

PRESIDENT'S PEN



cumberlandrsl.com.au



REMEMBRANCE DAY

November 11

" The living owe it to those who no longer can speak to tell their story for them "



105 years ago the German plenipotentiaries entered the railway carriage of Marshal Foch, supreme commander of the allied forces in France. The carriage had been drawn up in the forest of Compiègne, just north of Paris, and here the German representatives put their signatures to the Armistice.

At the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month 1918, the guns fell silent on the Western Front and the Great War, the War to End all Wars, the First World War, came to an end. The horrific slaughter with over 10 million dead on all sides, was over.

In Britain, France and Belgium, the 11th of November is a solemn public holiday. All over those nations people will gather in ceremonies at their local war memorial and hold commemorative services. Central to these ceremonies is THE SILENCE at 11am, a tradition introduced by King George V.

In many nations around the world November 11, originally called Armistice Day, is the day on which citizens will reflect on the terrible sacrifices made by those who gave their lives in all conflicts.

In Australia, Remembrance Day has always been secondary to Anzac Day, April 25, because Anzac Day, marking the landing of the Anzacs at Gallipoli, had already established itself in the hearts and minds of Australians well before the end of the First World War. 'Anzac Day' ceremonies on the first anniversary of the Gallipoli landing arose spontaneously across Australia in 1916 so April 25 became our day to reflect on our armed forces, past and present.

However, on November 11, we rightly take the opportunity to reflect on the sacrifices our ancestors made and what they did to give us the Australia that we are privileged to call home.



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CUMBERLAND

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Trustee	Paul Hughes
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RSL NSW - AUXILIARY

Co ordinator	Ann Batkin
Assistant	Alice Walsh

GRANVILLE CHAPTER

Co ordinator	Alice O'Connor
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RSL NSW CUMBERLAND

NEW Email
CumberlandSB@rslnsw.org.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

PRESIDENT'S DESK

Leaving his MARK ...

Dear James, Committee and Cumberland members.

It is with great regret that I hereby tender my resignation as the HON Secretary of RSL NSW Cumberland from COB today, Tuesday 17 October 2023. Due to changing circumstances within my family and lifestyle that has taken effect after a recent close death within our family, this was no easy decision.

I will volunteer to continue assisting committee members with the Cumberland communications (publications & website responsibilities) for at least the next six months; I will train others within our team to take on the communications role long term into 2024.

I will also spend the following 21 days in a complete handover of administration and event programs to my successor, as much as my time permits.

Thank you committee members and President James Batkin for your assistance during my period as Secretary, it's been another wonderful RSL journey for me.

Mark Lee

"Mark, I accept your resignation under the circumstances and fully understand your position, family comes first.

On behalf of the Cumberland committee and members, we all wish you well in your future endeavours once you depart Sydney. You will be missed.

We value your commitment to spend time in the handover period to the new honorary Secretary and I also endorse your request to stay within the sub-Branch as we move towards 2024 for our communication requirements, by training other persons to take on that role.

Your efforts here over the past 12 months have been well and truly noted and appreciated by our membership and many others within the RSL NSW community. Bravo Zulu you are now truly an old navy salt!

You have certainly set the benchmark of the modern day sub-Branch Secretary very high, not just for Cumberland, but for the whole of the NSW RSL community when it comes to administration, event management and communications.

Your happy face and outgoing tales of navy days and another good racehorse around the office, along with your hospitality of cakes and biscuits will be well and truly missed.

Thank you Mark Lee. Job well done." JB

PS: Former Cumberland President Greg Read, has volunteered to take on the role of 'acting Secretary' until a new appointment is made by the general membership of RSL NSW Cumberland. Note new email for Greg at left of this column.

James Batkin

JAMES BATKIN
President
RSL NSW Cumberland



VISION PLAN BELIEVE ACT

'One RSL - working together, delivering locally'

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RSL NSW
Cumberland



The ROUSE
Vice President - **RON INGLIS**

APATHETIC MEMBERS

You would think that the members of the RSL here in New South Wales would be keen to have a say in who would be President of their organisation for the next three years and who would sit on the board. After all, the need for renewal is urgent. The RSL is at a critical time of ageing membership, out-dated procedures and reduced political and community influence, but no, not the case!

Out of some 18,000 service members of RSL NSW, only 1,544 valid votes were received on the Presidential Ballot (including just 49 postal votes) and 1,566 valid votes were received on the Director Ballot (including 48 postal votes). You would have to say this is a pathetic response.

Only around 9% of service members of RSL NSW voted.

You can be certain that the 91% of members who could not be bothered to vote will be the most vocal in criticising the RSL NSW President and Board over the next three years.

