



Pittwater RSL Sub-Branch Newsletter



JULY 2019

NUMBER 18

Pittwater RSL Sub-Branch

82 Mona Vale Road,
Mona Vale NSW 2103

T: 02 8401 0785
E: pittwater_rsl_subbranch@gmail.com
W: pittwater_rsl.com.au/Sub-Branch.html

Pittwater RSL Club

T: 02 9997 3833

Produced by
Sandra May-Crabb,
Newsletter Editor
M: 0417 944 244
E: smay44@bigpond.net.au

Submissions by:
Deborah Carter
Darren Crabb
Sandra May
Ted Blackwood

Current Membership: 108

The next Newsletter will be published in October 2019



<i>In this Issue</i>	<i>Page</i>
<i>President's Report</i>	1
<i>Anzac Sunday</i>	2
<i>Anzac Dawn Service</i>	2
<i>Vale Cecil Sly DFM</i>	3
<i>Birthdays</i>	3
<i>This Day in History</i>	4
<i>M.V. Nyora article</i>	5
<i>Gwenyth Sneesby</i>	5
<i>New Member</i>	6
<i>Vale</i>	6
<i>On the Horizon</i>	6
<i>Executive Committee</i>	6

President's Report

Vale

It is with great sadness I report the passing of two Sub-Branch members. FLG OFF Cecil Sly DFM Korean War Veteran RAAF Service number O33287. WOFF Colin Petersen RAAF Service number A24889.

Please read Vale in this publication for further information.

April

April was a very busy month with ANZAC Day commemorations including school visits, nursing home visits and a very successful ANZAC Day Sunday and Dawn Service.

This year's theme for ANZAC Day was 100 years of the Australian Nursing Service and respects were paid to all in the nursing profession.

My thanks go to Chief Petty Officer (CPO) Zamri Burns who is the underwater medic specialist at HMAS Penguin and Pittwater RSL Sub-Branch member who gave the ANZAC Dawn Service address. His heartfelt commemoration paid respects to the ANZACS and Veterans, past and present. CPO Burns will be deploying to Afghanistan in July and he shared the amazing commitment that current service personnel endure in conflict zones. Our prayers and good wishes accompany Zamri on his deployment, and we are here to assist his family in any way they need.

We also send our best wishes to SGT Shane Fender and his family whilst he is on deployment.

Other highlights for ANZAC Day commemoration was the March and luncheon at War Vets Narrabeen on Wednesday 17 April. This included a parade lead by the WW2 Veterans in their wheelchairs. On ANZAC Day, I attended the Palm Beach March and luncheon.

May

On Friday 31 May, the Sub-Branch Executive and WW2 Veteran and Living Treasure Gwenyth Sneesby attended the Warringah Remembers (Defence of

Sydney Commemoration) at North Head. The HMAS Kuttabul sank as a result of the Japanese Midget Submarine attack in Sydney Harbour on 31 May 1942, 77 years ago. WRAN Gwenyth Sneesby who was stationed at Kuttabul was luckily on leave the night of the attack. Please read her profile on page 5 of this Newsletter.

At this year's Commemoration, Gwenyth was the only Veteran who had actually served on the Kuttabul. As a result, she became an instant celebrity, and had her photograph taken with former Prime Minister Tony Abbott, event organiser James Griffin MP, Jason Falinski MP, Commander Bernadette Alexander from HMAS Penguin, and students from Mosman Preparatory School.

June

On Friday 7 June, all the Presidents and Honorary Secretaries of the Northern Beaches District Council (NBDC) attended Hyde Park Memorial as the guests of James Griffin MP, State Member for Manly and Veterans DVA Liaison Officer.

On Monday 17 June, Michael Carrodus and I attended Governance training at Hyde Park Inn sponsored by RSL NSW. It has been recommended that all Sub-Branch Executive and Trustees attend this vital training.

Finally, a draft Constitution has been emailed to all Sub-Branches which is to be discussed at Sub-Branch meetings and voted on its implementation at the State Congress in October 2019. A copy of this document can be viewed at the Sub-Branch office on Mondays between 10am and 4pm.

A reminder that the Sub-Branch office is closed on Public Holidays.



Lest We Forget
Regards,

Deborah Carter

Deborah Carter
President

ANZAC SUNDAY MARCH AND LUNCH, 14 APRIL. ANZAC DAY SERVICE, THURSDAY 25 APRIL
Photographs by Michael Mannington and Sandra May





Cec Sly was born in Woodburn, NSW, on December 12, 1926, the son of Lance and Clarice Sly. He received his early education at Woodburn State Primary School before his parents enrolled him at The Scots College Warwick.

It was while Cec was at college that he and 100 other boys were evacuated to Toolburra Station, about 10km away, to set up a school and continue their education when the Royal Australian Army's 2/12 Military Hospital took over the college to set up an Australian general hospital for soldiers in 1942.

