

COMPASS

Quarterly Newsletter - RSL NSW CUMBERLAND - Winter 2023
Approved Australia Post - Print Post No. PP 100029483

CANBERRA SALUTE CORAL SEA - Commemoration

CUMBERLAND
ANZAC WEEK

PRESIDENT
JAMES BATKIN
NEW DIRECTIONS

USS CANBERRA
SYDNEY BOUND



RSL NSW
Cumberland

RSL LifeCare Veteran Services

Our free services:



Veteran Wellbeing
Centres



DVA Claims
and Advocacy



Wellbeing Support
and Financial
Assistance



Homelessness
and Housing
Support



Employment
Assistance



Spur Equine
Program

Call 02 8088 0388 or
Visit rsllifecare.org.au/veteran-services



Honouring
your service

Brought to you by

RSL
LifeCare
VETERAN SERVICES

Supported by





CUMBERLAND

RSL NSW CUMBERLAND

Email
**secretary@
cumberlandrslsb.com.au**

Secretary
0432 - 475 744

Australia Post
**PO BOX 434
Auburn. NSW. 1835**

Auburn Office
**1-5 Harrow Road
Appointment Only**

Auxiliary
**Ann Batkin
0407 - 009 724**

All communication and correspondence for RSL NSW Cumberland is to be addressed to the Secretary, and sent by email or Australia Post.

Correspondence in any other format (social media) will not be recognised or answered.

COMPASS is published quarterly by the Committee of RSL NSW Cumberland for members and friends of the sub-Branch.

COMPASS is not for sale.

COMPASS is published as a printed publication, Electronic PDF, website based, with circulation worldwide.

Editor - Mark Lee, Secretary

Copyright - RSL NSW Cumberland

The opinions and content published in COMPASS are those of the authors/contributors. RSL NSW Cumberland does not necessarily endorse the opinions expressed.

*USA Memorial Canberra,
the warmth of the morning sun
was very welcome at this years
Coral Sea Commemoration.*

*Photograph
MARK LEE*



CUMBERLAND COMMITTEE

President
Vice President
Treasurer
Secretary

**James Batkin
Ron Inglis
Mehmet Evin
Mark Lee**

Committee
Committee
Committee
Committee

**Ross Baker
Paul Hughes
Chris Hurley OAM
Alice O'Connor**

Trustee
Trustee
Trustee

**Allan Chapple
Paul Hughes
Avanua Kupu**

DISTRICT COUNCIL

Delegate
Alternative

**Paul Hughes
Allan Chapple**

AUXILIARY
Co ordinator
Assistant

**Ann Batkin
Alice Walsh**

GRANVILLE CPTR
Co ordinator

Alice O'Connor

TURKISH CPTR
Co ordinator
Assistant

**Mehmet Evin
Cemil Kilicoglu**



CUMBERLAND PRESIDENT'S HAND OVER DINNER

DINNER & SHOW EVENT
“Company B”

CASTLEREAGH
BOUTIQUE HOTEL
Pitt Street, Sydney

Saturday 22 July



CASTLEREAGH BOUTIQUE HOTEL

DINNER & EVENT - Saturday 22 July - 6pm to 10.30pm

DRESS - Formal - Black tie - Miniature medals or ribbons

\$50 per person

**RSVP is by BOOKINGS and PAYMENT
to Secretary by Friday 30 June 2023**

M. 0432 - 475 744. E. secretary@cumberlandrslsb.com.au

Deposit to Cumberland Westpac account, add you surname to ref box

BSB - 032 070 Acct - 649 434

CUMBERLAND TRANSPORT TO CITY

Departure Auburn tennis Club 5 pm with return much later

CUMBERLAND

New Directions - You Bet!

CUMBERLAND AGM 2023...

Motion: "That RSL NSW Cumberland sub-Branch develop a 3-5 year Strategic Plan which incorporates thoughts and planning on how to use the funds currently accrued to benefit veterans and their families whilst retaining the original intent of the funds under management, including investigating the purchase of accommodation in a desirable coastal area for the use of veterans and their families and, the option for Incorporation, these and other initiatives should be considered to sustain, secure and grow the Cumberland sub-Branch into a thriving and respected pillar of the community in Western Sydney"

MOTION: Moved by Paul Hughes - as presented to meeting by Ron Inglis

Seconded: Chris Hurley OAM

Motion Put - Carried unanimously

“ **I believe** that the above Paul Hughes motion ‘put and carried’ at the recent 2023 Annual General meeting of our membership, has certainly left me as the President, a clear mandate on the direction that the membership demands and that my committee should deliver to take this sub-Branch into the next chapter of our RSL history.

There are some very strong and clear guidelines for a new direction. Our stalwart member Ron McLennon supported the motion and demanded that we make a ‘Strategic Plan’, and then share the views and status of the plan with the membership as soon as possible. I like it all, is my first impression.

I said in my acceptance speech that “Greg Read left me some big shoes to fill” and this is just the sort of ingredient this new committee needs to establish themselves as a ‘working’ committee. Greg Read, we wish you well in your future endeavours and thank you from us all, you did us very proud.


Secretary Mark Lee also gave us a good ‘heads up’ when he forecast ‘Change is Coming’ at our January planning day. The recent retirement announcement of RSL NSW Chief Executive Officer Jon Black, along with RSL NSW State

President Ray James, and probably many members of the present State Council at the close of this year’s congress means there will be many new faces at the helm of RSL NSW.

This new State Council line up in 2024 will probably come with another refined Strategic Plan with new players in command. This is sure to deliver big change across the face of our present day RSL as we know it.

On a more positive note, thanks to all members who contributed to a great Canberra tour, and a wonderful evening at the recent AGM. Looking ahead, the day trip to Roaring Thunder in June and the big night out at the July handover dinner certainly has a good winter calendar to warm us in the social circles.

I look forward to the challenges that change will bring to us all, new directions at Cumberland, you bet!



JAMES BATKIN
President
RSL NSW
CUMBERLAND





CUMBERLAND ANZAC WEEK



RSL NSW Cumberland Vice President, Ron Inglis, delivered the Anzac address at the Anzac Assembly at Strathfield Girls High School. The assembly was most capably led by senior students and included Anzac songs and a drama performance by the students of Creative Arts. Several students at Strathfield Girls High School are also members of the Air Force Cadets. They attended school in their Cadet uniforms and participated in the school's Anzac assembly.

LAST SUB-BRANCH CHIEF DESTINED FOR SERVICE LIFE

Shackleton's Captain Frank Hurley's Grandson



It's been 55 years since Silverwater's Chris Hurley was stationed in Vietnam in the 4th Battalion of the Royal Australian Regiment but the impression that experience made on the then 21 year old has lasted a lifetime.

There is nothing more he looks forward to than his duties at RSL NSW Cumberland and taking part in local ANZAC Day Services.

Destined for the services, Chris is the grandson of Captain Frank Hurley, on the Ship Endurance, that transported Sir Ernest Shackleton to Antarctica on the 1914 -1917 Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition.

"I was 14 when my grandfather died but he was a true inspiration and I always felt I had a lot to live up to" Chris said.

When discharged from the Army, Chris began a career in the trucking business, and was a contractor for Parramatta City Council for many years before retiring.

Life for the 76 year old is still very busy; he was the last President of Auburn RSL sub-Branch before it became RSL NSW Cumberland sub-Branch in 2016.

Chris says that although many Veterans are passing on, with only a few World War II diggers remaining, commemorating ANZAC Day in 2023 is as important as ever.

"We visit many local Cumberland district schools so we can teach them about our history and hold ANZAC Day school services, and you'd be amazed how surprised and interested today's young people are" he said.

"That's what drives us at the RSL, is to keep the legacy alive, and remember those that paid the ultimate sacrifice with their lives to keep our country safe. It's always an honour and we will never stop.

The Vietnam War (1962- 1975) was the longest 20th century conflict in which Australians participated.

It involved about 60,000 Australian personnel, 500 of whom lost their lives, while some 3,000 were wounded, otherwise injured or were victims of illness.

Auburn Review - Anzac week supplement



1



2



3



4



5

1. Local Auburn Police Sergeant Jim Dickson with his long time friend Allan Whichelo 2. Sue Roper, Loraine Lord and Sally Pavitt. 3. The Auburn hospital service was well represented with three senior committee members, Ross Baker, Chris Hurley and Greg Read 4. The Army cadets and Navy were in strong numbers at the Strathfield service 5. Cumberland members at the Strathfield service

OUR LOCAL CUMBERLAND ANZACS



Members of the Cumberland Auxiliary making their volunteer contribution to the 2023 Anzac Appeal at Dooleys Catholic Club, Lidcombe.

