



Monbulk RSL Newsletter

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February 2018

Presidents Report

I would like to wish everyone a HAPPY New Year and hope we have a better one than the last few years. We start the year with the **AGM** on **Tuesday the 13th February 2018.**

Club elections will be held at the AGM so anyone wishing to stand please put nominations forward. This year we will be doing several upgrades to the hall so we will need a few working bees to complete before Anzac Day.

The end of last year saw both the Veteran's lunch and Christmas party well attended and a good time was had by all.

With our fund raising activities during last year we rounded out the year in a very good financial position which will allow the upgrades to take place.

I would like to congratulate and thank everyone for the hard work they do in supporting both the RSL and I.

I would like to advise that I intend to stand for the President's position at

the AGM and if successful I look forward to working with everyone to keep improving the RSL and working with the community who we support and share our building with.

The Monbulk Historical Society sent me a copy of their newsletter featuring an article on a plane that crashed in Monbulk many years ago and Jill A'Vard has kindly allowed us to include this in our newsletter as an item of interest.

I look forward to seeing you all at the AGM.

Bill Ford.
President.

RECEIVE MONBULK RSL NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL.

Many of our readers already receive this newsletter by email which is a wonderful thing because it costs us nothing to make it available to you. If you do not already receive the Newsletter electronically, but have an email address please advise Dave Aitken at: daitken@trility.com.au, so we can in future email it to you.

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Veteran Suicide Memorial Ride

By Tina Bull

I came home from work on a Wednesday night in early December to find an unhappy and very pensive, thoughtful husband. When I asked him what was wrong, he replied that "we'd lost another one."

He meant another veteran to suicide. The tally for 2017 at that stage was now at 81 veterans and the 12 months wasn't yet up. I watched as he processed that information and we both sat helpless to the situation and the greater problem overall. Leaving him with his thoughts, I went off to get the evening meal prepared for our family.

He surfaced a little while later and announced he was going on a ride. He and his motorcycle would be taking up the cause before the year was out, and he'd be doing it as a memorial ride for those 81 names we did not know. Matt set up an event through Facebook for December 30th on the Young Veterans Facebook page. He planned to begin the ride at the Vietnam Veterans Commemorative Walk in Seymour and finish it on the steps of The Shrine of Remembrance.

36 hours later, Matt came to me and showed me something neither of us could quite fathom. His little ride had been shared over 350 times and people were registering their interest at incredible rates. Diggers MMC, Vietnam Veterans / Veterans MC, Partisans, Red Knights, Blue Knights and a few other motorcycle clubs had all come on board and were showing tremendous support for this ride.



i) Bikes lined up on the streets of Seymour

Matt's feeling about the large number of veteran suicides in this country was one that was proving to be definitely shared amongst the greater community.

As the next few weeks went by, the event grew to epic proportions and the Young Veterans crew stepped into gear to make sure that they had all bases covered for this

memorial ride that had now gone viral.

Permits were sought from The Shrine to park all of the motorbikes participating in The Shrine precinct, The Coo-Wee Ride folks volunteered to cook a breakfast in Seymour and Caulfield RSL stepped in to supply a function room and nibbles for after the event. And our man, one Matt Bull got briefed on the specific PR rules for the almost certain publicity that would be coming from the media.

The morning of the 30th arrived and bikes began arriving in Seymour from before 8 am for a ride due to start at 10am.



ii) Pre-ride brief at Seymour

In excess of 150 bikes and some vehicles including support vehicles and an ambulance from Emergency Australia all set off from Seymour. More bikes joined the ride along the route through Yea, Flowerdale and Whittlesea – resulting in



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over 200 bikes and half a dozen vehicles arriving at The Shrine.



iii) Pre-ride brief

Even one Ted Beard made an appearance and rode to Whittlesea, choosing not to come to The Shrine. A quite overwhelmed, but very proud Matt rode at the front with one of his diggers and mates from Iraq riding next to him. They led the pack the whole way, before arriving at The Legacy Remembrance Garden in town.



iv) Riders gathered in The Legacy Remembrance Garden - Shrine of Remembrance

As expected, the media took Matt's time on arrival with interviews from Channel 7, WIN News Shepparton, a local Seymour Radio station and local Seymour newspapers.



v) Media shot of Matt's best side - thanking participants

The problem of veteran suicide still remains. The presence of it and the awareness of it are perhaps now just a little more prevalent and hopefully more front of mind in our community since Matt and the Young Veterans took up the

cause and organised this memorial ride. I couldn't be prouder of this man who is prepared to say something about the unfortunate reality of the mental and emotional health of some of our

veterans and current service personnel. His message was thus: "We are taught when we were deployed, to work in small teams and rely on each other to keep each other alive. That shouldn't change when we get home. If you find you're not in a good

place, then #justtalktoamate."





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Membership

Monbulk RSL needs your membership and continued support.

There are 3 categories of membership:

-  SERVICE:
-  AFFILIATE:
-  SOCIAL:

SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE NOW DUE AT JUST \$30 ANNUALLY

Payment /Enquiries:

Membership Manager

Pete Frazer

pete.frazer@bigpond.com

Mobile 0408 000 073

Cheques/money orders to Monbulk RSL

You can now Renew Annual Memberships Online through Internet Banking – just make sure to key in your name!

Bendigo Bank

Title – RSL MONBULK–
GENERAL ACCOUNT

BSB – 633-000

A/C NUMBER –
154830624

The following article was forwarded by Jill A'Vard from the Monbulk Historical Society who kindly gave permission to reproduce it here.