In 1948 the Royal Australian Air Force was calling for aircrew cadets to undergo training to become pilots. In June 1948 at the age of 21 he signed up for aircrew training. Cec did his initial flying course at RAAF Point Cook in Victoria where after

many months of intensive training he graduated with his "wings" before being sent to No. 5 Operational Training Unit at RAAF Williamtown in NSW, for advanced training. This was a course for the top graduates who would eventually become the RAAF's first jet pilots. When Cec completed his flying training on P-51 Mustangs, he was posted to the famous RAAF 77 Squadron based in Japan.

With the Korean War now in full swing, and Australians heavily involved, Cec and 77 Squadron were posted to combat duty in Korea, serving at bases in Pohang, Hamhung, Pusan and Kimpo, near Seoul, the South Korean capital. Cec was now flying full combat missions against North Korean MIG jet fighters and conducting ground attack, when things changed for the worse on March 20, 1951. Cec was involved in a low-level sortie against communist ground installations when he came under heavy fire that crippled his P-51 forcing him to bail out over rugged terrain. He was rescued by the US 3rd Air Rescue Squadron which picked him up by helicopter.

Shortly thereafter, 77 Squadron converted to Meteor jets and Cec completed his quota of combat missions over Korea. Cec was

posted to the RAAF's No. 78 Wing in Malta, where he flew Vampire jets and Meteor 7 aircraft.

In 1953, Cec was awarded the Distinguished Flying Medal and the American Air Medal for his gallant service in Korea. He was also afforded the honour of being part of 78 Wing RAAF that conducted the fly pass over the Royal Review for the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1954.

In 1957, Cec took his discharge from the RAAF and started with the civilian airline Qantas. He flew the Sydney to London route, Hong Kong, Tokyo, Fiji and New Zealand on Super Constellations. This was followed by a period of flying DC3 aircraft for a local airline in New Guinea. His flying experience allowed him to become an examiner with the Department of Civil Aviation in Papua New Guinea, then as a senior examiner with the Civil Aviation Authority in Sydney before his retirement.

Cec was married to Valerie for 58 years, and together they raised two sons, Glenn and Brett, who have both become Qantas captains. For many years they have lived in Warriewood.

Cec passed away on 16 April 2019.



BIRTHDAYS - JULY, AUGUST, SEPTEMBER

Sandra May

Christopher Bedwell 07 Jul
 Shane Fender 07 Jul
 Don Tierney 08 Jul
 Jack Evans 10 Jul
 Dorothy Clark 20 Jul
 Jim Colbeck 21 Jul
 Deborah Carter 23 Jul
 Julian Vanslambrouck 27 Jul
 Peter Whipp 31 Jul

Sam Steel 05 Aug
 Cecil Capon 06 Aug
 John Davies 10 Aug
 Walter Nicholls 14 Aug
 Brian Heal 16 Aug
 Geoffrey Jones 16 Aug
 Bernard O'Neill 27 Aug

Cliff Gravenor 02 Sep
 Barry McFarland 08 Sep
 Darren Crabb 17 Sep
 Robert Crowe 18 Sep
 Shane Jones 21 Sep
 Brian Strawbridge 25 Sep
 Evan Williams 26 Sep
 John Vandyke 28 Sep



July

- 04, 1918 **The Battle of Hamel** was the first set-piece operation planned and conducted under Lieutenant General Sir John Monash. It came to be regarded as a model for later Western Front battles.
- 09, 1943 **Nos. 3 and 450 Squadrons, RAAF, and eight RAN Corvettes involved in the Allied invasion of Sicily.** Known as Operation Husky, the invasion of Sicily was the second largest undertaken in Europe during the Second World War, Overlord being the largest. The operation involved 180,000 troops and 2,590 ships.
- 22, 1917 **Four members of the Australian Army Nursing Service win the Military Medal.** Sisters Clare Deacon, Alice Ross-King, Dorothy Cawood and Staff Nurse Mary Jane Derrer, were awarded Military Medals for rescuing patients trapped in a burning Casualty Clearing Station at Trois Arbres, France. These were the first bravery medals awarded to Australian nurses in action.

August

- 02, 1941 **Last major action involving Australians at Tobruk.** After its capture, Tobruk was garrisoned by the 9th Division, elements of the 7th Division and other Allied units. The town was surrounded on three sides by the German Afrika Korps in April, and remained besieged, but able to be resupplied by sea, until December. Most Australians, however, left Tobruk between August and October.
- 07, 1915 **Australians charge at the Nek.** Fighting as infantry, the 10th and 8th Light Horse Regiments attacked the Turkish forces at the Nek, Gallipoli. Three waves went forward, and altogether 375 of the 600 men became casualties, a figure which included 234 dead.
- 18, 1971 **Australian Government announces withdrawal from Vietnam.** The Australian Government announced that the 1st Australian Task Force would be withdrawn before Christmas 1971, and the logistic support force shortly thereafter.