The problem of apathy among members lies in the traditional culture of the RSL. Many old members of the RSL have little interest in who is president and who is on the board. They dwell in their own sub-Branch world, jealously guarding their own little empire and hanging onto the assets and funds they have accumulated over many years. They are focused on benefits for themselves as they slowly slide into extinction.

The good news is that the election produced a new-generation President and Board. Reading the statements by successful candidates as published in Reveille, we can see that RSL NSW now has very well qualified, younger leaders. The new President of RSL NSW is Mick Bainbridge. Part of his statement reads,

"I am a Director & Solicitor of a veteran owned and operated law firm. I am a Returned Serviceman with five deployments (four to Afghanistan and one to East Timor). The majority of my time in the Army was served as a Commando in Special Forces. I have completed a Bachelor of Laws and Bachelor of Commerce, a Graduate Diploma of Legal Practice and a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors Course."

You would have to say, that is a very impressive record. Here are some other features of the new board I noted.

- **Highly qualified** - People on the board of RSL NSW have many qualifications in law and finance and some have experience in local government
- There are now **two women on the board**, Louise Sullivan and Sarah Watson
- Three of the elected members are new to the board so **there is new blood**
- There are **no Vietnam veterans** and, as far as I can tell from their statements, no National Servicemen
- **The Army rules!** Only one from the Air Force and none from the Navy

Receiving the highest number of votes, indeed, eclipsing the president-elect, was young veteran Sarah Watson.

"I am a veteran of the Australian Army serving primarily as an Intelligence Officer from 1997-2015, including a seven month deployment in Iraq. I am a dedicated member of the Yass sub-Branch and the inaugural Chair and member of the RSL NSW Young Veterans' Committee. I have competed internationally including the Invictus Games and world champion events for Ironman, triathlon and cycling."

Old men like me, out in here sub-Branch land, had better get fit sooner rather than later!



CUMBERLAND



"A welcome change is coming... Thinking outside the square"

RSL NSW MILESTONE MOMENT ...



Members elect youngest President Three new young veteran directors

RSL NSW has announced its new President, Mick Bainbridge.

A former Special Forces Commando, Mick is the youngest President elected by members across the state – making this a milestone moment for RSL NSW.

Mick has been appointed to lead RSL NSW alongside three new directors joining the board. Like the President, all new directors are younger veterans and were elected by members of the League in NSW in the second one-member-one-vote election held by the organisation.

The four young veterans joining the Board have the support of and will sit alongside experienced leaders. All current directors seeking reappointment were elected, clearly indicating strong support for the current strategic direction of the League in NSW over the past three years,

President Ray James OAM, and the Board of Directors have overseen a renewal of the League, with a focus on relevance to younger veterans and active pursuit of its purpose – supporting all veterans and their families, especially younger generations.

Their efforts resulted in the first membership increase in 40 years, as sub-Branched welcomed young veterans into RSL NSW, provided support and community for them, and empowered them to take on leadership positions to assure the future of the organisation.

RSL NSW incoming President Mick Bainbridge said, “I am honoured to be elected RSL NSW President, and am eager to continue the excellent work of the organisation and its members by leading RSL NSW into the future.

“As a young veteran myself, I will work with members to continue to revitalise RSL NSW. Further

engagement with all veterans will ensure that no one is left behind.”

In 2021-22, RSL NSW saw a 9.44% increase in members, and from 2022-23 this rose to 10.77%. Today, the average age of new members sits at 58, down from 78 just four years ago.

The increase in membership reflects the ongoing need for the support provided by the organisation. I look forward to continuing to steer RSL NSW towards a positive future for veterans of all ages and their families.”

RSL NSW outgoing President Ray James said, “I have been honoured to serve RSL NSW as President and I am happy to know that Mick has been elected to take my place. I’m sure that the League will benefit from his experience and knowledge on important veteran issues.

“There are several moments I’m particularly proud of in the past three years – among them our first increase in membership in 40 years and my apology to veterans of Vietnam who were rejected by the League when they returned to Australia.

“I’m especially proud of this moment though – the work we’ve done to make RSL NSW a community for veterans of all ages culminates in handing over leadership to a passionate young veteran who can help carry RSL NSW into the future.

“I have no doubt that Mick will continue to build on our work to ensure that all veterans and their families across the state can access the support provided by RSL NSW.”

RSL NSW pledges to support veterans of all ages and conflicts, and their families. Since 2021, RSL NSW has been evolving to meet the needs of contemporary veterans.

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Proud supporter for decades ...