THE PLANE THAT CRASHED INTO THE HILLSIDE OFF MONBULK ROAD IN 1962

On the 12th of April 1962, 38 year old racing car champion, Ron Flockhart was killed when the ex RAAF Mustang he was flying crashed into a hillside.

Flockhart had taken off from Moorabbin airport only 10 minutes before the crash on a flight to Bankstown to conduct fuel consumption tests and deliver the machine for radio modifications at Bankstown.

Ron was preparing for a second record attempt intended to break the Australia to England speed record for a single engine aircraft.

In Monbulk this story began one cloudy damp morning with the weather starting to clear after rain during the night.

"I've got trouble", Ron reported in a final message before he was killed in a plane crash. "I've lost my compass. I'm at 3,000 feet and in heavy cloud."

Immediately after this message, recorded at 10:27 am, radio contact with the plane was lost.

Locals heard a light plane in the general direction of Olinda Road Monbulk that was high up in the cloud and appeared to be heading towards the township of Kallista.

"It soon became obvious that it was in trouble"

Geoff Sands of Monbulk remembered: - *"It was mid-morning and we could hear the roar of an engine of a plane, then it appeared to be coming*



Ron Flockhart at Moorabbin Airport just hours before his fatal crash on 12th April 1962



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out of the low cloud in a steep dive. The plane did not pull out of the dive, it continued on and the motor appeared to be roaring at full throttle. In a few seconds it crashed”.

Geoff, with his father George and brother Ron, drove the F500 farm truck to the area of the crash site, not knowing what to expect when they arrived at the junction of Camms Road and Monbulk-Kallista Road. The crash site was directly opposite the T intersection of the two roads, and over the other side of the Sassafras Creek, just a few meters up the slope.

Other vehicles were parked at the intersection, including the Monbulk fire truck. There was no fire apart from a few smouldering pieces that were quickly doused.

Geoff recounted: *“We found that there was nothing anyone could do, as the plane was destroyed after hitting the treetops. The motor was buried into the ground about six feet and the pilot was killed instantly”.*

Another local, Rob Rich, remembered the accident because he was working on a building site with Harry Bradshaw and his

son Peter, near the elbow on Olinda Road. They too travelled down to the accident site. Rob and both the Bradshaws were members of the fire brigade.

Hundreds of twisted fragments of the plane were scattered over a large area of hillside. Police found Flockhart’s body lying amongst the ruins of the plane. He was still strapped to the wrecked remains of his seat and his parachute was strapped on him.



The afternoon edition of 'The Herald' newspaper on Thursday April 12, 1962

“Two Ferntree Gully council workers Mr. Alan McCormack, 19, and Harry Gay, saw the plane crash. They ran 200 yards to the spot immediately, but all they found were pieces of the wings and fuselage scattered among blackberry bushes. Mr. McCormack said the dead pilot was still strapped to his seat which had been

flung clear of the rest of the wreckage. The parachute had apparently been opened by the force of the impact, and it was fluttering in the slight breeze. Mr. McCormack said there was no sign of flame, but some smoke was rising from the broken engine and aircraft parts”.

A report supplied by Roger Meyer, President of the Civil Aviation Historical Society States:

The pilot had arranged to fly the aircraft from Moorabbin to Bankstown where some items of radio and navigational equipment were to undergo maintenance in preparation for the record attempt. From Moorabbin Aerodrome his flight plan provide for the flight to be conducted at an altitude of 2,000 feet to Lilydale, which is some 18miles distant from the departure point, thence to Bankstown at varying heights up to 5,000 feet. The aircraft took off at 1015 hours and, after completing one circuit of the aerodrome, set course for Lilydale at 1018 hours.

At 1023 hours the pilot reported to Moorabbin tower that he was over Lilydale and, one minute later, advised that he was



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unable to continue the flight in accordance with the visual flight rules and was returning to Moorabbin. At 1027 hours he reported he was 'having trouble', had 'lost' his compass and was 'in cloud at 3,000 feet'. On request, he advised that automatic direction finding equipment was available in the aircraft, whereupon he was given the Moorabbin N.D.B. frequency and was instructed to home on this beacon and maintain an altitude of 3,000 feet. This message was acknowledged by the pilot and the tower controller immediately instituted the alert phase of search and rescue procedures. At 1029 hours the pilot was requested to confirm that he was homing on the Moorabbin N.D.B. but no reply was received. Further calls to the aircraft were not answered and at 1033 hours the distress phase of search and rescue procedure was instituted.

The cause of the accident was never conclusively determined.

The above story reproduction was taken from the Monbulk Historical Society Summer Newsletter.

They have four newsletters per year and if you would like to receive them go to <http://monbulkhistoricalsociety.org.au/newsletter/subscribe-to-our-newsletter> or email explore@monbulkhistoricalsociety.org.au

and MHS will be happy to include you.

From the Secretary

Happy New Year all.

2018 is upon us and it is a big year in that this year marks the centenary of the end of WWI. In saying that, we hope to mark this ANZAC day with some special features. We also have a number of projects in the pipeline with more upgrades to the hall that we hope to have completed in the coming months. Some of these include further kitchen upgrades and the return of some of the military displays.

This year will see the return of more event nights such as the rock and roll and other bands dates to follow after the AGM.

Our web site has had some minor upgrades with new contact details for hall hiring.

We look forward to seeing all the usual faces on Thursdays and Fridays and also anyone new that would like to join us. I will look to start the parma nights again shortly with the assistance of Bernado's, maybe even a few more menu options just let me know.

Don't forget you can



Thanks

Craig VandenBerg, Secretary