



THE SUB-BRANCH SIGNAL

**DOING BUSINESS
WITH RSL
8:30 AM – 4:30 PM**

ANZAC HOUSE

28 St Georges Terrace, Perth
PO Box 3023
Perth Adelaide Terrace WA 6832
Website: www.rslwahq.org.au
Email: rslwahq@iinet.net.au
Tel: 9287 3799
Fax: 9287 3732

RECEPTION

Monday to Friday - general enquiries
Email: adminassist@rslwahq.org.au
Tel: 9287 3799

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

Monday to Friday - PA to State
President & State Secretary,
Listening Post
Email: rslwahq@iinet.net.au
Tel: 9287 3799

MEMBERSHIP

Monday to Thursday - membership
enquiries, Sub-Branch enquiries
Email: membership@rslwahq.org.au
Tel: 9287 3705

WELFARE

Monday to Thursday - welfare appli-
cations, emergency housing, food &
lodging grants, SS&A Relief Trust
Fund applications. Overseas pen-
sions
Email: welfare@rslwahq.org.au
Tel: 9287 3707

ADVOCACY

Monday to Friday - S31 reviews,
Veteran Review Board,
Admin Appeals Tribunal
Email: advocate@rslwahq.org.au
Tel: 9287 3708

FINANCE

Monday to Friday - all account en-
quiries, Sub-Branch credits
Sub-Branch Insurance, information,
claims, grant application assistance,
DVA, Lotterywest (ABN, tax)
Email: helenb@rslwahq.org.au
Tel: 9287 3703 or 9287 3718

PENSIONS

Monday to Friday - pension entitle-
ments, claims preparation
Email: pensions1@rslwahq.org.au
pensions2@rslwahq.org.au
Tel: 9287 3709
9287 3710, 9287 3711

ANZAC CLUB

Monday to Friday - facilities book-
ings, catering/hospitality
Email: anzacclub@rslwahq.org.au
Tel: 9287 3714

Congress 2009

With Congress 2009 completed it is time to review the overall organization of the activity. We have had the current traditional format for many years and it is time to investigate whether we are conducting Congress in the most appropriate way. In particular are we covering all the statutory requirements of an Annual General Meeting and are we communicating the League's activities to the membership in a clear and concise manner. With a marked shift in emphasis from Congress Motions it is obvious we must look at making the best use of time and in doing so ensure the membership has adequate time to debate issues that are of concern to them.

The quarterly cycling of Congress Motions to National Executive we expect to see few motions appear on the notice paper for our annual meeting therefore we can anticipate a significant void in the Congress program. For example, in 2001 we debated some 120 motions and this year we looked at eleven. This is a significant change in our dealing with issues. It is expected with the new format for dealing with issues a prompt consideration of matters will result with a more immediate outcome.

State Executive will be considering Congress 2010 format over the coming months and would welcome suggestions as to format and possible inclusion of features. By way of suggestion we could consider a Congress that commences on Friday evening with a Sunset Service at State War Memorial – with perhaps a 'Beat the Retreat Ceremonial – followed by a hospitality session at ANZAC House. Saturday could be the Formal Opening followed by the business session. The day would conclude with the Congress Dinner. There would not be a Sunday Congress. In the program we would look at only having essential speakers! It is also planned to conduct Congress in late October in future years.

CALLING ALL WWII VETERANS!

The Rottnest Island Authority would like to invite you to come and spend a day on the Island on Saturday 15 August 2009 to celebrate its rich military heritage both past and present. Come and take a tour of the guns and tunnels and meet current personnel from the 109 Signals Squadron of the 13th Battalion. Return ferry travel is provided, places limited.

To RSVP or for more information on the event and mobility access please contact Marcia on 9432 9350 or email events@rotnnestisland.com





Welfare Officer

On 17 July 2009 we said goodbye to retiring Welfare Officer, Margot Harness. Margot had been with RSL since 1990 firstly as our Senior Advocate then more recently as Welfare Officer. In that time she has served the veteran community with distinction and with great compassion and professionalism. We wish her well in her retirement and now take the opportunity to welcome Mrs Rosalind Howat to our team. Mrs Howat will be available for contact Monday to Friday at ANZAC House. Mrs Howat will also service applications to The Aged Fund for veterans in need or necessitous circumstances.

Sub Branches

It is with regret we advise that we are about to lose two Sub Branches due to lack of numbers. The Returned Sisters Sub Branch and the Brookton Sub Branch will return their Charters this month and the remaining members will be transferred to another Sub Branch of their choice. Both groups have served their members and the League well over the years and, in the case of Brookton, those remaining in the town will ensure appropriate ceremonial for ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day will take place.

In the near Eastern suburbs due process is taking place to amalgamate the Belmont and Rivervale/Carlisle Sub Branches into a new Sub Branch entitled 'The City of Belmont Sub Branch'. Again members are aware of declining numbers and of the difficulty of obtaining office bearers and in this case, amalgamation was seen as the best option for all concerned.