LIDCOMBE Friday 21 April 2023

Cumberland Auxiliary members took the 'front line' position for this year's Anzac Appeal as they were well positioned at the front and rear entrance to Dooleys Catholic Club, Lidcombe, to encounter the lunchtime club members.

Auxiliary coordinator, Ann Batkin, had her members positioned early for the four day promotion during the Anzac Day long weekend program.

"We were well received by Dooleys club members and the donations took on a steady flow.

"They were well looked after by Dooleys club management and the members certainly enjoyed their contribution to the Appeal" said Ann Batkin.

The Auxiliary members had been planning this event for some months. They now look forward to their return to Dooleys to complete their Anzac Appeal activities in November; when they exchange the lapel badge for the red poppy and will again be on the front line at Dooleys.

Cumberland committee members Greg Read and Chris Hurley at the local railways station selling Anzac badges.



RSL NSW CUMBERLAND

ANZAC DAY ADDRESS

COMMANDER AMY BULTERS, RAN

“ **Anzac Day** commemorates the landing of Australian and New Zealand troops on the Gallipoli peninsula on 25 April 1915.

Time dims the memory of ordinary events, but not great events. In a nation's history, great events – whether in peace or war – live in our memories regardless of time. They are deemed great not necessarily for what they achieved, nor for whether they were victories or successes. Rather, great events are distinguished by the quality of the human endeavour they called upon, by the examples they create for ordinary men and women, and by the legends they inspire. So it is with ANZAC day.

We gather as always, not to glorify war, but to remind ourselves that we value who we are and the freedoms we possess; and to acknowledge the courage and sacrifice of those who contributed to shaping the identity of our nation, and those that continue to serve.

I am with you to remember those from Strathfield and the surrounding area, of all generations, who have served our nation and paid the ultimate sacrifice; never again to return home to the land they loved; never again to see their family and friends.

Sadly, our World War II service members are now very few in number. Known as the Greatest Generation- they helped our allies to defeat hate, cruelty and greed in Europe and across the Indo-Pacific.

These veterans, both women and men, who returned tempered by war, took on the task of rebuilding Australia. We are all in their debt and we pay our respects to those of that generation of citizens still with us today.

I know that I am speaking to some of you who can recall from personal experience the trauma of war, which affected your families. Each in a unique way.

The experience of wars in Korea and Vietnam remains vivid in the hearts and minds of many Australians. Those of us in uniform today have inherited the legacy of those who served in these wars, they epitomised the spirit and values displayed in every battle in which Australians have proven themselves.

There are also younger ADF veterans who equally deserve our respect and our gratitude. The sailors, soldiers and aviators who have served our nation in Timor, Iraq and Afghanistan; in the waters and the skies around our coast and around our region.

Marked by their experiences near and far from our shores, many have lost friends and there is still much pain from these losses. These veterans stand alongside us every day, making their contribution to this city; serving their country and community just as the earlier generations of veterans have done.

We remember and honour those who have supported them, loved them and whose loss is enduring. Families, friends and communities share in the service and sacrifice.

The men and women of today's Australian Defence Force strive daily to emulate the qualities of self-

sacrifice, courage and a fair go for others demonstrated by those who have come before us in the Australian Uniform. Their example offers both inspiration and the required standard of us.

ANZAC day was first commemorated during the First World War to ensure that the sacrifices made by Australians and New Zealanders on the shores of Gallipoli on the 25 April 1915 would not be forgotten. Today all Australians pause to reflect on the contribution made by all of our past and present service personnel who have chosen a life of service to their country.

There are tens of thousands of Australian headstones in immaculately kept war cemeteries across the world. Underneath their names, there are usually a few simple words from their families as a reminder that they will never be forgotten.

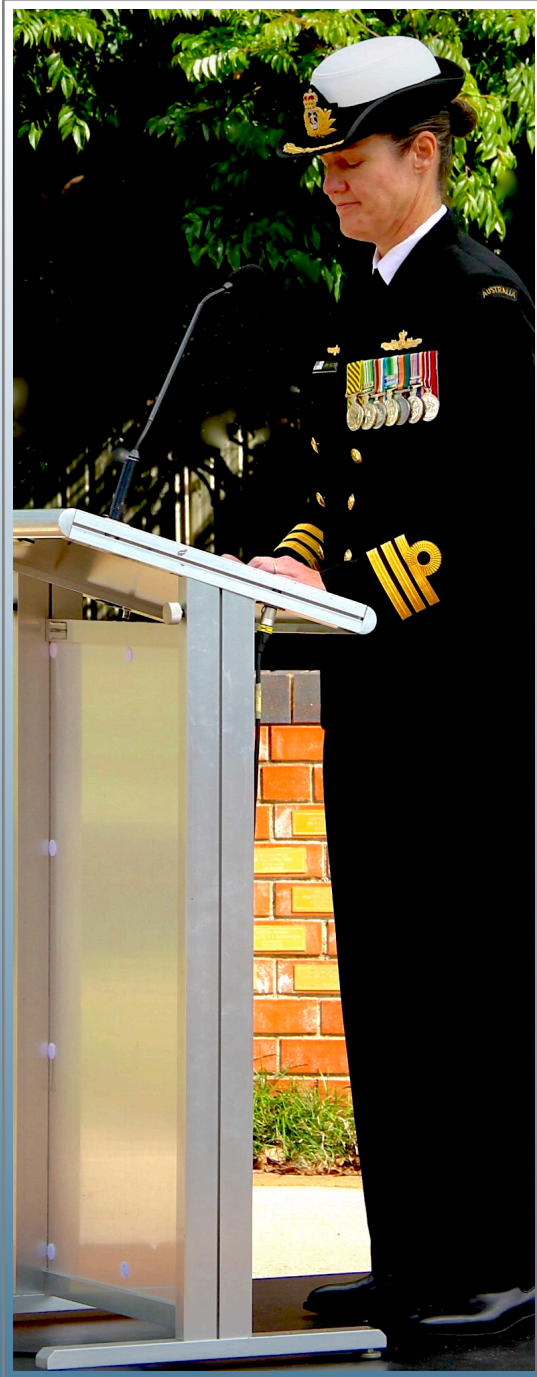
Nearly 1,900 Officers and Sailors of the Royal Australian Navy made the ultimate sacrifice. For the majority of them, their grave has no headstone, and there was no burial service. Their ships sank quickly and became their eternal resting place.

Today when our ships pass their location, we stop, say a prayer, and cast wreaths in the sea above where our ships are resting and rusting on the sea floor. We consider these sailors 'forever on patrol', and recite the words:

**They have no Grave but the cruel sea
No flowers lay at their head
A rusting hulk is their tombstone
Afast on the ocean bed.**

LEST WE FORGET





Commander Amy Bulters, RAN

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED

Greg Read and fellow RSL representatives

I wanted to reach out and express my sincere gratitude for the commemorative address you gave recently. Your words were both moving and inspiring, and they truly captured the spirit of remembrance and respect that we hold dear.

Your dedication to honouring those who have served our country is truly admirable, and I am grateful for the work that you do to ensure that their sacrifices are never forgotten. Your message was a reminder of the importance of commemorating our nation's heroes, and it left a lasting impact on us all.

Once again, thank you for your thoughtful words and for your unwavering commitment to the Australian Defence Force community. Your service and sacrifice are truly appreciated, and I am honoured to have had the opportunity to hear from you.

With gratitude and respect,

AMANDA GREEN

General Manager, Auburn Hospital
Western Sydney Local Health District

Greg Read, and the team at Cumberland office team

Thank you once again for a great couple of days away in Canberra to attend the service for the Battle of the Coral Sea and the Australian War Memorial Last Post service.

It was great to be able to chat to some of the serving members. I even had my photo taken with the ambassador for Japan, a real thrill for me.

I'm looking forward to the other exciting events in 2023, thank you.

Cheers

IRENE CHAMULKO

Member
RSL NSW
Cumberland

Greg Read, Paul Hughes and Ron Inglis

Thank you again for the opportunity to present the main address at this year's Strathfield Anzac Day service.

It was privilege to attend and meet some of our older servicemen and community alike.

Kind regards

COMMANDER AMY BULTERS, RAN

Commanding Officer
HMAS Penguin - Fleet Command

James Batkin, Mark Lee and HQ team

Congratulations on a lovely evening at the recent Cumberland AGM. As Greg would say "BZ", job well done.

Kind regards

LIZ WHEATLEY

Perpetual Investments



DAVID NOREEN

“My Wheels Are Rolling”



RSL NSW Cumberland President James Batkin, with RSL life-member David Noreen at the Canberra Nursing Home, Lidcombe. For many years David was Welfare Officer for the former Auburn RSL NSW sub-Branch.

David Noreen did not make it to London for the coronation of King Charles this year but he was there for the coronation of Queen Elizabeth in 1954.

