



Monbulk RSL Newsletter

RSL Hall, Monbulk 3793 PO Box 105 Tel: 9752 1100
President – Bill Ford 9756 7078
Secretary – Craig Van den Berg 0408 311 465
Treasurer – Paul Bennett 9756 7216

Winter 2017

The Gunn News

Presidents Report

This year Anzac Day was our most successful so far and the day was well attended even though the weather was not what we would have liked.

A sad part of the day was saying farewell to Lauren McAlister as our Bugler. Lauren was with us for eleven years and we will all miss her very much, however Lauren has found another young musician to take her place and start another generation in the history of Monbulk RSL.

On behalf of the Monbulk RSL I would like to thank Lauren for her support over those 11 years and wish her all the best for her future.

Since Anzac Day we have made major security upgrades to the hall with improved exterior lighting and the installation of security cameras. We now meet the requirements of the liquor license laws and will also assist our local law enforcement in the event of any further break-ins or unacceptable behavior by any unruly patrons. With our security upgraded we can now

move to the next stage and have the correct display cases made and installed to display our antique weapons from WW1 and WW2 as well as other conflicts.

We were saddened at the passing of Dot Sykes in early June.

As you would all remember, Jack Sykes was a long-time member of Monbulk RSL and in the very early days Dot was an active member of the ladies auxiliary of the Monbulk RSL.

On behalf of the RSL I would like to offer our condolences to the Sykes family.

Monbulk RSL and the Monbulk Bendigo Bank has had a close working relationship over the past few years since changing our banking arrangements and this year I attended the Bendigo Bank community awards night and was presented with a cheque for \$1525.00 for the RSL. The Bendigo Bank runs this programme each year and it is based on the amount of banking

we do with them as well as private individuals nominating us as their preferred charity when opening any accounts at the Bendigo bank.

Anzac House is finally starting to move on our request to incorporate. Our request was put to the State Executive in March and they formed a list of requirements from us. The property and Legal Department has finally sent these requirements and we are now in the process of formulating the information and another formal request to be put before the State Executive for consideration.

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We have already been advised by Anzac House that there are no legal reasons preventing us from incorporating however there appears a game has to be played out to finalise this process. Ted has more on this in his report.

At the beginning of this year we voted to have our sound system upgraded. I am pleased to report that this has happened and the new system is fully up to date with the ability of computers and televisions and other devices being able to interact through the one system. The new system has proved to be very successful so far and should serve us well for many years to come. The second half of this year is starting to get busy as we have to bring the bar up to council's regulations by October. We also are planning a bigger plant sale for October followed by Remembrance Day. After which we move into the Christmas mode with the Veterans Christmas lunch followed by the Christmas breakup party. Please mark the following dates, the Veterans lunch 03/12/2017 and

Christmas party 09/12/2017. Further reminders will be in the next newsletter. Till then my best regards and thankyou's to everyone.

Your President.
Bill Ford.

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.

If you really want the Newsletter to be sent by Post let us know by phone or Post and we will continue to mail you a copy.
(Phone: Ted 9761 9379).

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



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A Word from Ted



Incorporation

We have been in the process of incorporating Monbulk RSL for quite a few years.

For a lot of this time the discussion was internal, about whether it was worth the trouble, but we decided it is, especially since Monbulk Sub-Branch holds title to its premises and property in its own right, having declined ANZAC House's (RSL Head Office) request that we transfer title to it back in 1991.

Holding our title was the wish of the WW2 Diggers in relation to the property donated to Monbulk RSL by the Severino family many years ago in the last century.

Title was held on behalf of the Sub-branch by Trustees registered with the Corporate Affairs Regulator. After Denis Cattle died we were left in the precarious position of having only one Trustee, Case Broekhof. If Case had fallen under the proverbial bus we

may have found ourselves up the well-known Creek.

We discussed our situation with Corporate Affairs Victoria (CAV) and installed 4 new Trustees ie. Bill Ford, Paul Bennett, Craig Van den Berg and Matt Bull, while we sought incorporation. We also retained legal advice on the matter from Allpass and Associates of Kilsyth at considerable expense.