Veterans' Health Week 2009

As announced in last years Federal Budget, DVA is introducing Veterans' Health Week. It will be held between Monday 24 August and Sunday 30 August 2009. The aim of the week is to raise awareness of, and encourage participation in, activities that promote and maintain the health and wellbeing of the veteran community, their families and carers. This year's theme is *physical activity*.

The principle activities planned for WA are

- Choose Health Be Active – Kwinana Recquatic Centre – Tues 25 August
- Come & Try – Perth Town Hall – Thursday 27 August
- Join in Keep Active – Bunbury RSL – Friday 28 August

More information is available from Tracey Johnson 9366 8462 or Jumae Atkinson 9366 8355.

For Your Information

We are pleased to invite you to visit our new upgraded website. It has taken on an entirely new format and now contains a wealth of information that will be of great interest to veterans. We have also installed an information screen in the foyer at ANZAC House and in ANZAC Club Restaurant. These screens will provide information on RSL activities and services as well as acknowledge our sponsors.

Poppy Day

Planning is now well advanced for the 2009 Poppy Day Street Appeal. With this issue of *The Sub Branch Signal* Sub Branches will receive an Information Pack outlining the procedures and the conditions applicable to the conduct of the appeal. Please read the conditions carefully and realize that if you intend to participate compliance with time lines is obligatory. To have a successful day we need collectors and I have placed a notice in the Listening Post seeking assistance from members who do not normally attend meetings. They have been invited to register their availability with ANZAC House so we can direct them to a convenient collection point.

Remember – a successful appeal will assist veterans in need.

Don't let your mates down!

Remembrance Day 2009

The usual Remembrance Day Services will be held at State War Memorial on 11 November 2009 with observances in central city locations. It is also anticipated Services will be conducted throughout metropolitan and Country Western Australia with RSL Sub Branches hosting or organizing the Services.

Following the Service in Perth the traditional Remembrance Day Dinner will be held in ANZAC House. The dinner will commence at 12.30pm and will be limited to 120 tickets allocated on a first come – first served basis. The cost per person is \$40 and tickets may be purchased from ANZAC House.

Cataract Surgery

Recently the Government announced that from mid 2009 it intends to reduce the Medicare Rebate on cataract surgery. There was a thought that this may flow through to the reimbursement levels provided by the Department of Veterans' Affairs to service providers providing cataract surgery for entitled veterans.

The RSL has written to the Secretary of the Department of Veterans' Affairs expressing great concern if there is to be an impact, seeking clarification on this point, and arguing that veterans should not be disadvantaged in terms of their access to ophthalmological services by such a move.

As a consequence of this reduction RSL wrote to the Secretary of the Department of Veterans' Affairs seeking an assurance that there would be no reduction in access by veterans to surgery for those who are entitled to it under the Department's Repatriation Private Patient Scheme.

The Secretary has subsequently given an assurance that the Medicare Rebate Reduction does not result in an automatic reduction to fees paid by DVA for these procedures. The DVA fee schedule is independent of the Medicare Benefits Schedule. Further, any changes to the DVA fees for surgery would only be undertaken after close consultation with the Australian Medical Association.

Members are therefore assured that they should continue to expect the same level of service from ophthalmic surgeons in respect of any cataract surgery they may require.



Raffle

It's that time again. RSL will be conducting its **Annual Welfare Raffle** in the coming months. Raffle books will be posted to those who have indicated they are prepared to sell a book (s) and we ask that you make every endeavour to sell the book sent to you. For your convenience a reply paid envelope is provided for you to return the book and money – preferably NOT cash. Please support this raffle as with an unprecedented draw on our welfare reserves due to veterans falling on hard times and seeking RSL assistance we need every dollar we can get. The prizes are good and the cause is worthy – we seek your support. Look for your Raffle Book – it will be in the mail shortly.

Annual Financial Returns

Sub-Branches are reminded that their Annual Financial Returns are due at ANZAC House following their adoption at the Annual General Meeting. The final date for lodgment is 30 October 2009. We look forward to your cooperation by prompt submission of the return.

Army Museum

The Army Museum in Fremantle has received approval to occupy the entire site and is set to expand its displays using the latest museum and interpretive design techniques. This will bring the collection to life and engage visitors in ways that have not been possible in the past. The expansion will focus on post 1945 and look at the occupation of Japan to the current conflict in Afghanistan. It will address themes of Peacekeeping and the Army, Navy, and Air Force Reserves, as well as Cadets. This is an exciting project and fully supported by the RSL. Currently the museum committee is looking at fundraising strategies or Corporate Support to progress their plans. Any support given by Sub-Branches either in kind or frequently would be greatly appreciated.