RSL NSW Cumberland

“Creating the perfect impression”

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GILES HURST



RSL NSW New CEO...

After an extensive external recruitment process, RSL NSW Board recently appointed Giles Hurst, as its new Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

Giles commenced working with RSL NSW mid October, receiving a comprehensive handover from outgoing CEO, Jon Black, before his retirement from the position in November.

"I am delighted to have been appointed as the CEO of RSL NSW, an historic organisation with a rock-solid purpose that is very close to my heart, said Giles.

"The myriad challenges that veterans and their families face today, more than 100 years after the League was first established, require us to be more vigilant and focused than ever.

"I look forward to assisting our volunteer members as they take on these unique challenges and to support the brave men and women who have served each one of us during their military careers."

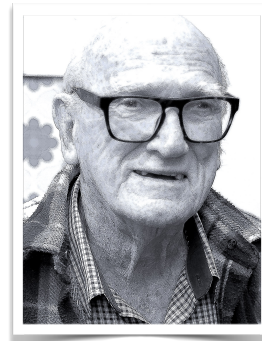
Giles brings a wealth of experience and expertise to this CEO role, having a distinguished career in not-for-profit and charity leadership, financial services, digital transformation, and professional services.

Giles diverse background and professional experience will be instrumental in advancing the implementation of the RSL NSW Strategic Plan 2021-2026. His most recent roles include CEO of the member-based professional body in tax, The Tax Institute, Director of Sales at Thomson Reuters ANZ, and General Manager of Retail and Business – Westfield (Australia) Ltd.

VALE BARRY RUSSELL

Military family man ...

RSL NSW Cumberland member Barry Russell, who recently passed away at age 89, was one of the last surviving 'Nashos' from the National Service Scheme that ran in Australia from 1951 to 1959.



Under that scheme, all 18-year-old Australian males had to undertake 176 days of military training followed by some years in the reserves.

52 intakes were organised and 227,000 men trained. Barry Russell entered the Air Force and served his 176 days at the RAAF Stores Depot then at Regents Park.

Born in Bega, Barry grew up in Granville, attending Granville Public School. He was an apprentice baker in Granville but then changed his trade to electro-plating. He worked for several local companies then the Water Board, both at Clyde and Prospect, up to retirement.

Barry married Susan, they have three sons and organised the building of their home in Steele Street, Granville. Susan herself, a daughter of 4535 Private Abney Hopton, an army veteran of the First World War.

Barry Russell was a long-time member of the now closed RSL NSW Granville sub-Branch, first in the old club-house in Blaxcell Street, then in the new architect-designed clubhouse on Memorial Drive from 1964.

Barry's son Todd Russell, served for 15 years in the RAAF as an officer specialising in aerospace engineering.

TROPHY LAND

AWARDS and TROPHIES

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CUMBERLAND

REMEMBRANCE WEEK

FRIDAY 3 NOVEMBER

10.30 am - Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway, Concord
Cumberland Representatives - Allan Chapple and Greg Read

FRIDAY 10 NOVEMBER

Remembrance Day Commemorations

9 am Holy Family Granville School assembly – Ron Inglis

11 am Strathfield and Homebush Memorials – Ron Inglis

1.30 pm Canberra Nursing Home, Lidcombe – James Batkin

1 pm MULTIPLE WREATH LAYING IN CUMBERLAND DISTRICT

Mini Bus leaves Auburn Tennis Club at 1 pm Friday 10 November.
Cumberland members invited to attend, must RSVP to Cumberland Secretary by COB Wednesday 8 Nov, seats limited

Schedule two hour tour - Lidcombe Memorial Park, Auburn Hospital Memorial, Auburn Memorial, Guilford Memorial Hall – Greg Read

SATURDAY 11 NOVEMBER

11 am Wreath laying Granville Memorial – Alice O'Connor



CUMBERLAND
Members Christmas Dinner

7pm - Sunday 10th December 2023

DOOLEYS
REGENTS PARK

RSVP
Monday 4th December
NEW Email
CumberlandSB@rslnsw.org.au

DRESS
Smart Casual

2023 EVENTS

COMMEMORATION REMEMBRANCE SERVICE

PUBLIC

RSL NSW WMDC EVENT
Sunday 5 Nov 2.30 pm

War Graves
Strathfield entrance
Rookwood Cemetery

MEETING

MEMBERS

Tuesday 21 Nov 4.30 pm
Dooleys, Lidcombe

MEETING

AUX

Wednesday 22 Nov 11.30 am
Dooleys, Regents Park

MEETING

COMMITTEE

Tuesday 19 Dec 6 pm
Dooleys, Regents Park



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