David was on board HMAS Sydney and saw action in the Korean War. Then in 1954 HMAS Sydney went on a round-the-world goodwill voyage that included being part of the Australian military presence in London for the Queen's coronation.

Not only was David in London but he found a seat in Westminster Abbey and observed the entire coronation event. “Uniforms have opened doors all my life” said David.

CANBERRA SALUTE

CORAL SEA - Commemoration

IN GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE
OF THE VITAL HELP GIVEN BY THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA DURING
THE WAR IN THE PACIFIC 1941-45
UNVEILED BY
HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II
FEBRUARY 15th 1958

RSL NSW Cumberland members made a recent return sojourn to the national capital, Canberra, to participate in this year's Coral Sea commemoration.

The highlight of the three day weekend was to participate at the annual Australian American Association commemorative dinner at the Canberra Commonwealth Club, combined with the 'Last Post' sunset ceremony at the Australian War Memorial.

Cumberland Vice President, RON INGLIS, kept the pencil sharp and the note book pages turning as Secretary, MARK LEE, displayed his creativity of an iPhone camera at work.



Cumberland Vice President, James Batkin, delivers the 'Naval Ode of Remembrance' at the Coral Sea Commemoration, USA Memorial, Russell Offices, Canberra.

“On The Road Again... CANBERRA

Storyline
MARK LEE

In the years prior to COVID, RSL NSW Cumberland journeyed to Canberra for their annual participation in the Australian American Association commemoration of the Battle of the Coral Sea.

Grounded for the past two 'Covid' years, the committee placed this tour at the top of the agenda for our annual country tour.

The resumption of this event delivered a rich experience of Australia's military heritage and this tour promised everything of past tours and more

3 May - 9.30 am Thursday

AUBURN - A chilling wet Thursday morning, sheets of rain blanket the southern suburbs of Sydney. Large grey clouds are hovering ready to make the day even worse. Auburn Tennis club was the pick up point for our Cumberland RSL members to commence their journey south into the NSW Southern highlands, and then on to the blue skies of Canberra.

A large silver coach rolled into the tennis club curb side 30 minutes early. That was a good omen for the journey. The eldest member of the group, 98 year old Allan Whichelo, is first in line ready to take the front seat, assisted by his new best friend Hee Na.

'Sonny' the smiling bus driver, was there to assist. Tour organiser, Ann Batkin, requested that the Hopkins Coach company send their best man. Sonny was the perfect fit for our group.

In no time members arrived all on time, luggage loaded, two large floral wreaths arrived, Secretary did a roll call. We were ready to roll into the end of peak hour traffic on the Hume Highway. There was an air of excitement within the group. We were on the road again!

Our first schedule stop is for 11am at an old winery just outside Bowral for a brief tasting and lunch.

Sonny knew how to drive this coach. He has been on the weekly NSW country run for the past 20 years for Hopkins. The ride was smooth down the highway as the blue skies started to open up on the horizon as we headed South. The rain clouds were drifting towards the coast, good weather was ahead.

11 am

BOWRAL - This is the country side of lush green grass surrounded by the imported colours of European autumn leaves on every tree. Most properties display a proud name board with an artistic logo on their front gate representing the produce and lifestyle beyond the driveway.

Our winery tour, was a welcome start to the tour. A tasting session led to a light luncheon in a room filled with warm and comfort. The huge three metre fireplace, stocked with what looked like a tree trunk instead of a normal log, took the room temperature way above what was outside. In a room like this you can visually 'see' the cold air as well as feel it!





*The daily Last Post ceremony at AMW.
Our Cumberland 'wreath honoured Auburn Anzacs.*

After lunch, the temperature was plummeting down the thermometer scale as the sun went past the yardarm, eight degrees was tops at midday in Bowral! This is our winter tour south!

2.30 pm

Back on the coach with the creature comfort of air conditioning, a two hour journey to make the 'Last Post' ceremony at the Australian War Memorial (AWM) our next scheduled stop.

There was a droning roar of road noise from the coach and then there was snoring! Several passengers had certainly reached their 'comfort zone' earlier than expected as the late afternoon sunshine gave some added warmth inside the coach.

4.30 pm

CANBERRA - Nestled at the base of Mount Ainslie sits the great monument of the Australian War Memorial. However today the building was very different. Cranes, signs, trucks, wire fences, barricades and not a visiting tourist to be seen at 4.45pm on a very cold chilling Thursday evening.

The Memorial was undergoing massive renovation, the display and entry areas were limited. Sonny was searching the boundaries for directions. The coach was directed to a new 'outer orbit' carpark. We were a long way from the new front door, which was once the old back door, our first big challenge was about to hit.

Moving 20 visiting veterans down a 'zig zag' pathway 600 meters, several on walking sticks, and one 98 year old on a walking frame with 'shopping trolley' wheels.

We did it. All inside the front door and accounted for with no casualties coming down the steep hill. With five minutes to spare, a bathroom stop and entry via the normal public service building security bag and body search! Secretary Mark Lee had to explain to security that our 'artificial wreath' was not transporting any unwanted forbidden insects into the Australian Capital Territory, really!

Shuffling through the cold darkened memorial corridors, the group reached the outer levels and were positioned above the central court around the Pool of Remembrance.

Members looked down on RSL Cumberland Vice President James Batkin and Secretary Mark Lee

who were both about to participate in the evening ceremony with a large group of visiting dignitaries.

The Canberra blue skies were now bathed with filtered golden sunset rays. Postcard picturesque is the AWM dome. Suddenly several. They perch high on the loft areas of the outer memorial to watch the final act of the day, part of their daily routine.

A dedication with a large storyboard on the anniversary of some former ADF person is presented to an audience looking on. The visiting dignitaries participate in laying a wreath on this occasion. It's just so strong and fitting of this unique Australian icon the AWM. James and Mark present the Cumberland wreath and give a salute as their sign of respect.

The AWM has also always been a focal point of our Cumberland excursions. It is noted as one of the finest war memorials in the world. Numerous dedicated memorials and trophy military hardware items are found around the grounds surrounding the AWM and extending down along Anzac Parade.

Military history is so different when you inside such a building like AWM. The stone walls are littered with one major theme 'death'. This building really presents what Charles Bean set out to do, images and memories of the battle fields and all that led to and from these confrontations. It truly is a magnificent work of art in itself.

On previous Canberra excursions by the group we have also visited the AWM annex in North Canberra. They have huge pieces of military hardware, including a V2 rocket, kept in a climate-controlled building. We will endeavour to arrange these visits in future years. It's the rich history that we bring to so many in our group that have little knowledge of the days of a former family members military service.

The team at AWM do this 'Last Post' event every night at their 5pm close. They get it so right, every time. Bugle, bagpipes, military personnel and always a senior staff member has the duty of seeing the last person out of the building and locking the door. It's a wonderful tradition they have set themselves, very military, well done, AWM staff.

5.30 pm

Sonny the coach driver has jumped the roadside barriers, moved a few coloured cones and navigated the big silver coach to the new front door. Engine churning and heaters on full blast the group



Shaky start to the day with coach electrical concerns



*Cumberland Vice President James Batkin
lays the wreath on the USA Memorial, Canberra.*

clamber on board ready for the next stop, an evening meal is on everyone's agenda.

Off into the darkness of the night sky, across the back streets of Duntroon and Fyshwick joining the late peak hour traffic. We navigate towards the neon lights and international flags of the local German Club in Narrabundah.

Sonny puts on another 'showmanship of driving'. He slides the monster coach around and over several small tight roundabouts and lands his hungry travellers within metres of the front door, Huge improvement on the last stop. All happy and big clap of appreciation for Sonny from the tour group, he is becoming our hero of the tour!

Members are greeted and seated in our reserved section with our plated German meals of absolute 'feast' size in front of us in no time. James and Mark are on bar duty, it seems 'ginger beer all round' was the ale of the day!

Our members were contented with dinner and the ambiance of the German Club. The locals had found a special favourite warm watering hole for a Thursday evening. Canberra City was the next destination for accommodation, those soft motel pillows were near!

7.30 pm

The coach again swings into action. Sonny has it dancing like a high wire performer with all the tricks on display in tight driveways. The Novotel motel, our accommodation in the centre of Canberra for two nights.

James Batkin and Mark Lee displayed 'lots of emotional relief' as the motel night porter delivered the final key envelope to the last couple in the group. They had correctly allocated room numbers and bedroom partnerships. This was a vital element of running a successful tour to a very tired group after a very full active day.

"Sleep in, late buffet breakfast, full RSL uniform, hat and gloves ladies, coach departs 10.15am" are the good night instructions from Mark. Yawns and happy faces all round.

