Triolo, Senior Lecturer, Education, Monash University (see Picture 1).

The Service was supported by the City of Greater Dandenong Band and the Victoria Welsh Choir under their Musical Director, Ms Faleiry Koczkar, OAM. Lance Corporal Benjamin Casey from the Pipes and Drums of the 5th/6 Battalion Royal Victoria Regiment, was the piper.

The Catafalque Party was provided by Defence Force School of Signals commanded by Corporal Tim Scully and mounted troopers from the Light Horse and Field Artillery Museum were also in attendance, adding extra atmosphere to the Service, as they do each year. Other troopers, dressed in World War I infantry battledress, as worn by Australian soldiers on the Western Front, were provided by the Australian Great War Association.

During the service, a most impressive flyover by five vintage military aircraft from the RAAF Museum at Point Cook took place at the start of the service to commence proceedings.

Mal Carson, did a fine job as the Service MC. Clergy for the Service were Chaplin Andrew McNeill Australian Army and Reverend Father Brendan Dillon (Roman Catholic), recently retired from parish duties at St Leonard's Parish, Glen Waverley.

A number of schools supported the service including Haileybury Collage, St Margaret's, Wheelers Hill Secondary Collage and Cranbourne East Secondary Collage.



Picture 1: Dr Rosalie Triolo, Senior Lecturer, Education, Monash University delivering the 2018 State RSL Remembrance Service address.



Picture 2: Some of the WW1 Banners paraded on the day.



Eighty Army Cadet's from the Australian Army Cadet Corp's Melbourne provided a contingent to assist with parading the banners and running of the Service, including wreath control, handing out programs and sprigs of rosemary, acting as ushers and parking guides, amongst many other vital tasks.

Tributes were laid at the Cross of Sacrifice in the form of wreaths or books on Australian military history during the Service. The books were recovered by the tribute layers after the Service for gifting to local schools. Our State President, Dr Rob Webster, OAM, recited The Ode.

Special thanks go to Mr Brian Neal, Capt Judy Cummings, WO2 Grant Reeves, Colin Haggett for their unstinting support and assistance during the conduct of, the Service and especially to the management and administrative staff of ANZAC House for their valued encouragement, work and assistance.

The Southern Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust and Australian War Graves Commission Staff had each worked hard in advance to present the Cemetery and surrounds in the very best condition for the Service, and to ensure that the occasion was conducted with relevant decorum. The Springvale War Cemetery a truly beautiful place for a Service of this nature.

None of this could take place without the unseen support of the parents and staff of the AACCC, St Johns Ambulance and Victoria Police.

The 2019 Service will be held on Sunday 10th November, commencing at 1.00 pm. Please consider entering this date into your diary now. The Remembrance Service Sub-Committee would be delighted to see as many people as possible attend this most special commemorative occasion.



Picture 3: One of the many Australian Army Cadets who volunteered on the day.

Picture 4: State President, Dr Rob Wester, OAM, pays respects to the fallen after laying a wreath at the Cross of Sacrifice on behalf of Returned & Services League of Australia (Victorian Branch) members.



# RSL Victoria Staff



## State President's Office:

State President Dr Robert Webster OAM  
Executive Assistant Rosemary Kennedy

## Chief Executive Officer's Office:

Chief Executive Officer Michael Annett CSC  
Executive Assistant Christina Kinna

## Administration:

Office Manager Jude Beshears  
Assistant Office Manager Rose Sorrell  
Receptionist Sandra Pillay

## Aged & Health Support:

Manager Wendy Bateman  
Manager Volunteer Support Kerry Burns (from August)  
Volunteer Support Services Martin Lees  
Information Officer Linda Yemm  
Administration Officer Erica D'Lasselle

## Appeals:

Manager Peter Smith OAM  
Assistant Penny Gressieux  
Appeals Coordinator Kirsty Kennedy  
Warehouse Supervisor Anthony Mays  
Warehouse Assistant Ben Ahern (from July)

## Finance and Property:

Chief Financial Officer Luke Gilholme  
Executive Assistant Christina Kinna  
Finance Manager Suzanne Nicholson  
Bookkeeper Naomi Adams  
Appeals Accounts Kathy Barrile  
Charity & Risk Manager Clint Brewster  
Charity & Risk Assistant Rose Mitchell  
Network Planning & Development Manager David Ridley  
Patriotic Funds Officer Patricia Bohner  
Property & Legal Manager Bernard Churchill  
Sam Demeo (from August)  
  
Property & Legal Administration Officer Peter Merlo (from May)

