



TOUKLEY RSL SUB BRANCH

Newsletter

Issue 56– March 2020

From the President:



The new president is currently settling into his role and needs some time before he can provide some information for the newsletter.

NEW SUB BRANCH MEMBERS

Welcome to the following new Sub Branch Members:

Michael Eele
Ian Simpson

VALE

Donald Tice

Lest We Forget



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



**Sub Branch General Meetings are held on the first Monday of each month,
At 10.00am, upstairs in Club Toukley RSL, with the exception of January.
All Members are invited to attend.**

Saturday 25 April 2020 – 5.20am

Anzac Day

Wednesday 11 November 2020 –
10.40am

Remembrance Day

Keeping your Sub Branch Details Up to Date

If you have recently moved, or your details have changed, please let the Sub Branch Office know so that we can update your address and contact details.

This information is required so that we can send any correspondence and membership renewals to the correct address.

Also, if you know of a member who has moved, either to another area or to an Aged Care Facility, please notify the Sub Branch Office.

Advertising:

Do you need a new or serviced computer?

Try the “Computer Guy” at Factory 3, 8 O’Hare Close, Charmhaven

Phone 4392 5697

Martin is the owner/manager and provides excellent service, and advice, as well as giving Toukley RSL Sub-branch members a discount on purchases.

If you are a tech head Martin has everything that you could want.

Give him a try for your next computer and equipment.

Regional Seniors Travel Card

The regional seniors travel card provides eligible seniors living in regional, rural and remote areas of NSW with a \$250 prepaid card to help ease the cost of travel. You can use the card at certain retailers to pay for pre-booked NSW Trainlink Regional trains and coaches, fuel and taxis.

Eligibility criteria is available at www.service.nsw.gov.au/regionalseiorstravel

Or you can go into the ServiceNSW office near Toukley Public and ask for help.

Welfare at Toukley RSL Sub-branch

The Welfare team at Toukley consists of Graham Tredinnick and Bob Williamson.

Graham is qualified under the requirements of the Department of Veterans Affairs training system called the “Advocacy Training and Development Program” at Level 2, while Bob completed the original training package but has chosen to not continue with further training.

The prime roll of the Welfare Advocate is to provide information, and support, as required by the veteran and their family, with much of that information coming from the knowledge of the Welfare Advocate, and from DVA, via computer searches.

The secondary role of the team is communication primarily through regular visits to the veterans in their homes, hostels, nursing homes, and in Wyong and Tuggerah Lakes Hospitals, and of course by phone.

Please note that a Welfare Advocate is NOT a Pension Advocate as they are 2 separate streams.

In the 2019 year the team covered some 2500 kilometers, spent 350 hours in direct contact with the veterans at an average of 1 hour per visit. Graham spends around 50 hours per year in training and meetings.

In addition, Digger’s Inn is staffed by the team on Tuesdays from 9.00 to 10.30 am, and by the Central Coast Veterans Centre/Doyalson team on Thursdays and Fridays from 9.00 am to 12.00 noon.

There is a strong need for members to take up the opportunity of visiting veterans. No exams are required and the only training will be by Graham.

An ability to listen to the veteran, and family members, and to engage in general discussion is all that is required. Any welfare matters are to be referred to Graham.

The task is not hard, but the reward for listening to the veteran is extremely high. Please volunteer.

The Welfare Team.

Sister Vivian Bullwinkel's Story

On 12 February 1942, with the fall of Singapore to the Japanese imminent, sixty-five Australian Army nurses, including Sister Vivian Bullwinkel, were evacuated from the besieged city on the small coastal steamer *Vyner Brooke*. In addition to the Australian nurses, the ship was crammed with over two hundred civilian evacuees and English military personnel. As the *Vyner Brooke* was passing between Sumatra and Borneo, Japanese aircraft bombed and strafed the overloaded ship and it sank quickly. The survivors in lifeboats were strafed by Japanese aircraft but some reached Bangka Island off the coast of Sumatra. Twelve Australian nurses were either killed in the attack on the ship or drowned in the sea. The remaining fifty-three nurses reached Bangka Island in lifeboats, on rafts, or by drifting with the tide.