4 May - 9.30 am Friday

CANBERRA NOVOTEL HOTEL - The morning breakfast bar is buzzing with many bright-eyed and bushy-tailed Cumberland members after a good nights rest. Some had even walked the concrete

paths of Canberra to taste the fresh air at two degrees! Coco pops, crumpets, crepes, and eggs to order are the favourites going around most breakfast tables.

Mark, James and Ann Batkin are catching up with a well-dressed local businessman who they seem to know. There are laughs and chuckles a plenty in the group. They are all in deep discussions with paperwork and phones working overdrive. They all consumed the allocated two cups of coffee per hour!

Our first real taste of America arrived at the breakfast lounge as a few USA basketball players used their 'loud voice' to share their tales of a recent tour in Texas.

The morning sun arrives at 9.30 am after a thick 'pea soup' fog rolled through the main street and off to the horizon of Lake Burley Griffin. As quick as it arrived, it was gone like a gust of wind in a wild west movie from Arizona.

The Cumberland members assembled in the foyer. Jackets, ties, shiny clean shoes, medals, caps, scarves and most with gloves at the ready. The coach is ready and Sonny the happy driver is still smiling as he greets everybody at the door step. He assists Alan Whichelo and his helper, Hee Na, into his now favourite front window seat.

10.25 am

Members are seated in the coach ready to roll across to the USA Memorial at Sir Thomas Blamey Square, Russell Offices, one suburb from Canberra central. A new visitor is welcomed on board for the occasion. President of the Tingira Australia Association Dr Brad Murphy from Bundaberg has joined the tour. The Tingira association also annually participates in the Coral Sea commemoration.

Engine revved up Sonny finds reverse, the old 'beep beep beep beep' buzzer breaks the silent cold air. Suddenly the bus comes to a complete stop and the dashboard 'lights up' like a Christmas tree, there a small problem.

Sonny hits the ignition and nothing moves, not a spark! Second time, third time, fourth time with complete ignition failure. The smile on Sonny's face has gone sour, very sour as he thumps the steering wheel.

Mark is instantly looking at his watch, his brain was ticking from the outside! James looks worried, his



The salute - CAPT Kevin "Q" Quarderer USN

right eye wink's a few times and he wipes his brow. Old Allan breaks the silence with jest and says "she'll be right Sonny old mate, give the tyres a kick, works in the movies!"

And that is just about what Sonny did next.

Sonny jumps from his seat, hits the outside door hinge with a few good left and right thumps. This is modern day repair work in action. Sonny jumps back in the seat, rolls his eyes, crosses his fingers and flicks the switch!

Brum, brum, engine kicks over, revs are up, we are away!

"Small electrical malfunction, shuts down the complete coach" explains Sonny as the familiar friendly smile returns. He too wipes his brow and flickers the eyelids a few times!

10.45 am

The coach drop off point is 40 meters from members seats at the USA Memorial. Great move Sonny, moving those orange cones works every time with a group of visiting aging veterans on board.

The group are happy for a short walk across the grass as the sun starts to deliver some instant warmth to the occasion. 15 minutes early is a welcome situation, how good after that false start!

James and Mark make their way to the front of the memorial and meet up with the Defence Force officials and USA hosts. James gets the nod that he is requested to read the 'Naval Ode', he looks a little nervous again, sure Mark may have volunteered him, James being a former soldier!

The Australian-American Memorial stands in the Sir Thomas Blamey Square. The towering "big eagle" is another great local icon of Canberra. See front cover photograph, this column towers over 30 metres in height.

It has also become a great landmark for many lost interstate drivers when navigating between the three major roundabouts on the Canberra Parliamentary triangle.

The ceremony of commemoration for the 'Battle of the Coral Sea' is the most featured annual at this memorial.

A large bronze wreath and a commemorative tablet are located at the base of the column. Below the crest of the Commonwealth of Australia is an inscription which reads:

IN GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE OF THE VITAL HELP GIVEN BY THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA DURING THE WAY IN THE PACIFIC 1941-1945.

Even though both sides, USA and allies v Japan, lost heavily in the 1942 'Battle of the Coral Sea', the battle checked the southward thrust of Japanese forces and turned out to be a turning point in the war in the Pacific.

The battle is also notable in that it was fought entirely by aircraft from aircraft carriers on both sides. The naval vessels were not even in sight of each other.

11 am

The ceremony commences. It was similar to the Thursday evening AWM Last Post ceremony. The Coral Sea commemoration has military prestige, precision from the ADF Federation Guard and music by the band of the Royal Australian Navy.

As the Australian Governor General and Prime Minister were both on 'royal duties' at the King's coronation in London, they were represented by senior government ministers. Speeches are given by Senator the Hon Don Farrell and American, Japanese and Australian government officials.

Captain Kevin "Q" Quarderer USN, naval attache representing the US ambassador, delivered the keynote speech and thanked the members of Cumberland RSL for their attendance.

The navy Drums roll and the brass instruments deliver their notes with pure excellence. A young lady from the navy band sings fine renditions of the Australian and American national anthems.





1



2



3



4

1. Ladies on tour - Chloe Villers, Shiela O'Brien, Ann Selfridge and Irene Chamulko at the AWM 2. Group photograph at Australian War Memorial 3. Hee Na and Allan Whichelo try the local 'schnitzel and sausage' at the German club, with ginger beer the beverage choice of most that night 4. Starting the tour with a quick stop for 'hamburgers' all round at Bowral, a great setting for all

Vice President James Batkin laid the Cumberland wreath with a salute. James also presented the the Naval Ode. The Last Post was played followed by two minutes of silence. James was precise and distinguished in the role. Cumberland was very proud in their moment.

Time for a quick Cumberland group photograph around at the base of the memorial. Everybody is in the scramble as the officials are only too pleased to pose with members.

Members then made their way with another short walk to the Defence Centre recreation rooms for a light morning tea. Mixing with officials and members of the Australian American association is another welcome highlight of the tour.

The Australian American association President Alicia Doherty makes everyone very welcome as we are greeted at the door with hot pumpkin soup. Our eyes are taken back when the selection of cakes and finger food is displayed in the centre table. It was a feast for a lunch crowd.

More photographs are taken with our military, American and Japanese officials. It is a colourful sight as our Korean members of the tour group also get to tell some of their history from their days of military service.

After an hour, that was lunch taken care of. Sonny is again at the coach door to settle us for the return journey to the motel. Members now have an afternoon of free time in Canberra city.

5 pm

Members gather in the foyer, immaculately dressed, distinguished in formal attire. Back on the coach, Sonny has the big engine purring with the heaters on full as the night air is very cool. The temperature plummeted after sunset. It was a short journey over Lake Burley Griffen to the Commonwealth Club in Yarrlumba for the evening 'Coral Sea' dinner function.

Now Sonny gets us to within three meters of the front door. This is good! Entering the club you are instantly confronted with an 'old world'. First sign you see is "no mobile phone conversations permitted with in the club' and strict dress standards are enforced. Welcome back to last century, probably not a bad idea.

A group of 80 members and friends of the Australian American Association have gathered for their annual dinner and we are presented

with a three course meal that was equivalent to a coronation feast!

Senator the Hon Don Farrell gave an interesting speech before the main course. Mark Lee did us proud and presented the background as to why Cumberland makes this commemoration event an annual tour. Again more photographs were taken with groups all making small talk and exchanging background stories.

Captain Kevin "Q" Quarderer USN, gave the main speech and enlightened the group with the news that the brand new US ship, USS Canberra would be commissioned at Garden Island, Sydney in July. The captain said he would like to see some of us on that occasion in Sydney if possible.

The final speech of the night was presented to our coach 'hitch hiker' passenger, Dr. Brad Murphy, Tingira Australia Association President.

The good doctor, a noted after dinner speaker, was in fine form. Brad had the room in fits of laughter for the next 20 minutes. Brad's observations and pleasantries were very forthcoming and made the night one to be remembered by all. Coffee and chocolates was welcome. We proceeded down a short roadway to the welcome sight of our warm tour coach.

The trip 'home' to that welcome motel bed was short and sweet.

5 May - 8.30 am Saturday

CANBERRA NOVOTEL HOTEL - It was another casual morning over the breakfast bar. The American basket ball team had moved on and the Western Sydney Giants AFL team were now upon us.

After an early morning run they were hungry and preparing for a battle of their own with the boys from the Footscray Bulldogs that evening at Manuka oval. You get a real feeling for the size of footballers when you shoulder up to the toaster and the shortest guy in the team, Toby Green, is six foot.

Our members all seemed very relaxed. Susan Chan was sharing her iPad images and stories of the previous 24 hours. Happy group!