## Operations:

Chief Operating Officer Brian Cairns  
Executive Assistant Kerry O'Donovan  
Manager – Membership, Marketing & Communications Brad Swain  
Manager - IT & Systems Kevin Smith  
Business  
Development Manager Warren Blee  
Business  
Development Manager Ben Myers  
Loyalty Analyst Shannon Waller  
Marketing Coordinator Greta Adamo (to October)  
Graphic Designer Renee Madden (to November)  
Journalist Aileen Phillips (to July)  
Member Services  
Coordinator Danielle Moffitt  
Membership Administration Officer Dallas Wilmot

## Pensions, Advocacy & Welfare Support:

Manager Jeff Jackson OAM  
Compensation Advocate  
Lvl 4/ Welfare Advocate Lvl 2 Jo Baful  
Welfare Advocate Lvl 2 Shane Ellison  
Compensation Advocate Lvl 1 Adam Kent (from July)  
Compensation Advocate Lvl 1 Anthony Geyer (from July)  
Compensation Advocate  
Lvl 4/ Welfare Advocate Lvl 3 Robert Buchanan  
Tim Whitford  
  
Compensation Advocate  
Lvl 4/ Welfare Advocate Lvl 2 Bruce Turner  
Compensation Advocate  
Lvl 3/ Welfare Advocate Lvl 2 Bruce Dunlop  
Receptionist Linda Mancuso

## RSL Active:

Manager Anne Pahl  
Event Coordinator Stephen Gilmour (from Dec)  
Event Coordinator Judy Somes



It is with regret that we report the following deaths recorded by the State Executive during 2018. They were:

**JAN** Nil.  
**FEB** John Paul Murrihy, 17th Squadron Vietnam, Friday 23 February 2018.  
**MAR** Brigadier Keith Colwill CBE OAM – passed away 8th March 2017.  
**APR** Nil.  
**MAY** Nil.  
**JUNE** Nil.  
**JULY** Nil.

**AUG** Lieutenant Commander John McCain, US Navy.  
**SEPT** Nil.  
**OCT** Nil.  
**NOV** Lieutenant Colonel John Williams (Retd) former Commanding Officer of 4th/19th Prince of Wales Light Horse, a Korean War and Vietnam veteran who passed away on 27th November 2018.  
**DEC** Francis Leslie Kuffer, OAM OStJ – passed away 8th December 2018.

# Sub-Branch Membership

## 2018 Total Membership *(effective 31/12/2018)*

1st Serbian	11	Colac RSL	1,503	Harrow RSL	34
Alexandra RSL	83	Coleraine RSL	54	Hastings RSL	136
Altona RSL	2,493	Corryong RSL	27	Hawthorn RSL	32
Angeles City Philippines RSL	306	Creswick-Smeaton RSL	48	Headquarters	476
Anglesea RSL	93	Crib Point RSL	221	Healesville RSL	1,071
Apollo Bay RSL	152	Croydon RSL	157	Heathcote RSL	90
Ararat RSL	2,059	Dandenong Ranges RSL	81	Hellenic RSL	173
Avenel RSL	25	Dandenong-Cranbourne RSL	10,329	Heyfield RSL	46
Avoca RSL	24	Darebin RSL	6,041	Heywood RSL	29
Bacchus Marsh RSL	172	Daylesford RSL	123	Highett RSL	2,765
Bairnsdale RSL	4,560	Defence Sub-Branch	79	Hopetoun RSL	23
Ballan RSL	69	Derrinallum RSL	18	Horsham RSL	1,712
Ballarat RSL	343	Diamond Creek RSL	60	Hurstbridge RSL	30
Balmoral RSL	31	Dimboola RSL	28	Inglewood-Bridgewater RSL	126
Balwyn RSL	32	Donald RSL	25	Interstate Transfers	56
Bayswater RSL	212	Doncaster RSL	67	Inverleigh RSL	42
Beaumaris RSL	217	Dookie RSL	8	Inverloch RSL	127
Beechworth RSL	92	Doreen RSL	173	Italian RSL	21
Benalla RSL	163	Dromana-Red Hill RSL	435	Ivanhoe RSL	119
Bendigo District RSL	7,295	Drouin RSL	63	Jeparit RSL	0
Bentleigh RSL	7,150	Drysdale RSL	74	Kangaroo Flat RSL	119
Berwick RSL	241	Dunkeld RSL	18	Kaniva RSL	24
Birchip RSL	18	Dunolly-Bealiba RSL	48	Keilor East RSL	2,324
Blackburn RSL	161	East Malvern RSL	1,173	Kerang & District RSL	41
Boort RSL	26	Echuca RSL	156	Kew RSL	638
Boronia RSL	257	Edenhope RSL	84	Kiewa RSL	41
Box Hill RSL	3,081	Eildon RSL	29	Kilmore-Wallan RSL	110
Briagolong RSL	32	Elmore RSL	26	Koo Wee Rup RSL	53
Bright RSL	111	Emerald RSL	222	Koondrook RSL	39
Broadford RSL	55	Ensay-Swifts Creek RSL	26	Korea RSL	6
Buninyong RSL	56	Epping RSL	4,074	Korumburra RSL	23
Bunyip RSL	41	Essendon RSL	71	Kyabram RSL	54
Burwood RSL	31	Euroa RSL	47	Kyneton RSL	1,721
Camberwell City RSL	47	Fawkner RSL	324	Lakes Entrance RSL	1,404
Camperdown RSL	36	Fish Creek RSL	30	Lang Lang RSL	47
Cann River RSL	11	Flemington-Kensington RSL	145	Langkoop-Apsley RSL	17
Caroline Springs RSL	216	Flinders RSL	26	Lara RSL	116
Casterton RSL	65	Footscray RSL	110	Leongatha RSL	2,742
Castlemaine RSL	97	Foster RSL Sub-Branch Inc	315	Lilydale RSL	108
Caulfield RSL	1,754	Frankston RSL	14,554	Loch Sport RSL	323
Cavendish RSL	20	Geelong RSL	7,413	Longbeach RSL	3,655
Charlton RSL	25	Gembrook RSL	47	Longwarry RSL	25
Clayton RSL	936	Girgarre RSL	23	Lorne RSL	31
Clunes RSL	40	Gisborne-Macedon Ranges RSL	26	Macarthur RSL	26
Cobram-Barooga RSL	192	Glenroy RSL	1,829	Maffra RSL	80
Coburg RSL	365	Greensborough RSL	7,235	Maldon RSL	55
Cockatoo RSL	151	Hamilton RSL	83	Mallacoota RSL	24
Cohuna-Leitchville RSL	119	Hampton RSL	336	Manangatang RSL	40