Wearing their Red Cross armbands, and having protected status as non-combatants by convention of civilised nations, the nurses expected to be treated in a civilised manner by the Japanese when they reached shore. Their expectations were short lived. The lucky survivors were rounded up at gunpoint by the Japanese and herded into a building that was filthy and overcrowded. All of the survivors were tired, thirsty and hungry. Some were suffering from exposure to the sun after many hours immersed in the sea, and some had been wounded in the attacks on the ships and the lifeboats. The Japanese were unsympathetic to their plight and only offered a bucket of water and a bucket of rice.

The unlucky survivors, including 22 Australian nurses, landed in lifeboats on the northern coast of Bangka Island and lit a bonfire to guide other survivors to them. Sister Vivian Bullwinkel was in this group of nurses. When the number of survivors at the bonfire reached about one hundred, it was decided that they should surrender to the Japanese. A party of male survivors went off to find Japanese. They were accompanied by civilian women and their children. The twenty-two Australian nurses stayed to look after the injured, and they made and erected a red cross to indicate to the Japanese that they were non-combatants.

A patrol of about fifteen Japanese soldiers arrived from the coastal township of Muntok. While some guarded the Australian nurses, the rest herded the male survivors, about 50 in number, down the beach and around a headland. The nurses heard gunfire from this direction, and shortly afterwards, the Japanese soldiers returned alone. Some were wiping blood from their bayonets.

The twenty-two Australian nurses were then ordered by the Japanese to form a line and walk into the sea. The women knew what was going to happen to them, but none panicked or pleaded for mercy. When the water had reached the nurses' waists, the Japanese opened fire on them. Sister Bullwinkel was hit in the back by a bullet and knocked off her feet. Upon discovering that she was the only one wounded, she pretended to be dead. After some time had passed, she risked a look at the beach and saw that the Japanese soldiers had gone. She looked around for the other twenty-one nurses and saw none. She was the only nurse that had survived the massacre.

When she reached the beach, she was joined by an English soldier who had survived the massacre behind the headland. Private Kingsley had been bayoneted by the Japanese and left for dead. They were given food by the local village women, but after two weeks, they realised their position was hopeless and they decided to walk to Muntok and give themselves up. Shortly afterwards, Private Kingsley died from the bayonet wound.

Realising that the lives of all survivors of the *Vyner Brooke* would be at risk if the Japanese discovered what she had seen, Sister Bullwinkel concealed her wound from the Japanese and treated it herself. She survived harsh imprisonment to give evidence of the massacre at a war crimes trial in Tokyo in 1947.

2020 Membership Due now

Sub-branch memberships for 2020 are now due.

RSL NSW have now advised that the 2020 membership cards will be provided in May 2020.

**Ian Collier
Membership Officer.**

Editors Note

Keen readers will notice that this newsletter has a very different look to previous issues. The main reason for this is that the main person responsible for the newsletter is no longer involved in an official capacity with the sub-branch. Any input would be appreciated for future issues.

Recipe Corner

Best Curried Sausages

Enjoy the Best Curried Sausages for seriously good comfort food, Aussie style. Grilled sausages, onion slivers and green peas smothered in a thick curry gravy. It's a satisfying and nourishing dinner your whole family will love.

Ingredients

- 6 beef sausages
- 1 onion thinly sliced
- 1 ½ cups beef stock
- ½ - 1 cup green peas
- 1 tbsp curry powder Keens or Clive of India brand for the best flavour
- 1 tbsp corn flour
- 2 tbsp water
- vegetable oil
- Salt & pepper to taste

Optional

- 1 tbsp ketchup or 1 tsp gravy powder

Instructions

1. Heat the oil in a large frypan over medium-high heat. Add the sausages and fry until just cooked. Turn them often to cook evenly and avoid burning. Remove from the heat and allow to cool slightly, then slice into 4-5 cm pieces.
2. In the same frypan add the onion and cook until translucent. Add the curry powder, beef stock and sausages to the pan, bring to the boil then reduce to a simmer.
3. Add the peas and stir through.
4. Mix the cornflour with 2 tbsp water in a small dish. Pour into the pan with the curried sausages and gently mix through. Continue cooking for another 5 minutes until the sauce has thickened nicely.
5. Optional step: Add ketchup or gravy powder and mix through for richer flavour.
6. Season with salt and pepper.
7. Serve immediately over mashed potato or cooked rice.

TOUKLEY RSL SUB BRANCH

Patron:	Karen McNamara
President:	Allan Love
Vice Presidents:	Rod Clark Vacant
Secretary:	John Fraher
Treasurer:	Terry Murray
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