1



2



3

1. Tingira Australia Association President Dr. Brad Murphy OAM, Cumberland Vice President, James Batkin, and President of Australia America Association, Alicia Doherty 2. Breakfast call for four members 3. An all round toast to King Charles III, at the end of the evening with the Australian American Association at the Canberra Commonwealth Club

10.30 am

The Cumberland group are packed and loaded on Sonny's silver coach, leaving the forecast of a very cold day in Canberra behind us.

The coach navigates in a northern direction towards Lake George then onto Mittagong for the lunchtime stop over. The chatter of the coach was soft as members took in the blurring colours the autumn countryside in this beautiful region of New South Wales.

Lunch at the Mittagong RSL was pleasant, the Saturday roast meat and three veg was most welcome.

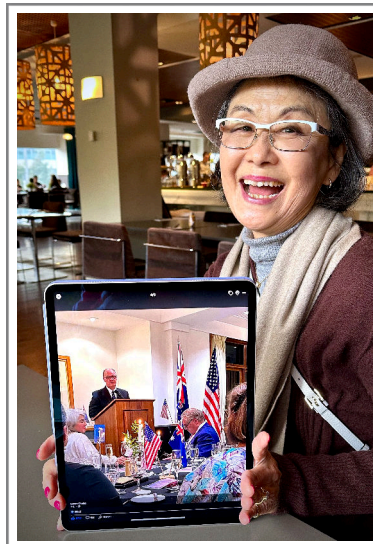
3.25 pm

Sonny completed the tour having the group home of the doorstep of the Auburn Tennis Club in Auburn five minutes before our estimated arrival time.

It was now off home for the contented Cumberland members. Ready to settle in for a night by the TV to observe the events of London as the coronation of King Charles III was about to commence.

Bravo Zulu (BZ) all round.

Thank you all round to President Greg Read, Secretary Mark Lee, Vice President James Batkin and Auxiliary co ordinator Ann Batkin who got us "back on the road again" with an enjoyable three days for all.



Cumberland affiliate member, Susan Chang, loves her iPad combined with her newly acquired photography skills. On board the tour Susan photographed most things 'that moved'.

She was the morning star at the breakfast table sessions when she displayed her previous 24 hours of creative work to members over their toast and eggs!



RSL AND SCHOOLS REMEMBER ANZAC ART COMPETITION 2024

"WHY LEST WE FORGET"



RSL
NSW

RSL AND SCHOOLS REMEMBER ANZAC ART COMPETITION 2024

*"WHY
LEST WE
FORGET"*



Your artwork could be featured on the cover of the 2024 RSL and Schools Remember ANZAC Service Program.

All finalists will be invited to an exhibition of artwork at the Anzac Memorial Hyde Park, Sydney.

KEY DATES

- **1 February 2023** - Competition opens
- **22 September 2023** - Submissions close
- **3 November 2023** - Finalists notified
- **30 November 2023** - Winners announced

For full details on the competition including important submission criteria please visit rslnsw.org.au/artcompetition



AUSTRALIAN AMERICAN Association



AUS & USA

Friendships alive and warm in Canberra

TWO DAYS - IN THE LIFE CUMBERLAND VICE PRESIDENT

6 am Wednesday 3 May, Auburn Sydney

“ I get the call that Greg Read has an urgent medical on Friday and that I am to lead the sub -Branch members on the Canberra tour tomorrow. Right, put on the memory cap here James I say!

Thank God I have got Mark Lee and Ron Inglis on the coach with around 20 very elderly members. It's going to be an interesting few days, what could possibly go wrong I think?

No, that's not the attitude James, what could go right?

Well think positive, I'm bound to meet an American or two, so that's where this short story goes!

*

Friday 11am, Coral Sea Commemoration, Canberra.

I have just laid the wreath and said the Naval Ode, so glad I had a haircut on Tuesday. I can see Mark Lee floating amongst the crowd taking snaps with his little iPhone.

Ceremony done, It's all over, now for a coffee.

“Not so fast James” says Mark, come and meet the US Navy Captain.

CAPT Kevin "Q" Quarderer US navy meet James Batkin, Vice President RSL NSW Cumberland sub-Branch. Mark sets up the photo angle, here we go!

A hand shake and a fist pump with a knuckle crunch and smiles all round, that's it. Well, not quite. We get to exchange cards, have the normal introductory small talk on the cold Canberra weather with the welcome sunshine. “Hey James” says the Captain, let's go for that hot coffee!

It was a delight to be in the reception room at Russell Offices with our Cumberland members, all mixing in with the USA and Canberra ADF members, happy times!

No coffee? What? Hot pumpkin soup with sour dough bread. Hey, at eight degrees this is right on the mark!

The food presented as a morning tea was more like a 'Governor General's tea party'. Lunch was not required by any of us.

Friday 7pm, Coral Sea Dinner, Canberra.

It's black tie, new diner suit with an uncomfortable bow tie. I will break it in by the end of the night; the wife looks a diamond!

This should be a good night even though we are competing for 'sound space' with 60 odd 'Canberra Monarchs' celebrating the Kings coronation in the room next to us.

Meeting the Australian American Association President Alicia Doherty is a delight. All her committee members are presented and primed for a very regal formal gathering. And who is opposite me? This time in his nice blue business suit, out of navy uniform, why it's the good USA navy Captain Kevin "Q" Quarderer.

After the first break we catch up with some more small talk and he tells me he has some great breaking news tonight when he gives the after dinner keynote address.

First class food once again with entree and main, I still think I'm at the Governors residence. Here comes the Captain's speech.

“ And with great pleasure I can announce tonight that we may all meet again in the near future, when the newest US navy vessel, USS Canberra, will be commissioned in Sydney at Garden Island on Saturday 22 July 2023”.

Bloody hell I think to oneself, that's the day of our RSL President's handover dinner in Pitt Street, now I have something to talk to the Captain about!

The room was abuzz, desert and coffee were a delight and many of us in the room had made a new friend or two, mostly American.

I also meet up with Tingira Australia Association President, Dr Brad Murphy. He is an excellent after dinner speaker. Brad had us all in many fits of laughter for his 15 minutes on the microphone, just what we needed to warm the hearts on a typical very cool Autumn night in Canberra.

Going places and meeting new people, to me that's what RSL is all about! The Captain, we will meet again, perhaps on a ship next time!

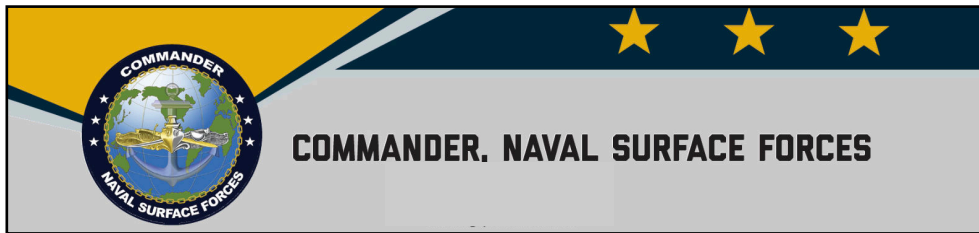
James Batkin

US SHIP SYDNEY BOUND HONOUR CANBERRA NAMESAKE

USS CANBERRA - COMMISSIONING
GARDEN ISLAND, SYDNEY
Saturday 22 July 2023



The Independence-variant littoral combat ship USS Canberra (LCS 30) departs San Diego Harbour for a routine underway cruise off the California Coast. Littoral Combat Ships are fast, optimally manned, mission-tailored surface combatants that operate in near-shore and open-ocean environments, winning against 21st-century coastal threats. LCS integrates with joint, combined, manned and unmanned teams to support forward presence, maritime security, sea control and deterrence missions around the globe



SAN DIEGO - The future **USS Canberra** (LCS 30) will join the U.S. Navy active fleet on July 22 with the U.S. Navy's first international commissioning ceremony at the Royal Australian Navy Fleet Base East in Sydney, Australia. The future USS Canberra (LCS 30) will join the U.S. Navy active fleet on July 22 with the U.S. Navy's first international commissioning ceremony at the Royal Australian Navy Fleet Base East in Sydney, Australia. Canberra is the first U.S. Navy warship to be commissioned in an allied country. It is the second U.S. Navy ship to bear the namesake of Canberra.

"I can think of no better way to signify our enduring partnership with Australia than celebrating the newest U.S. Navy warship named for Australia's capital city, and commissioning her in Royal Australian Navy Fleet Base East surrounded by many of the Australian ships we have worked alongside for years," said Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro. "I look forward to this momentous day for the ship, crew, sponsor, and all our partners in government and industry who worked tirelessly to give the future USS Canberra the celebration it deserves."

Australian Chief of Navy, Vice Adm. Mark Hammond said this historic event encapsulates both the depth of the historical ties, and modern day partnership between the Royal Australian Navy and the U.S. Navy.

