

FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT – APRIL/ MAY 2006

Good day everyone, I hope this reports finds you all fit and well.

Sadly, I have to report that since the last newsletter in April, Mr Ian Colin Forbes, ex-2nd AIF WW2 passed away on 14th May 2006 aged 84. Ian had been a member since 2003 prior to his transfer had been a member of Coolangatta/Tweed Heads RSL and had been a very active member of Gold Coast Legacy. His mates will miss Ian “Lest we forget”

Our current Membership stands as at 31st May 2006, 2 Life members, 126 Life Subscribers and 110 service members, total 238. This year is the 90th Anniversary of the RSL and as it is a special year the Queensland RSL state branch, after a State Council resolution, will be producing a certificate of membership to be issued to every financial member in Queensland. These certificates will be issued to each Queensland Sub-Branch to distribute which ever way they feel would be appropriate to their members, more news as to when the certificates will be available will follow after the Queensland RSL State Congress in June at Roma. This will be the first time in the history of the RSL that any member has received a certificate of membership, as it had never been a practice in the past.

The April monthly general meeting was very well attended, 82 and 1 visitor, which is always pleasing to see the interest that is held by the members, keep up the wonderful attendances, 4 women of the Auxiliary joined in after the meeting for the social.

91st anniversary Anzac day “dawn service” held at the Burleigh war memorial park was a momentous event with almost 2000 attending the dawn service on a beautiful early morning with a crescent moon and star shining over the cenotaph which in fact depicts the Turkish flag, a very moving symbol. It was great to see so many children with their parents attend and the troop numbers on parade was

heartening, considering the early hour of the service. For any member that may not be aware, the time of the dawn service has no relation to the sun rising here, it is the time the troops landed on the shores of Gallipoli, 4.28am the 25 April 1915 and I think that message is getting out there.

The bowls club this year, did us proud by providing their bar and club facility to members and visitors who attended the service. Thanks to Christine Smith, State member for Burleigh, we had the liquor licensing laws changed so we didn't have a repeat of last year. A wonderful gunfire breakfast was provided by the catering staff, Tony, Leesa and their helpers, was greatly appreciated.

Thank you and well done to the Burleigh Bowls club, chairman, committee and staff. Their invaluable contribution to the Burleigh Heads RSL, ANZAC day commemoration service is always most appreciated, as they are our de facto RSL Club on ANZAC Day.

The main ANZAC service, this year broke all records, I would estimate over 7000, the crowds kept coming and the wonderful attendance by school children with their respective schools was tremendous. The Gold Coast City Council again, assisted us with sound equipment, chairs, marquees and many other little things, but mainly the maintenance of the memorial park and cenotaph, which was a picture to behold, thank you, council, our Burleigh Councillor, Gregg Betts and his hard working secretary, Melinda. We were fortunate to have the Burleigh Heads State School Choir in attendance, they participated in our service under the leadership their Music Teacher Ann Newman.

112 Members & visitors attended the ANZAC function, at the RSL hall. They were very well looked after; the food kept coming thanks to Betty Hale and her helpers. The refreshments were lovely and cold, thanks to our Providore and his

band of merry men. Numbers at the hall were back to normal; it was great to see our veterans, their families and friends enjoying themselves. Thank you to Geoff Smith for his wonderful contribution with the music, but he didn't use the new sound system he thought he would be loud enough.

The tremendous support, I received from the committee and members, made my duty as the ANZAC organizing secretary very easy, I must thank you again. I won't mention names, in case I miss anyone out, as there are so many, I have thanked you personally. Congratulations goes to all for a job well done!. The Ladies of the Women's Auxiliary need to be congratulated for their wonderful effort with regard to ANZAC badge selling and everything else that they contribute, thank you ladies! You are a wonderful group of ladies and your contribution is most appreciated by the Sub-Branch.

Sunday prior to Anzac day, I attended the Burleigh Heads Uniting ANZAC Church service and again it was a very moving and emotional time. Padre Rodger Boerth and the master of ceremonies, Jim Watt, excelled in the organization and execution of the service and again the church was full to capacity, I do think they need more parking spaces!

A wonderful effort and credit to the Burleigh Uniting parish, thank you for the invitation and well done and thanks to the members who attended the service.

There are few new members that have joined us since the last report, I would like to welcome Frank Campbell & Kevin Slattery to the sub-branch and hope your stay with us will be a very long one. All the very best to those who have been on sick parade, I hope you all improve and are 100% again.

Happy birthday to everyone, who have had birthdays recently, and those about to have one. I hope you have a great day and have many more birthdays to come. A

big thanks to Ray who will be continuing the practice of phoning members on their special day, I regret not being able to ring everyone for their birthday during May due to many other RSL commitments with Ray being away. The Secretary, Ray Fellenberg has been away overseas visiting the battlefields of France and Belgium, I'm sure he will give us a report with photos on his return.

The Sub-Branch May general meetings was well attended, we had 76 Members and three Women's Auxiliary ladies join in the social after the meeting. Great to see such attendances, considering health, age, medical and transport restrictions.

I sincerely hope you all keep well over the next few months of winter, and hopefully the weather will be kind to all of us.

The Sub-Branch May fourth Wednesday social was well attended, we had 49 considering this is winter, not too bad at all, and I'm sure those who attend, enjoy themselves immensely. A Huge thanks to the volunteers who provide their time, to set up the hall, serve food, refreshments and help clean up and pack away the furniture.

I sincerely hope you all keep well over the next few months, and hopefully the weather will be kind to all of us.

Chris Keating