Mansfield RSL	116	Piangil RSL	29	Toora RSL	47
Maryborough RSL	29	Polish RSL	7	Toorak RSL	66
Marysville RSL	37	Port Fairy RSL	29	Torquay RSL	197
Mathoura RSL	15	Portarlington-St. Leonards RSL	284	Trafalgar-Thorpdale RSL	220
Meeniyar RSL	43	Portland RSL	104	Tramways-East Melbourne RSL	96
Melbourne RSL	78	Prahran RSL	165	Traralgon RSL	1,776
Melton RSL	241	Queenscliff-Point Lonsdale RSL	110	Upper Beaconsfield RSL	25
Mentone RSL	530	Red Cliffs-Irymple RSL	65	Upper Yarra RSL	678
Merbein RSL	42	Reservoir RSL	1,529	Upwey-Belgrave RSL	645
Meredith RSL	13	Returned and Servicewomen RSL	38	Violet Town RSL	57
Metung RSL	135	Returned Nurses RSL	36	Wangaratta RSL	1,520
Mildura RSL	7,048	Richmond RSL	73	Warburton RSL	53
Minyip RSL	11	Ringwood RSL	4,912	Warracknabeal RSL	39
Mirboo North RSL	18	Ripon-Beaufort RSL	24	Warragul RSL	240
Mitiamo-East Loddon RSL	8	Robinvale RSL	35	Warrandyte RSL	115
Moe RSL	3,714	Rochester RSL	58	Warrnambool RSL	2,940
Monbulk RSL	153	Rokewood RSL	23	Watsonia RSL	6,017
Montmorency-Eltham RSL	1,915	Romsey-Lancefield RSL	65	Waverley RSL	3,451
Mornington RSL	210	Rosebud RSL	3,780	Wedderburn-Korongvale RSL	43
Mortlake RSL	42	Rosedale RSL	56	Werribee RSL	1,233
Morwell RSL	2,287	Rupanyup RSL	24	West Heidelberg RSL	1,077
Mount Beauty RSL	41	Rushworth RSL	19	Whittlesea RSL	38
Mount Evelyn RSL	115	Rutherglen RSL	48	Willaura RSL	2
Murchison RSL	32	Rye RSL	3,772	Winchelsea RSL	18
Murtoa RSL	20	Sale RSL	899	Wodonga RSL	501
Myrtleford RSL	91	Sea Lake RSL	27	Wonthaggi RSL	71
Nagambie RSL	59	Seaford RSL	2,524	Woodend RSL	132
Nar Nar Goon RSL	19	Sebastopol RSL	62	Woods Point RSL	58
Nathalia-Picola RSL	45	Seymour RSL	117	Woorinen RSL	96
Natimuk RSL	15	Shepparton RSL	7,829	Wycheproof RSL	2
New Zealand RSL	51	Sorrento-Portsea RSL	590	Yallourn-Newborough RSL	118
Newport RSL	94	Spotswood-Kingsville RSL	271	Yarra Glen RSL	25
Nhill RSL	33	Springvale RSL	1,304	Yarram RSL	59
Noble Park RSL	1,667	St Arnaud RSL	107	Yarraville RSL	9
Norlane RSL	163	St Kilda RSL	642	Yarrawonga-Mulwala RSL	388
North Balwyn RSL	36	Stanhope RSL	17	Yea-Kinglake RSL	56
Numurkah RSL	110	Stawell RSL	73		
Oakleigh-Carnegie RSL	411	Stratford RSL	64		
Ocean Grove-Barwon Heads RSL	207	Strathmerton RSL	22		
Omeo RSL	18	Sunbury RSL	224		
Orbost RSL	65	Sunshine RSL	2,052		
Ouyen RSL	7	Swan Hill RSL	1,650		
Pakenham RSL	60	Talbot RSL	6		
Pascoe Vale RSL	1,961	Tatura RSL	77		
Patchewollock RSL	22	Templestowe RSL	185		
Paynesville RSL	220	Terang RSL	30		
Penshurst RSL	20	Thornton RSL	1		
Phillip Island RSL	4,831	Tongala RSL	42		