We have also been involved in ongoing discussion with CAV and believe that incorporation of our Sub-branch remains the best long term option to give us control of our affairs in the best interests of our members and our local community.

However to incorporate under RSL rules we require the approval of the state Executive of the RSL. This was duly sought and after a long period under consideration we were advised that State Executive, advised by the Property and Legal Section required a lot of information, including a Business Plan, Bank Statements and other stuff "as a bare minimum" to enable them to give our application to

incorporate proper consideration.

Interested members can discuss the process with the President or Secretary and view relevant correspondence if they wish. This is a matter which affects all members.



Vale

Suzanne (Sue) Ford.

Monbulk RSL extends its sincerest condolences to RSL President Bill Ford and the Ford family on the sad death of their beloved wife and mother Suzanne (Sue) this month after a long illness.

The Fords have a very long association with our RSL and have made significant contributions over many years. Sue's behind the scenes support shall be missed.

Mark Ashley Surridge.

We wish to express our deepest sympathy to John and the extended Surridge family on the passing of their treasured son, brother and uncle, Mark who has left us much too soon.



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Dorothy (Dot) Sykes.

Monbulk RSL was saddened to hear of the recent death of Dot Sykes widow of former Official of our RSL the very respected WW2 Digger Jack Sykes.

We pass on our sincere sympathy to their family.

James 'Jim' Wilson



We were deeply saddened to learn of the death of much loved Monbulk RSL member and World War 2 Veteran Jim Wilson. Jim reached the milestone age of 97.

Jim will always be remembered for his good humour and friendship and his playing of the piano accordion, particularly on ANZAC Day.

Always a proud Scot, we nevertheless considered him an honorary Digger.

Lest we forget.

ANZAC Day 2017

Monbulk's ANZAC Day Observance went off well for 2017.

Our magnificent Last Post Player of the last 12 years Lauren McAllister announced that this would be her last performance. She went out on a high note and a few tears were shed by both player and President. She has however nominated her successor; a young man she assured us is up to the job. Thanks Lauren you have been a highlight of our ceremony.

Monbulk Schools formed a combined choir for the National Anthem and their selected song which they delivered with talent and enthusiasm.

Tina Bull was excellent in rendering the deeply moving New Zealand National Anthem "God Bless New Zealand." We are most fortunate to have her involved as part of our Observance.

Jill A'Vard, President of the Monbulk Historical Society, gave the address at the main service. She spoke about the Service of WW1 Monbulk Digger Patrick O'Connor who lost a leg in the service of his country. Jill's address gave a meaningful insight into the life and times of

our WW1 Diggers which is all the necessary and important as they have now passed into history.

As always ANZAC Day in Monbulk was a great success because of the efforts of a lot of dedicated people and the strong support of Monbulk and district community.



With Jill A'Vard's kind permission, her address at the main service is reproduced in full here:

"Good morning.

To commemorate the 100th anniversary of World War One I researched many of the Diggers from the Monbulk area and in doing so, many interesting things came to light.

Some young men enlisted thinking it was a chance for an overseas adventure and that they would be home for Christmas. Some went to great length to hide their true age so that they could sign up, one as young as 15.

I realised just how many were related to each other. Brothers, fathers, sons, cousins and brothers-in-law all left



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their families, who had to 'keep things going' until their return. The war impacted the whole community and the community supported each other both during and after the war.

It was easy to get caught up in some of the interesting stories of these men. One of these men was Patrick O'Connor from The Patch and it is Pat's story I would like to share with you today.

Pat's story is quite different from others as he was taken prisoner of war. Fortunately for us he wrote a detailed account of what happened to him.

Patrick enlisted on the 18th December 1914.

He left Melbourne on the 19th February 1915 and arrived at Gallipoli on the 14th June.



On the 6th August 1915 the 4th Brigade of which Pat was a part of, left ANZAC Beach with the objective of taking Hill 971.

They left Rest Gully in Gallipoli about dusk passing through fields of stubble and then into open ground where they

were subjected to heavy rifle and machine gun fire by the Turks. They were ordered to dig in.

