



RSLWA

SUB-BRANCH SIGNAL
17/7/2020

ANZAC HOUSE VETERAN CENTRAL

As we count down to the opening of this game-changing new service facility for Veterans (providing medical treatment, DVA access etc) follow its progress via our new Facebook page. Please, come share the journey!

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From the desk of the CEO

FOLLOWING the recent RSLWA Election, the first meeting of the new Board of Directors was held on 2 July, 2020 - and there are some exciting times ahead. As previous Sub-Branch Signals, I am pleased to provide a snapshot of initiatives and progress.

The State President welcomed the new Board and foreshadowed his view of the key elements to focus on over the next three years. They include:

- Continued and improved financial stability and sustainability, including risk-profiling on investments.
- Completion of ANZAC House on time and on budget, with commencement of Veteran Central services.
- Expanded provision for Veterans and families through ongoing development of Veteran Hubs.

ANZAC House



AS of early this month, the new building was approximately 75 percent complete (as shown above), with fit-out well underway ahead of an expected RSLWA-occupancy by the first week of September.

The official opening by the WA Governor will be on Thursday, 12 November, with a fundraising Gala Dinner held that evening.

Importantly, it will be a very busy period ahead of the official opening - with a raft of Veteran service providers making sure they are ready when the doors open. (See separate feature in the latest edition of The Listening Post).

Veteran Services

Our Veteran Services department now delivers more core services on behalf of the organisation, namely: wellbeing, welfare, advocacy, Veteran transition and employment.

Emerging issues over recent months include access to DVA, management of this access by RSLWA, and the development of the new Veteran Employment Program with Case Manager Sherry Baxter joining us this week after several years as a case manager with employment service provider Jobactive.

Welfare

Welfare activities involved Members and other Veterans seeking a range of services, including emergency financial relief, general support and assistance. Present issues included financial hardship and emotional issues, with a number being referred to Open Arms, Legacy, DVA and The Age Care Assessment Team.

Our free financial counselling service is enjoying positive outcomes - with one family being assisted when RSLWA liaised with their bank and the Bankruptcy Trust to allow them to retain their home, retain their dignity and find meaningful work.

Advocacy

State Branch's Advocacy team has been busy trying to keep up with demand. Examples of their success include the case of a 38-year-old male who served just over a year in the Navy before being discharged when the position became redundant. RSLWA assisted the Veteran with an application for Incapacity Payments under DRCA, as well as access to DVA's Household Services for a previous medical condition.

Employment

State Branch has added a new capability in the Veteran Transition and Employment space with the appointment of a WA-based Case Manager, following funding support from the Federal Government. RSLWA is now part of the new program to help address transition and employment issues for those leaving the Australian Defence Force. This augurs well for RSLWA's commitment to working with other Ex-Service Organisations and Veteran Service Providers to improve job prospects for new Veterans.

And in other departments:

Membership

Membership numbers have again dipped recently – an understandable consequence of the COVID-19 restrictions and the cancellation of large-scale commemorative ANZAC Day events.

Marketing & Partnerships

There's been further development of strategic partnerships in a bid to help resurrect RSLWA's fundraising efforts in a very difficult market, with donor fatigue most evident. On a positive note, RSLWA is planning some proactive events over the coming six months.

New Veteran Hub

The Board has approved the establishment of a new Veteran Hub in Perth's South-East Region. It's part of an RSLWA commitment to gradually roll out Veteran Hubs in the Greater Perth Metro Area and Regional Centres to improve services provided to Veterans and their families.

The new hub will form part of the existing Recovery & Restoration Transition Centre at 79 Hughes Road, Jarrahdale. An existing facility, now being renovated, is situated at the centre of the property and will suit the needs of a Veteran Hub, as well as providing a second home to the Serpentine-Jarrahdale RSL Sub-Branch.

Serpentine-Jarrahdale is the fastest-growing local government in Western Australia, with a current population of 33,000 covering a mix of demographics across the age spectrum.