"This is a unique demonstration of respect by the U.S. for the Officers and Sailors of the Royal Australian Navy," said Hammond. "It is an opportunity to reflect on our shared history, and on a friendship forged while fighting side-by-side. On August 9, 1942 the RAN heavy cruiser HMAS Canberra was severely damaged off Guadalcanal (Solomon Islands) while protecting the U.S. Marines fighting ashore. In a surprise attack by a powerful Japanese naval force, Canberra was hit 24 times in less than two minutes and 84 of her crew were killed including Captain Frank Getting"

"I look forward to welcoming the U.S. Navy, and the crew of USS Canberra to Australia and we are honoured to host the U.S. Navy's first international commissioning. It will be a historical event to see the USS Canberra and HMAS Canberra alongside each other in Sydney. As we look to the future, the strength of our partnership remains a cornerstone of a secure, stable, free and open Indo-Pacific Region."

The first USS Canberra (CA-70/CAG-2) was named at the direction of President Franklin D. Roosevelt in honour of the Australian heavy cruiser HMAS Canberra for the ship's courageous actions during the Battle of Savo Island that took place Aug. 7-9, 1942. The new Baltimore-class heavy cruiser was renamed Canberra from Pittsburgh on Oct. 16, 1942, and was commissioned on Oct. 14, 1943.

Canberra will soon begin the transit for the Navy's first international ship commissioning making stops along the transit in Indo-Pacific nations prior to its arrival in Sydney for commissioning.

A visit to the Australian capital city of Canberra is planned the day after commissioning, continuing the U.S. Navy tradition of building a strong relationship with namesake communities.

The ship's sponsor is Australian Senator, the Honourable Marise Payne, the former Australian Minister of Foreign Affairs who attended the ship's keel laying ceremony in Mobile, Ala. in 2020. The ship was christened June 5, 2021, by Alison Petchell, the Australian Government's Defence Assistant Secretary for Industrial Capability Planning in the Nuclear Submarines Taskforce and former Minister Counsellor for Defence Materiel, on behalf of Senator Payne. The ship arrived for the first time at its homeport of San Diego last year.

The first U.S. Navy ship named after a foreign capital, Canberra (CA-70) was sponsored by Lady Alice C. Dixon, the wife of Sir Owen Dixon, then Australian Minister to the United States. Following World War II, Canberra was placed out of commission and in reserve on March 7, 1947. Five years later, the ship was selected to be the U.S. Navy's second guided missile cruiser. The ship was re-commissioned on June 15, 1956, as guided missile heavy cruiser CAG-2.

With its new designation, Canberra transported President Dwight D. Eisenhower and later was the ceremonial flagship for the selection of the Unknown Serviceman of both World War II and Korea interned at Arlington National Cemetery, was the Commander of the Atlantic Fleet Cruiser Force flagship, conducted an around the globe goodwill cruise, provided medical assistance to the crew of the Turkish merchantman Mehmet Ipar, was the Commander Task Group 136.1 flagship that was charged with maintaining a blockade during the Cuban Missile Crisis, and served in Korea and Vietnam. To highlight the ship's role in naval gunfire support following operations in Vietnam, Canberra was re-designated to original classification and identification number CA-70 on May 1, 1968.

Canberra received seven battle stars for her service in World War II. The ship was decommissioned on Feb. 2, 1970, and was stricken from the Naval Vessel Register on July 31, 1978.

The present day USS Canberra is the 16th Independence-variant Littoral Combat Ship commissioned by the U.S. Navy. LCS are designed to be fast, optimally-manned, mission-tailored, surface combatants that operate in both littoral and open-ocean environments. LCS integrate with joint, combined, crewed, and unmanned systems to support forward-presentation, maritime security, sea control, and deterrence missions around the globe. The future USS Canberra was built by Austal USA in Mobile, Alabama.

Admiral Samuel Paparo
Commander of the U.S. Pacific Fleet



Feature Navy Exhibition

ANZAC MEMORIAL

HYDE PARK SOUTH, SYDNEY

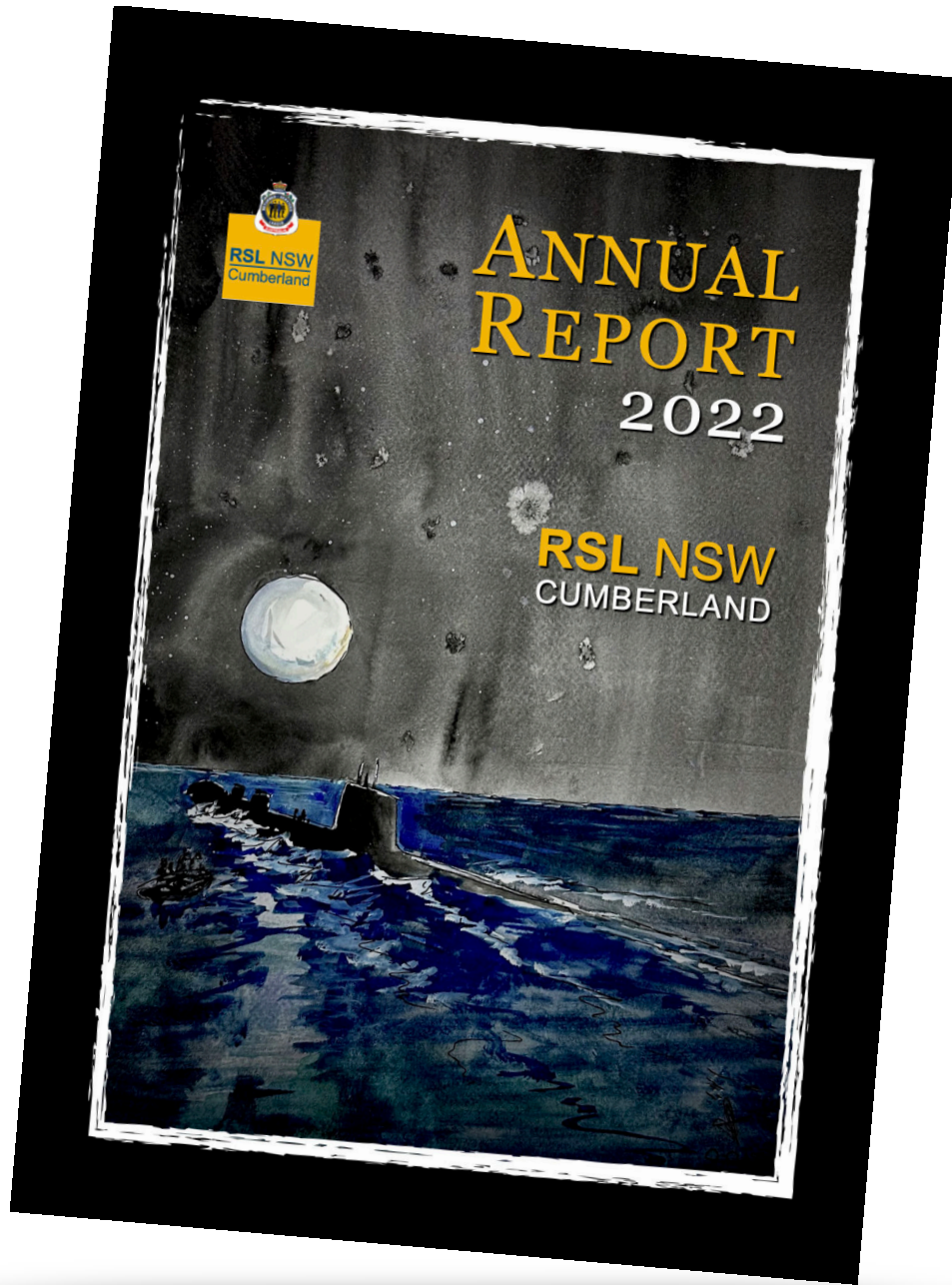
1913 the Royal Australian Navy's brand-new fleet sailed through the Heads and into Sydney Harbour. Since then the RAN has served on all the world's oceans in times of peace and war.

During the Second World War, the RAN reached its maximum strength. Approximately 37,000 men and women wore a RAN uniform. The war inflicted a heavy toll on ships and personnel. Thirty-eight cruisers, destroyers, sloops and smaller vessels were sunk and almost 2,200 sailors died on active service.

The RAN has sent ships and service personnel to war in Korea, Vietnam and the Persian Gulf. The service has participated in peacekeeping and humanitarian operations all over the globe, at sea, on remote islands and in tri-service deployments. It has played a vital role in protecting our borders and interrupting the international drug trade.

Today the RAN is a highly technical force of state-of-the-art equipment staffed by skilled and dedicated people serving the white ensign in the best traditions of Francis Drake and Horatio Nelson.

To recognise the generations of Australians who have gone to war on great waters the Anzac Memorial will open a year-long exhibition on the Royal Australian Navy.