Pat was among the men who were detached to bring water up for the men from down in the gully. Just as they left Pat was hit on the left shoulder by a piece of shrapnel but Pat continued down to get the water.

The next morning the Brigade advanced again to Hill 971. By this time Pat's wounded shoulder had become very stiff, for he had not been able to see a doctor nor had he been able to have his wound dressed and bandaged.

It wasn't long before they were being subjected to machine gun and rifle fire from the enemy once again.

Pat was just getting down into position when he received a bullet through his right foot. He fell heavily, luckily behind a large rock. The pain of his wound made him roll over and in doing so; he exposed himself to the enemy and was being persistently sniped at. One shot went into his right thigh. He heard bullets repeatedly strike the big rock behind him. In his right tunic pocket he had 10 rounds of

ammunition. A sniper's bullet exploded this ammunition but luckily Pat was not injured by the explosion beyond having his skin taken off his right hip.

Unable to move, Pat had to wait for help. But it wasn't his comrades that arrived first. Pat lay still in hope he would be overlooked but that wasn't to be. A succession of enemy soldiers raided his belongings including his money belt, a few cards and letters and Pat's watch which he had hidden in a tobacco tin. They also took the ring from his finger.

It wasn't long before Pat witnessed another wounded Australian, who was lying not far from him, get brutally attacked by a soldier. Pat couldn't "fake sleep" any longer and yelled out at him, cursing him in good Australian!

The soldier approached Pat, picking up a large rock that lay nearby and began to pound Pat's head with it. When Pat came to, he was dragged towards a nearby gully then, with a rifle to his ear, made to drag himself to a dug out in the side of the hill.

Once there he was given first aid by a kind



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Armenian soldier who bandaged Pat's wounds. Furthermore, he gave Pat a drink of water and a couple of cigarettes. Just in front of the dug-out was a main track which Turkish horse trains were passing by. The Armenian gave instructions to have Pat put on an empty pack horse.

Pat was taken to a dressing station where there were already a number of wounded Australians. Later that evening Pat, along with the other wounded men, were taken on ambulance carts about 10 miles on bumpy roads until they found themselves alongside a pier. There lay a small steamer that was flying a hospital flag.

They had arrived at what appeared to be a convalescent camp for Turks. While waiting to board the boat many of the wounded men were subjected to cruelty from Turkish convalescent patients.

Once aboard, the small steamer carried them to Constantinople and from there to a hospital.

Pat stayed at that hospital for 11 days. During this time a Turkish doctor said his leg would have to be amputated. But that same afternoon

a German doctor said he was sure his leg could be saved.

The next morning all the wounded were moved to another hospital where there were English patients. This hospital was appalling! There was no light, the windows had been boarded up, and there were only mattresses on the floor for them.

At 9 o'clock the next morning Pat was carried on a stretcher to a room where the bandages on his wounds were unrolled and his wounds examined. A chloroform "bag" was thrust over his nose and later, when he resumed consciousness, his leg was gone!

Pat underwent two further operations at that hospital to remove small fragments of bone from his leg.

The wounded Australians in that hospital had a very rough time. They were fed alternate dishes of boiled wheat and steamed wheat with molten fat. There was no change. They were held there for about 5 months until January 1916.

In January, Pat was returned to the first hospital he had been in. During this second stay Pat was again operated

on twice. In the second operation they removed a piece of bone from the stump of his amputated leg. The operation revealed that on the first occasion to amputate his leg, the bone had only been partially sawn through, and then snapped off!

Pat left there in September 1916, being moved from hospital to hospital over the next 14 months. During this time Pat underwent another operation, this time to remove portions of his skull from injuries sustained when he was first captured.

By late November Pat was told that he and the other prisoners were to be sent home. It proved to be correct as they all set off for England on 27th November 1917.

Over the next 6 weeks the group of about 280 men, consisting of many nationalities, travelled through Turkey, Austria, Switzerland and then France by train before boarding a hospital ship that eventually took them to England.