# Awards 2018

## ANZAC of the Year

Kevin O'Callaghan ESM

## Meritorious Service Medal

Maurie Anderson	BCOF
William McKenna (Nov 2017)	Montmorency-Eltham
Nance Ormsby (Nov 2017)	Epping
John Wyke (Nov 2017)	Romsey-Lancefield

## Life Membership with Gold Badge

Kevin Hillier OAM	Frankston
John Meehan	Noble Park

## National Certificate of Appreciation

Paul Ranson	Benalla
Brett Taylor-Parkins	Benalla
Ross Wallace	Benalla
Ronald Burns	Benalla

## Womens Auxiliary Life Membership

Joan Brusaschi	Buninyong
Emma Martin	Buninyong
Helen Stephens	Buninyong
Elaine Bencraft	Hampton
Dianne Redley	Noble Park
Terry Brown	Ringwood
Lois Congram	Pascoe Vale
Alma Pearce	Pascoe Vale

## 60 Year Long Service Award

Raymond Duckett	Altona
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## Life Membership

Rodney Canobie	Boronia
Barry Jones OAM	Watsonia
Jeffrey Mawkes	Watsonia
Glen Doyle	Coburg
Jill Doyle	Coburg
John Hollands	Ensay/Swifts Creek
Robert Harrison	Bendigo & District
Paul Penno	Bendigo & District
Patrick O'Shaughnessy	Rochester
Ralph Shinkfield	Benalla
Arthur Merryweather	Box Hill
David George Keall	Nagambie
Alan Baldwin	Croydon
Leslie (Keith) Joyce	Warracknabeal
Henry Andrews	Alexandra
Dennis Jenkins	Glenroy
Gerald O'Donovan	Glenroy
Paul McDermott	Mildura
Robert Doherty	Nagambie
Philip Deutscher	Coleraine
George Harris	Morwell
Bryan Nichols	Sebastopol
Geoff Christopherson AM	East Malvern
John Carlyle Wells OAM	Dandenong/Cranbourne
Iain Townsley	Mt Evelyn
Tom Steele	Mt Evelyn

## 50 Year Long Service Award

Des Bourke	Coburg
Gordon Miller	Wangaratta
Malcolm Robotham	Wangaratta
Edward Patrick Whelan	Koondrook
Percy Stanley	Box Hill
Konstantinos Kontossis	Hellenic
Graham Fisher	Ocean Grove

## Membership Certificate of Achievement Awards

Metropolitan Group	Sub-Branch	Increase
10-50	Balwyn RSL	7%
51-100	Flemington-Kensington RSL	43%
101-250	Doreen RSL	91%
251-500	Caulfield RSL	5%
501-1000	Seaford RSL	8%
1000+	Bentleigh RSL	14%

Country Group	Sub-Branch	Increase
10-50	Briarolong RSL	35%
51-100	Rosedale RSL	50%
101-250	Inverloch RSL	14%
251-500	Warrnambool RSL	15%
501-1000	Mildura RSL	12%
1000+	Phillip Island RSL	14%



# State Honorary Treasurer's Report

## Dr Robert Webster OAM

State President

Returned & Services League of Australia  
(Victorian Branch Inc)

Please find enclosed the Financial Statements and the Independent Auditor's Report to the Member's of the Returned & Services League of Australia (Victorian Branch Inc.) for the Financial Year ended 31st December, 2018. The CD is enclosed at the end of the Annual Report 2018.