RSL NSW CUMBERLAND
2022 ANNUAL REPORT - NOW AVAILABLE
MEMBERSHIP MAIL AND WEBSITE

www.asapress.com.au



Proud supporter for decades ...

RSL NSW Cumberland

"Creating the perfect impression"

02 - 9279 4600



CHANGE IS COMING

**JAMES
BATKIN**
“Bring It On”





Newly elected Cumberland President James Batkin's first address to members at the recent Annual General Meeting was one of 'emotional strength'.

James stepped up to take on the leading role from his good mate, Greg Read.



“ **Good evening** Cumberland members, affiliate members, auxiliary members, distinguished guests, ladies and gentleman.

It's hard to believe I am here as President after having served in the President's role at Lidcombe for 11 years.

Life today, even in my retirement years, is a changing world. I'm here to serve RSL NSW and our membership here at Cumberland, I'm up for the challenge ahead.

I fully support and endorse Paul Hughes' motion tonight to take us to another level of where the future of RSL sub-branches can and should be. I will take that on as a real challenge for our Cumberland team.

Greg Read, you leave me with big shoes to fill.

We all fully understand your position and wish you well. I am assured by the team around me, that this committee and the sub-Branch is in good hands today.

The past six months have seen many developments and our activities have certainly gone far beyond the previous 12 months. I will endeavour to keep that momentum going, 'full steam ahead' they would say in Greg's old navy talk.

I'm not going to bang on very long tonight.

The committee will come together over the following months and we will reset our strategic plan in line with RSL NSW. Change is coming is

Around the room... at the AGM



1. Ron Inglis, is congratulated by Cumberland Councillor Glenn Elmore, who launched Ron's book 'Auburn Anzacs', a very proud moment for Ron and the sub-Branch 2. President Greg Read, makes his final speech as he closed the AGM 3. Treasurer Mehmet Evin, is surrounded by our financial guests from Perpetual Investments, Keeping and Co book keepers and the audit team from SDJA Audits specialists 4. Secretary Mark Lee, presents the RSL cap to country music star Luke O'Shea 5. Barry Inger and Chloe Villers 6. The President's 'first lady' Ann Batkin, took the honour to draw Ron Lamb's name to win the evening door prize 7. Greg Read, James Batkin, Charlotte Cun and Raktive Paul with a cherished lolly jar prize



Cumberland President James Batkin, told two of our senior members Brian Russell and Gwen Riley that next time they meet he would present them with the last two RSL caps from the office clothing store. It was a very welcome surprise as this hat presentation has become James first official duty when he put a cap on them both and posed for a very memorable group photograph.

the signal we are going to see from many angles of the future RSL in NSW and Australia wide.

Last week RSL NSW CEO Jon Black, signalled his resignation at the end of NSW RSL State congress later in the year.

That event will also see the retirement of current President Ray James, and several of his present directors also depart when the elections are held for new State directors in November.

There will be many new RSL faces at the desk at this top level when we start the year 2024.

Here at Cumberland we will need to take on board as quickly as possible any new directions that are going to affect us at the sub-branch level from this new group. 'Prepare for change' is certainly the way ahead. "Bring it on" I feel will be the shout out from across the state sub-Branches.

Over the next few weeks I am on a steep learning curve with Greg Read and Mark Lee in the administration role of President at our

Harrow road office. I look forward to this challenge of administration and finding new ways forward for 'The League' here in western Sydney.

I will always be available at the end of a phone line for Cumberland members to chat. Please fire in any concerns or suggestions . My desk is always open.

Well done tonight to Jason Safary and his functions team here at Dooleys and all the Cumberland committee members who made this a wonderful event here tonight.

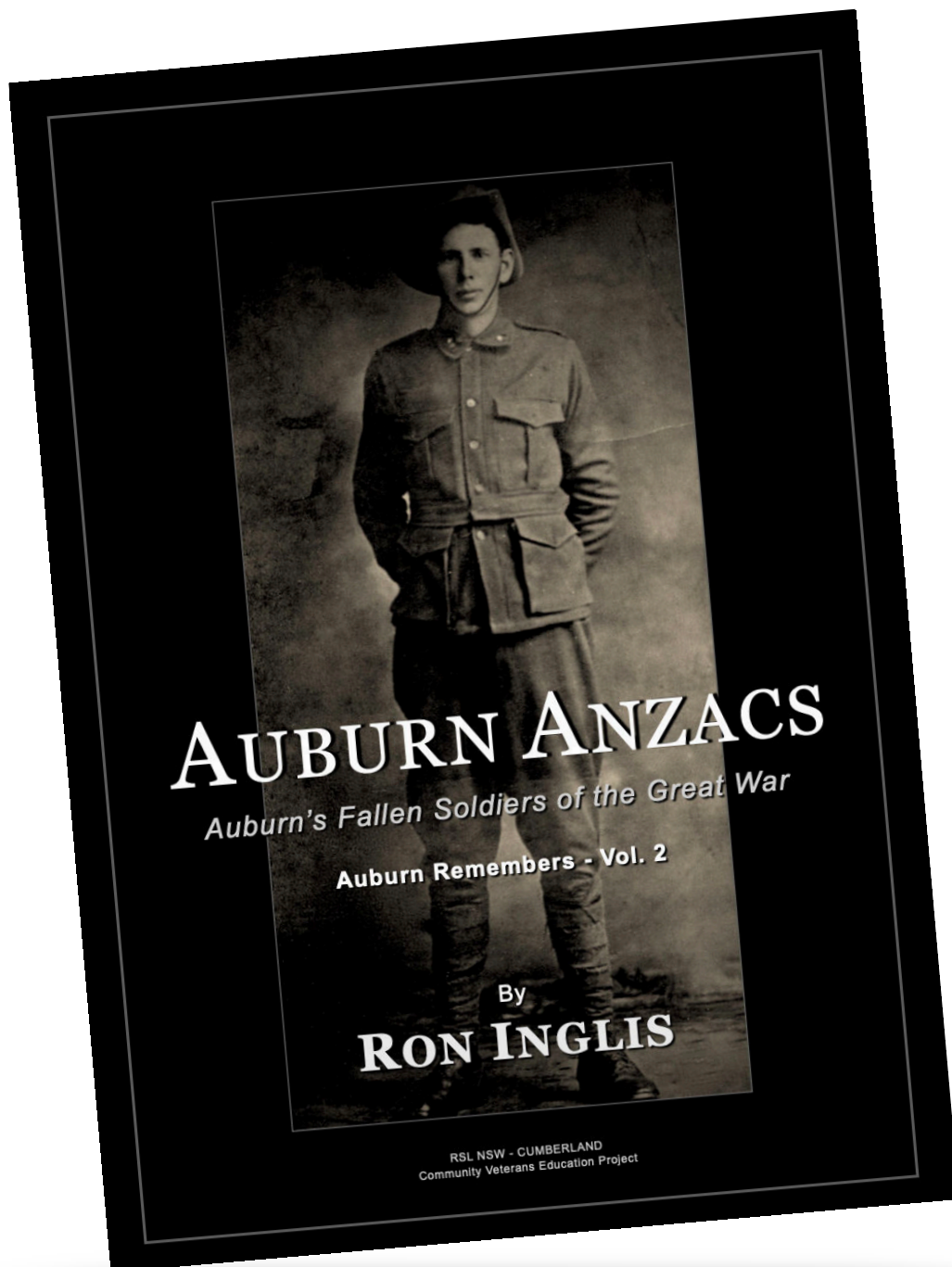
Just to finish, behind every man stands a strong lady and that's the truth in my house!

My wife Ann, has been a stalwart for years in my many RSL activities. In her own right, she is also a pillar of strength to the Cumberland auxiliary members, thank you Ann.

As for 50 plus icons theme tonight - I think I make the big 50 mark with ease, I too am looking forward to a 'Fredo frog' with my coffee!

Thank you.

BOOK LAUNCH & REVIEW - AUBURN ANZACS





Cumberland Vice President Ron Inglis, presents to the Cumberland members some of the inside workings of his latest publication 'Auburn Anzacs'.

The first phase of the Auburn Remembers project, initiated by RSL NSW Cumberland as a continuation of their Community Veterans Education Project, was to perpetuate the memory of the First World War men named on the Auburn (NSW) War Memorial.

This memorial was erected in 1922 to carry the names of men of Auburn who had perished in the First World War 1914-1918. The story of the Auburn Memorial men was told in the book Volume One **Auburn Remembers**, published by RSL Cumberland in 2020.