It is hoped the establishment of the South-East Metro Hub will significantly improve the service options of the RRTC property and demonstrates RSLWA's collaborative approach to supporting Veterans and their families.

Next Board Meeting

The next meeting of the Board of Directors will be on Thursday, 6 August, 2020 – the final one at RSLWA's current premises before returning to the new ANZAC House.

Warm regards,
John McCourt, RSLWA CEO

Government grants for Advocacy

WA has benefitted from the most recent approvals under the Excellence in Support and Training (BEST) grants program.

The Federal Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Darren Chester, said the government was committed to continuing its support of the Advocacy service offered by ESOs while we experienced unprecedented times caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

The Minister has encouraged the Veteran community to continue to stay in contact with DVA and other local Veteran community groups during difficult times.

The list of beneficiaries among RSLWA for the 2020 Grants were as follows: City of Rockingham RSL Sub-Branch, \$2700; Armadale RSL Sub-Branch, \$13,668; Nannup RSL Sub-Branch, \$1098; Busselton RSL Sub-Branch, \$41,847; Ocean Reef RSL Sub-Branch, \$14,181; Greenbushes RSL Sub-Branch, \$619; RSLWA State Branch, \$74,918.

Urgent deadline for your attention

2021 ANZAC Day Lotterwest Sub-Branch grants: Applications are due by Friday, 31 July, 2020. Please return Forms to admin@rslwa.org.au

New financial year, new financial software and hardware

Free accounting software

With the new Financial Year starting for Sub-Branches, now is a great time to consider changing over to accounting software if your Sub-Branch using manual financial systems.

Wave is a free (no strings attached), cloud-based accounting software package that is easy to set up and use. It is accessible from any computer with internet access and produces all essential financial reports for compliance.

A number of Sub-Branches have taken up the software over the past 12 months and are happy with the way it works and how it simplifies record keeping.

For more information head to <https://www.waveapps.com/>.

If you are keen to go ahead with using it and need a hand to set up your Sub-Branch or have any queries, please contact Karen at accounts@rslwa.org.au

Free PCs

RSLWA State Branch will have a small number of older PC towers available at no charge to Sub-Branches over the next few weeks.

The PCs won't have an operating system or Microsoft Office software, but see below's **Free/Cheap Software for Charities** for information on to get these for either very little cost, or for nothing.

To register your Sub-Branch's interest in one, please email Karen at accounts@rslwa.org.au.

Preference will be given to Sub-Branches that don't already own a PC. After that, it will be in order of interest registered.

Cheap PCs

As previously advised, Wanneroo Men's Shed has ex-Government PCs available for \$100-\$125, which come with Operating System and Office software. To get in touch with them please contact Bernie on 0499 243 171, or via wcms.deliveries@gmail.com

Free/cheap software for charities

Connecting Up is an organisation that offers donated and discounted IT products for not-for-profits and charities.

Some current offers are Office 365 (includes Word/Excel etc) available free of charge, and Microsoft Windows Pro full operating system for \$17.

For more information go to <https://www.connectingup.org/> where you can sign up for a free account (you will need to prove that your Sub-Branch is a registered charity)

Suicide prevention program

A free online suicide prevention training program is to be delivered by a partnership between the Open Arms Veterans and Families Counselling service and RSL Australia.

Minister for Veterans' Affairs Darren Chester says the program is available to anyone who has contact with, or supports, the Veteran community

contemplating suicide and how to connect them with help and support.

Open Arms is one of a number of important services to be offered in RSLWA's Veteran Central one-stop shop facility within the new ANZAC House with the potential for such services to follow the growth of Veteran Hubs.

For more information you can go to www.openarms.gov.au

Please notify your WWII Veterans

All surviving WWII Veterans are eligible for a Commemorative Medallion and Certificate of Commemoration marking the upcoming 75th anniversary of the end of largest global conflict of the 20th century. It is produced by the Australian Government Department of Veterans' Affairs and more information is available here <https://bit.ly/2AwJ8NE>. Lest we forget!



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