Amelioration Accounts

With the requirement that net proceeds from the Annual Poppy Day be placed in a separate bank account clearly titled Amelioration Account, Treasurers are reminded of the need to be compliant and accountable for the correct treatment of monies deposited into the account. This requirement is obligatory as the funds are not Sub-Branch funds, but public monies set aside for veterans in need or under necessitous circumstances.

AIF Malayan Nursing Scholarship

Included with this issue of the *Sub-Branch Signal* is a letter from the Chairman of the AIF Malayan Nursing Scholarship. The letter details the purpose of the scholarship and the brochure invites donations to ensure its future availability to deserving recipients. Should you wish to donate, it would be a fitting gesture to perpetuate this 'Living Memorial'

ANNUAL INSURANCE COVERAGE 1 JULY 2009 TO 30 JUNE 2010

Please find enclosed an invoice for your annual insurance charge for the above period.

Insurance coverage for Sub Branches includes Public Liability, Volunteer Workers, Professional Indemnity and Directors and Officers insurance. It also includes Building and Contents insurance. Please note that if you failed to send your **Insurance Request** form back to Head Office by the due date you may not be covered for your contents insurance and I recommend that you check with the RSL WA Branch State Accountant, Mr Ken van Lit, to ensure that you are covered. Workers Compensation insurance will be invoiced to the Sub Branch within the next month.

For those Sub Branches requiring Workers Compensation insurance you should have now received from the State Accountant for completion an insurance declaration form from GIO Australia. If you have not received the above declaration and you require Workers Compensation insurance please contact Mr Ken van Lit on 9287 3718 to arrange insurance for you.

Certificates of currency will be issued once the attached invoice is paid.

Kevin Davidson, MVO OAM
Chief Executive Officer

Membership Notes

Thanks to all members who promptly responded to their Membership Renewal Reminder. Their renewals swelled our Service Membership to just over 100 members in excess of the same time in 2008.

As at 23 July we have:

Service Members	9016
Affiliates	1604
Total	10620

A end of year target is 12000.

It's up to you!





DVA Transport from Hospital.

Recently a country sub branch represented a situation where a veteran who was required to be transported to a hospital in an ambulance in the metropolitan area, was supposedly unable to arrange transport to return home following discharge.

This issue was discussed with DVA and if a veteran or war widow who is discharged from hospital and has no family or other means to return home then DVA will arrange for transport.

If this situation arises in the future you will need to discuss the issue of transport with your doctor or hospital so that this can be arranged. If you experience difficulties in this regard please contact the Welfare Officer in ANZAC House so that they can intervene on your behalf.

Operation Life Workshops

Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Services (VVCS) is now offering Operational *Life* workshops which are designed to provide awareness to people by giving them the skills and knowledge to prevent suicide and making them more aware of this important issue within the ex-service community. These workshops have been designed to replace the programme known as ProgramASIST. With this change, workshops are now being offered in three different models.

1. half day introduction called safeTALK.
2. 2 days skills based workshop called ASIST
3. half day refresher workshop called ASIST Tune Up.

All workshops are free and open to people who are concerned about family, mates or others in the veteran community. In the first phases ESOs, Welfare and Pension Officers, Advocates and others are encouraged to attend so that they can promote these workshops in the veteran community.

Please take the time to register now and contact the local VVCS office on 1800 011 046 during normal business hours.

Notice of Special Congress

Sub Branches are also reminded that we will be required to hold a further meeting of Congress to approve the Annual Financial Statement. We expect to be able to distribute this document in early October with the meeting taking place in the last week of October. When we have confirmation of the completion date of our Audit from Grant Thornton Auditors we will be in a better position to confirm the date.

Podiatry Services

It appears some veterans may have been experiencing some difficulties in obtaining special footwear when prescribed by a podiatrist. This may have come about due to the approving authority within DVA now being located in another state with the changes to the organizational structure of DVA.

So as to minimise this problem in the future please ensure that your podiatrist provides as much clinical information as possible prior to submitting to DVA for approval.

New Vice President Elected

State Executive has appointed Mr Richard Carter as State Vice President to fill the vacancy occasioned by the resignation of Graeme Sherriff last December.

Richard has had a long association with the RSL in WA. He was State Treasurer in the late 1990's and into 2000. He assisted in the formation of RACA and the transition of War Veterans Homes into the new entity.

As a qualified accountant he will bring financial expertise to the Branch as it consolidates its financial position in the League. He may better be known as the voice over at Perth ANZAC Day Dawn Services where his military knowledge and presentation skills add to the conduct of the ceremony.

Richard will fill the unexpired portion of the current term of State Executive which will end in October 2011. He is also quite keen to spend time in Sub Branches to assist them in any problems they may have – particularly relating to financial management.

We welcome our new Welfare Officer

Mrs Rosalind Howat

who has an important message for you from

The WA AGED Sailors', Soldiers' and Airmen's Relief Fund Trust

who can HELP veterans/ADF personnel on low incomes, or those unable to pay essential bills.

Ring 9287 3707 (ANZAC House Welfare) for an Application form to be posted out.