The second phase of the project was to prepare material for the official New South Wales war memorials register www.warmemorialsregister.nsw.gov.au

Several war memorials in Auburn had not been registered and the information on the Auburn War Memorial itself needed to be updated and expanded. In the second phase, the project was broadened to include a study of the 12 First World War honour rolls/stained glass windows found in Auburn schools and churches. These honour rolls included names of persons who had died in the war but whose names were not inscribed on the Auburn War Memorial. Altogether there were 155 names of persons linked to Auburn who had paid the supreme sacrifice during the Great War.

Five names could not be linked to any service record. These five remain unknown so the details of 150 of Auburn's Fallen Soldiers of the Great War were registered. The details of these 150 men have now been published in Volume Two of the Auburn Remembers project under the title,

Auburn Anzacs.

The publication Auburn Anzacs was launched by Councillor Glenn Elmore at the RSL NSW Cumberland Annual General Meeting held in Dooleys Lidcombe on Tuesday May 16, 2023.

Auburn Anzacs is not just a list of 150 First World War records of service in alphabetical order. An equally significant part was to investigate characteristics across the whole cohort and to compare these characteristics with the rest of the AIF and with the overall population of Australia at the time. For example, collating the occupations of the men of Auburn clearly showed the working-class nature of the cohort and collating the pensions granted indicated the number of widows and orphans left behind in Auburn.

Printed copies of Auburn Anzacs will be distributed by RSL NSW Cumberland to all schools and libraries in our Cumberland district and further copies on the new website, late July 2023.

1501

SERGEANT ERNEST GEORGE BEESLEY

Ernest George Beesley 38, life assurance agent was born in London UK. He lived with his wife and eight children in Union Road, Auburn. Prior to enlisting in the AIF, Beesley had extensive military experience serving in the 4th Middlesex Royal Regiment in Britain, in the 21st Battalion Imperial Yeomanry (sharpshooter) in the South Africa (Boer) War and in The Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force (AN&MEF) in New Guinea.

On 16 August 1914 Beesley enlisted in the AN&MEF and was with the force aboard the *Berrima* when it set sail from Sydney's Cockatoo Island on 19 August 1914.

Discharged from the AN&MEF 4 March 1915, Beesley enlisted in the AIF just a month later. He was almost immediately promoted to Sergeant then embarked, coincidentally again on the *Berrima*, on 24 June 1915. Arriving on the Gallipoli peninsular on 3 August 1915, he was killed by a bomb 26 days later. Initially buried at Victoria Gully, he was later reinterred in the Lone Pine Cemetery. See Family Notices: *The Sydney Morning Herald*, Thursday, 6 January 1916, p6. Beesley's wife requested the following for his gravestone but it was rejected as too long.

**NEVER THE LOTUS CLOSES, NEVER THE WILDFLOWER
WAKES. BUT A SOUL GOES OUT ON THE EAST WIND THAT
DIED FOR OLD ENGLAND'S SAKE**

Ernest George Beesley is honoured on the following memorials in Australia

Auburn War Memorial
Municipality of Auburn 1914-1919 Honour Roll
St Philip's Anglican Church Auburn First World War Honour Roll
Parramatta and District Great War Roll of Honour
Roll of Honour Australian War Memorial Canberra

PRIVATE ERNEST RICHARD BEESLEY

Ernest Richard Beesley, 22 was a son of 1501 Sergeant Ernest George Beesley who had been killed on Gallipoli on 29 August 1915. A farmer, Ernest Richard Beesley enlisted 4 November 1916 and embarked on the *Ayreshire* 24 January 1917. It was a slow voyage of 11 weeks, not arriving in Devonport, UK until 12 April 1917. It is not clear why Beesley remained in the 13th Training Battalion at Codford for the next seven months. He did have a month in hospital with mumps and he did go AWL for two days for which he had to forfeit 12 days' pay.

Beesley did not cross to France and march into the 42nd Battalion until 17 December 1917, more than a year after enlistment. Shortly afterwards he was transferred to the 11th Light Trench Mortar Battery. Facing the German attack at Morlancourt, Beesley received a gunshot wound to the abdomen. He was taken back to the Vignacourt Clearing Station where he died of wounds on 7 April 1918. He was buried in the Vignacourt British Cemetery. See War Casualties: *The Sydney Morning Herald*, Saturday, 20 April 1918, p14. His mother requested the following inscription for his gravestone but it was rejected as too long.

**SHINE SUN, SHINE UPON THEM WHERE THEY LIE. AND
STORM AND WINTER PASS THEM BY. AND DARKNESS
PLEADING TO THE EARTH FOR LIGHT. LEAN OVER THEM AS
MOTHERS MIGHT. LEAN OVER THEM AND SAY GOOD NIGHT,
GOOD NIGHT.**

Ernest Richard Beesley's name is on the Auburn War Memorial and, along with his father and a brother, is found on the First World War Roll of Honour in St Philip's Anglican Church, Auburn.

Ernest Richard Beesley is honoured on the following memorials in Australia

Auburn War Memorial

Municipality of Auburn 1914-1919 Honour Roll

St Philip's Anglican Church Auburn First World War Honour Roll

Roll of Honour Australian War Memorial Canberra

CENTAUR

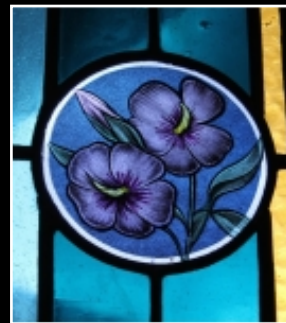
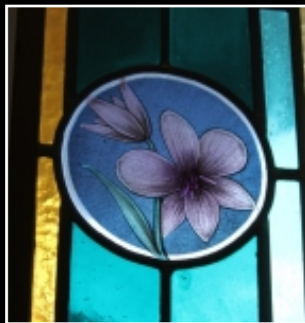
MEMORIAL WINDOW



Gum blossom



Sturt's desert pea



Native hibiscus



Close up of the ship



The ship goes down

80th ANNIVERSARY

SINKING OF THE HOSPITAL SHIP

THE CENTAUR

May 14, 1943, the 2/3 Australian Hospital Ship was making its way from Sydney to Port Moresby with medical stores and personnel going to care for Australian sick and wounded in the battles being fought in tropical New Guinea.

In the early hours of the morning the Centaur, though fully lit and with Red Cross markings, was attacked and sunk off the coast of southern Queensland by a Japanese submarine.

Of the 332 persons on board only 64 survived. Sister Ellen Savage was the only one of 12 nursing sisters to survive.

The accompanying photo shows the memorial stained glass window at the entrance to Concord Hospital.

The Concord Hospital was established in 1943 as a military hospital and for many years was the repatriation hospital for many First and Second World War ex-servicemen and women.



RSL LifeCare Veteran Services

rslifecare.org.au/veteran-services

Brought to you by

RSL
LifeCare
VETERAN SERVICES

Supported by

 **RSL**
NSW

Ph. 02 - 8088 0388

THE SONGS OF BING CROSBY
AND THE ANDREWS SISTERS

ALL ABOARD!

TAKE A SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY
WITH THE SUBLIME HARMONIES OF

COMPANY **B**

Take a trip back in time with Company B! Join us for our brand new show 'All Aboard', a light hearted journey through wartime Australia. Featuring all your favourite Bing Crosby and Andrews Sisters tunes – 'Rum and Coca Cola', 'Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy', 'Don't Fence Me In', 'Chattanooga Choo Choo' and so very many more!

We will bring a tear to your eye when their sweet renditions bring back memories of yesteryear, or perhaps encourage you to leave your seat behind and step out onto the dance floor!

**RSL NSW
CUMBERLAND**

**PRESIDENT'S
HANDOVER DINNER**

**CASTLEREAGH
BOUTIQUE HOTEL**

Saturday 22 July - 6pm



WWW.COMPANYB.COM.AU



**MEMBERS
NEXT EVENT**

**PRESIDENT'S
HANDOVER DINNER**

'Company B' Entertainment

**CASTLEREAGH
BOUTIQUE HOTEL**
6pm Saturday 22 July 2023

Booking required, Seats limited, Black tie

**NEXT MEETING
COMMITTEE**

Monthly Status
Tuesday 20 June 6 pm
Dooleys, Lidcombe

**NEXT MEETING
MEMBERS**

Tea Party
Tuesday 18 July 4.30 pm
Dooleys, Lidcombe

**NEXT MEETING
AUXILIARY**

Luncheon
Wednesday 28 June 12 pm
Dooleys, Regents Park

**NEXT MEETING
TRUSTEES**

Annual Status
Tuesday 22 August 4.30 pm
Sydney





If not claimed within seven days please return to:

**PO Box 434
UBURN. NSW 1835**

**PRINT
POST**
PP 100029483

**POSTAGE
PAID**
AUSTRALIA

JUNE 2023

www.asapress.com.au

asapress

Proud supporter for decades ...

RSL NSW Cumberland

"Creating the perfect impression"

02 - 9279 4600