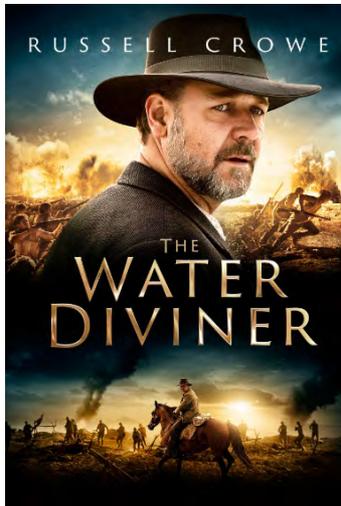
After many months in a hospital in London, Patrick finally returned to Australia on the 10th March 1919, more than 4 years after he left.



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A huge gathering was arranged in honour of his return. Many returned soldiers from the Monbulk district attended along with their families as did Jeannie Gunn and her sister Lizzie Taylor who had been a great support to all the soldiers and their families throughout the war. Mrs. Gunn had also arranged for Billy Hughes, the Prime Minister of Australia at that time, to attend.

A little known fact about Patrick O'Connor is that his journey was used as the basis in the movie "The Water Diviner" starring Russell Crowe.



The Water Diviner is a fictional story about an Australian farmer named Joshua Connor who travels to Turkey to find his three sons who went missing during the 1915 Battle of Hill 971 at Gallipoli. His eldest son is located alive, surviving as

a Prisoner of War. To find his son, Joshua travelled the same route as Patrick O'Connor had during his time as Prisoner of War.

Patrick's story was not unique but his writing does reflect the real horror of war and the many stories that were never told even to close family. Pat's story is still relevant even today as we must never forget the sacrifices such young men made and should value the freedom we have and the strength that lies within us as individuals and as a community.

Thank you."

Jill A'Vard

President Monbulk
Historical Society

Aircraftman Patrick
Hylard.



We gratefully received this submission from Wayne Hylard, brother of Monbulk RSL member Tony Hylard.

This is Wayne's report from his sons passing out parade:

As cyclone Debbie was making her mark on North Queensland, blue skies prevailed over Wagga Wagga.

Course 1/17 graduated impressing the 200 plus crowd of family and friends marching across the RAAF training base parade ground.

One of the 53 graduates was Patrick Hylard who joined through the gap year program.

The Brisbane teenager is mustering in the air base protection unit with ambitions to become a fire fighter. He says "the experience has been better than I expected, achieving goals through team work has formed great friendships with the other recruits"

The 18 Year old is currently on a 10 week training course at RAAF base Amberley QLD, from there he will be posted for the remainder of the year.

He says "this is the start of my career and that military life is for me"



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our prize money, aslo a big thankyou to Kaye Charles Real Estate for their generosity.

Footy Tipping

The 2017 season has been run and won.

This years top tipper is Alan Morgan, who outclassed us all with his 132 correct tips for the season and takes out our very handsome first prize.

In second spot was a very determined Nick Broekhof, just 2 behind Alan, and should be satisfied with his tipping season.

In equal third was Don Maunder and Pete Frazer, also a further 2 back, a couple of stalwarts of our competition and well deserved picking up of the prizemoney.

We now head into our finals tipping, also with our knockout comp carrying over into the finals series.

Our popular end of season BBQ will be held on Friday night the 15th September, with the awarding of all prize monies and our final countdown of the "pick the whole season" competition.

All are welcome.

Once again I would like to thank the Monbulk RSL for their contribution to



The CWA is holding its annual Oaks Day Lunch on November 9th this year at the RSL. Tickets are limited so if anyone interested closer to the time can contact me 0419 107 827. Thanks, Wendy Dennison

Many Thanks again to:
The office of James Merlino MP
Deputy Premier
Education Minister
Emergency Services Minister and
State Labour Member for
Monbulk,
for kindly printing our newsletter





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Forthcoming Events.

15 Sep 2017 – Footy Tipping BBQ, all welcome

30 Sep 2017 - Footy Grand Final

21 Oct 2017 - Plant sale

7 Nov 2017 - Cup Day

9 Nov 2017 Oaks Day at the RSL

11 Nov 2017 Remembrance Day

12 Nov 2017 - Car show

2 Dec 2017 - Veterans lunch

9 Dec 2017 - Xmas party

22 Dec 2017 - close of business for 2017

MONBULK RSL
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