The year 2018 was marked by a series of items affecting numerous entities under the Administration of the Victorian Branch which I wish to draw attention to as follows.

It is my opinion, that the main material items of interest are:

- Total revenue \$8.0m represented by \$4.8m RSL Support Fee.
- Employee benefits expenses \$3.1m increase of \$189k represents (in the main) additional professional staff engaged to assist in delivering increased services to Sub-Branches and their Members.
- Honorariums totaling \$40k approved in 2018 at State Conference and consequently paid in June 2019.
- Debt forgiven - RSL of Australia Victorian General Appeals Fund - \$356k Administration levy regarding the provision of professional services - (refer note 15).
- Marketing Advertising - A reduction of \$70k to \$799k achieved during the current financial year.
- Rent paid reduced by \$335k during the financial year to \$160k
- The Trading affairs of Victorian Branch Incorporated resulted a profit of \$800k compared to a loss of (\$376k) in the previous year 2017.

## Comment

The Audit and Finance Committee, meeting on a monthly basis closely monitors the financial position and ongoing liquidity of the Victorian Branch. The State Branch monthly financials are distributed to all Sub-Branches for their information with the minutes of each State Executive meeting.

The Victorian Branch continues to have the necessary cash reserves to meet its ongoing employees benefits liabilities as at the date of this Annual Report.

## RSL General Appeals Patriotic Fund

Revenue from the ANZAC Day and Poppy Day Appeals was \$7.6m an increase of \$920k on the 2017 financial year.

It should be noted that the Poppy Day Appeal was \$3.1m an increase of \$505k over the previous year 2017.

Total revenue for the General Appeals Patriotic Fund was \$8.2m for the year ended 2018.

The total revenue included interest income of \$140k.

The expenditure of \$8.5m represented by the major elements being the transfer of ANZAC/Poppy sales to Sub-Branches of \$2.6m, salaries and on costs \$2m. ANZAC/Poppy Appeal expenses \$1.1m. Net loss for the year \$323k (\$821k in 2017).

## RSL (Victoria House) Building Patriotic Fund

Total revenue from continuing activities realised \$2.7m. Rental income of \$305k was down on the previous year by \$759k due to the absence of a tenant on level 4 and level 5 being utilized to accommodate our Pensions, Advocacy and Age Care personnel.

Property plant and equipment after accumulated depreciation revealed an asset of the fund of \$21m.

## RSL Statewide Building Patriotic Fund

Total revenue of \$108k (2017 \$378k) was due to interest on investments which was down due to the economic forces in play. Grants to Sub-Branches Patriotic Building Funds in support of their objects totaled \$3m.

The fund posted a loss of \$3.1m during the financial year. The equity in the Statewide Patriotic Fund at year end totaled \$9.7m.

## Welfare Trust Funds

Total revenues of \$134k which included interest income of \$100k compared to \$202k in the previous financial year.

Total expenses of the fund \$387k included welfare grants of \$254k. Equity in the Welfare Trust Fund is \$5.9m.

## Appreciation

This is my opportunity to express my appreciation to the following members of the Finance Team and the Officers of the State Branch for their ongoing dedication and commitment to their tasks at hand and their support of me in what is an ongoing challenging role within the Returned and Services League of Victoria.

Chief Financial Officer, Luke Gilholme for his support in the Finance and Property Department Team consisting of Sue Nicholson (Finance Manager), Naomi Adams (Bookkeeper - Vic Branch), Kathy Barrile (Bookkeeper - General Appeals), Clint Brewster (Charity & Risk Manager), Patricia Bohner (Patriotic Funds Account Manager), Rose Mitchell (Charity & Risk Administration Officer), David Ridley (Manager Network Planning & Development), Sam Demeo, Peter Merlo and Bernard Churchill.

My gratitude also to Michael Annett (Chief Executive Officer), Christina Kinna (EA to CEO & CFO), Rosemary Kennedy (EA to State President) and Penny Gressieux (Appeals Administration) along with my fellow colleagues who serve on the Audit and Finance, Property Sub Committees and the State Executive who give freely of their valuable time for the economic well-being of the State Branch.

Once again it has been my privilege and pleasure to serve the State Branch and thank you for your ongoing support therein.

Yours faithfully,  
John F. Cullen OAM, FIPA, FFA, MAICD



# Financial Statements







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