

BURLEIGH HEADS 25th April 2010 ANZAC DAY - PRESIDENTS REPORT

DAWN SERVICE 4.28am

The morning of Sunday 25th April 2010 was a beautiful mild morning with a little dew on the grass. I arrived at the Burleigh Heads Memorial Park at 3am, to check the arrangements and prepare for the sound technician, Grant Maroney arriving. Grant has been our sound technician for many years and has conducted this task with great enthusiasm. Veterans and crowds started to arrive about 3.45am and by 4.15am there were in excess of 3000 in attendance. World War 2 veteran attendees were down compared to last year but those numbers were filled with younger Veterans, ex-service and current serving members. There were still at least ten World War 2 veterans, well done diggers!. The crowds filled the park from the left and the right of the cenotaph for the service and you could have heard a pin drop during the entire program.

We had quite a number laying wreaths this year. A group of students from Marymount College were in attendance and laid a wreath for the first time. Karen Andrews laid a wreath on behalf her Dad, William Weir, OAM, a WW2 Veteran who had passed away recently. A number of others came forward.

Fr Greg McGory participated in the religious part of the service; many thanks Fr Greg. Samantha Naday presented herself early and lead the singing of the three anthems, for which we were very grateful. Kevin Cook, committee man, performed the duties of the flag officer. This year we were very fortunate to have a real live bugler, Brett Whitchuch who came all the way from the Sunshine Coast to play the Last Post and the rendition of the Reveille. There were quite a few wet eyes after the service.

I wish to publicly note and thank, Fr Greg McGory, Burleigh Anglican Minister, Samantha Naday, St Andrews College, Kevin Cook, committeeman Flag officer, Brett Whitchurch, ex-Army Bugler and Les McKenzie, Junior Vice President and Parade Marshall for their participation and services on the occasion of the 2010 Burleigh Heads ANZAC Day Dawn service.

Councillor Greg Betts, Division 12 and his PA Melinda Murdock must get a huge mention and thanks for the great assistance given to me with the planning of the ANZAC service at Burleigh. The Gold Coast Events Unit also must receive a huge thanks for their support by providing the services of the sound system, chairs and marquees.

Finally the Chairman, board & members of the Burleigh Heads Bowls Club need to be thanked for the loan of their facility for this ANZAC Day. Gary Potts, manager, and his staff provided the usual great service of looking after the veterans and crowd that had returned there after the Dawn service for the Gunfire Breakfast.

Lisa our caterer at the Bowls club with her staff provided a great Gunfire Breakfast, nearly sixty veterans received a free breakfast from the sub-branch and many more enjoyed the great food that was available.

The crowd this year was the largest ever seen participating at a Burleigh Heads ANZAC day

Dawn service, it was an experience that I will never forget and treasure in my memories.

'Lest We Forget'

The 2010 BURLEIGH HEADS MAIN ANZAC SERVICE & CEREMONY 9.30am
Conducted by Burleigh Heads RSL Sub-Branch

This ANZAC Day was a significant event, being that it was the 95th Anniversary of the landing at Gallipoli and it was a Sunday, just like the original ANZAC landing that had taken place on Sunday, 25th April, 1915. The weather was warm with blue skies and a mild breeze.

208 white crosses were placed around the cenotaph. These represented every Burleigh Heads RSL Member that had passed away since 3rd January 1939. Trevor Taylor, Honorary Burleigh Heads RSL Sub-Branch Secretary, and Paul Bailey, Sub-Branch member, made the huge effort to have these positioned around the cenotaph before the service. Many thanks!

The crowds were building from about 8 am. By 9.30 am, James and West Streets were filled with Vintage Military vehicles carrying disabled Veterans, Australian Army Cadets, serving members of the ADF, veterans, ex-service men and women, scouts, school children who had fallen in behind their school banners and children from different sporting codes. It was a sight to behold, the crowds were packed both sides of James & Connor Streets to watch the marchers go by. The March commenced 9.30 am and concluded at the Cenotaph at 9.55 am with everyone joining the marchers in the Memorial park. The park was a sea of faces, it would be estimated the attendance was in excess of 6,000.

The service got underway with the mounting of Catafalque party by Cadets from 133ACU on the Cenotaph. Burleigh Heads RSL Sub-Branch President, Chris Keating, gave a warm welcome to all and thanked everyone for their attendance, especially the children. He then named all those who gave of their time to participate in today's service:

Mr. Greg Betts, Gold Coast City Council Councillor Divison 12 Burleigh,

Mrs Christine Smith, MP, State Member for Burleigh,

Mrs Margaret May, MP, Federal Member for Mcpherson,

Fr Pat Molony, Catholic Parish Priest Burleigh Heads & Honorary Padre Burleigh Heads RSL Sub-branch

Warrant Officer Class 2 John Nixon 1 Field Regiment

Anna McGrath –Marymount College – Girls Captain

Anthony Rofe- Marymount College – Boys Captain

Brett Whitchurch – ex Army Bugler.

Samantha Naday St Andrews College-Vocalist

Students & Music Teacher Ann Newman Burleigh Heads State Primary School

Officers and Cadets from 133 Army Cadet Unit

The Officers of Queensland Police Service.

The Queensland Ambulance Service.

Mr Lloyd and Linda Glassik and the Drivers from the Military Vintage Club

Mr James Casey – Main Parade Marshall

Mr David Grant – Burleigh Heads RSL Sub-Branch Senior Vice President.

Mr Trevor Taylor – Burleigh Heads RSL Sub-Branch Secretary & Right Hand Man to the President

Mr Les Mckenzie – Burleigh Heads RSL Sub-Branch Jnr Vice-President Veterans Parade Marshal.

Mr Craig McKenzie – Burleigh Heads RSL Sub-Branch Member & Cameraman.

Ladies of the Burleigh Heads RSL Women's Auxiliary

Mr James & Mrs Virginia Casey and Their Team Who Performed Security Duties

The Hymn, "O God our help in Ages Past" was sung, led by Samantha Naday, followed by the Rendition "The Last ANZAC" by the Burleigh State Primary School Choir. These were very moving.

Prior to the wreath laying ceremony, the Burleigh Heads RSL Sub-Branch President, Chris Keating, presented Mrs Margaret May, MP, Member for McPherson, with a small arrangement of flowers and thanked her for the twelve years support to the Burleigh Heads RSL Sub-Branch. He went on to wish her well in her upcoming retirement from Federal Politics. Wreaths & books were laid by many organizations. President Chris Keating introduced the guest speaker WO2 John Nixon who gave a wonderful address on the meaning of ANZAC Day.

The usual five ANZAC Day service resolutions were read by, Anna McGrath, Margaret May, MP, Christine Smith, MLA, Anthony Rofe & Councillor Greg Betts. These resolutions have been developed by the ANZAC Day Commemorative Committee since 1916.

The Last Post was played by Bugler, Brett Whitchurch, followed by one minute silence. Then the Ode was recited by the President, followed by the Rouse being played. The rendition of both

these tunes by Brett was absolutely moving. It brought a tear to many a eye! A big thanks to Brett for making the effort to come all the way from the Sunshine Coast.

The Burleigh Heads 2010 ANZAC Day service concluded with Samantha Naday leading the singing of the three Anthems - Royal Anthem, New Zealand Anthem and finishing with the Australian Anthem. The service came to end at 10.50am with the dismounting of the Catafalque party by 133 Australian Army Cadet unit which remained in place for almost one hour, well done Cadets!

Gold Coast Taxis provided free taxi rides to any veterans that needed a lift after the service, many thanks to Gold Coast Taxis and the drivers that volunteered to provide this wonderful service.

Almost 100, members, guests & visitors returned to the Burleigh Heads RSL Hall where they enjoyed libations and food for over three hours, together with some wonderful piano music being played by our Patron, Gary Ivory, and his assistant, Penny. Many thanks Gary & Penny!

ANZAC Day 2010 ended about 3.30pm for the Burleigh Heads RSL Committee and members.

Yours in service.

Christopher Keating
President