September

- 06, 1951 **HMAS Anzac bombs targets near Haeju, Korea.** The HMAS Anzac was detached from HMS Glory's screen to bombard targets near Haeju, Korea. The Anzac was one of 11 Australian ships to serve in Korea.
- 16, 1942 **Japanese advance in Owen Stanley Ranges stopped at Ioribaiwa.** The Japanese were too ill-equipped and their supply lines too extended over forbidding terrain to enable them to reach their objective – Port Moresby.
- 17, 1944 **Damien Parer killed.** Academy award-winning, Australian cameraman Damien Parer killed while filming American troops on Peleliu in the Pacific. Parer's documentary, Front line Kokoda, won an Oscar for best documentary in 1943. Having filmed Australians in action during the early years of the war, Parer accepted a job with the American film company, Paramount, to film Americans in action in the Pacific.



Damien Parer



Clare Deacon

Her medal was pinned on by King George V. Clare was the only Tasmanian woman to receive this medal.
<https://vwma.org.au/explore/people/56011>



Alice Ross-King

Her final Rank was Major.
<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/P11013368>
<https://vwma.org.au/explore/people/173405>



Military Medal



Dorothy Cawood

<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/P10676555>
<https://vwma.org.au/explore/people/174524>



Mary Jane Derrer

<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/P10726383>
<https://vwma.org.au/explore/people/207850>

For more information on these and other Nurses,
<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/P11013368>

This ship was launched in Emden Germany in 1935 and named "M.V. Adrian". When commissioned, she was used around the Baltic ports carrying timber and general cargo. During the war, she ran Allied blockades around European countries under German control, and did a couple of trips to South America.

The Ship was scuttled by the crew when Germany surrendered.

The "M.V. Adrian" was salvaged by the British and towed to the northern port of Blythe, refitted and renamed the "Empire Conifer" (Young Conifer Trees).

As decided by the Inter-Allied Reparation Agency, Britain handed over the "Empire Conifer" to the Australian Government on 18 July 1946. By October 1946, she had been renamed MV Nyora, and was ready to sail to Australia under Captain A.D. Barling. The chosen name "Nyora" is an Aboriginal translation for native cherry.

This single ship was Australia's only share of 700,000 tons of seized German shipping and at 1750 tons deadweight, she represented a bare 0.2% of the whole tonnage distributed among the Allied nations. Australia's shipping losses had been 49,000 tons.

On 11 November 1946, the MV Nyora set sail for Australia. She arrived in Sydney on 18 February 1947, at which time the crew were paid off.

This ship was the only one on the Australian coast to have no steering wheel, but rather two small buttons mounted on a small platform in the centre of the bridge. The effect of this button steering system was that it acted much more quickly than a steering wheel, enabled finer navigation and required less effort by the helmsman.

The contract for the refit was awarded to Dreadnought Engine Pty Ltd (Nicholson Bros. Ferries) Balmain and work commenced early 1948. After sea trials in February 1949, the ship was commissioned on 23 February 1949 for the Australian Shipping Board (which became the Australian National Line).



In early 1953, John Burke Pty Ltd bought the Nyora and operated on the east coast until 1963. She was then sold to Singapore interests and renamed "Selat Singkep".

GWENYTH SNEESBY - PROFILE

Photos and Article contributed by Deb Carter and Darren Crabb



Service No. WR379
Women's Royal Australian Naval Service - Leading Writer
Served: HMAS "Kuttabul"
1939-1945 War Medal;
Australian Service Medal 1939-1945

I was born Gwenth Forster in 1924. My Father was in the Royal Australian Navy during WW1, and was also seconded to the Royal Navy, travelling to the United Kingdom in a submarine, so the Navy was in my blood!

The recruiting office was in Loftus street, Circular Quay and I signed up there and went into the Navy. I was eighteen. After basic training at HMAS Penguin, I spent the next three years at Bradleys Head Degaussing Range which had been constructed by United States Navy in 1942. Degaussing was a vital element demagnetising a ship's hull against magnetic mines. The Bradleys Head Range employed electronic devices laid on the harbour floor beneath the shipping lanes. As the ships crossed this range, the magnetism of their hulls was measured to ensure they were still fully protected prior to deploying on missions. If not, ships were turned back to conduct additional degaussing.

I was one of eight WRANS who operated the instruments used for the testing of the ship's Magnetic Field; essential for the Electrical Officers to calculate settings required to repel magnetic mines.

Fatefully, I happened to be off duty when my steam ferry, HMAS Kuttabul, was sunk while docked at Garden Island during the Japanese Midget Submarine attack on Sydney Harbour at 2:30am on 01 June 1942.



Gwenth with Tony Abbott and Mosman Preparatory School students at the 77th Commemorative Service of Defence of Sydney Monument, North Head Sanctuary; 31 May 2019

GENERAL

Mission

Providing for the well-being, care, compensation and commemoration of all Service personnel, especially those who paid the supreme sacrifice.

We engage with the general community promoting the patriotic spirit of ANZAC, providing information on our activities, and encouraging membership of, and interaction with, the Sub-Branch and their families.

50 Year Certificate

If you have been a Sub-Branch Member, continuously of any Branch, for longer than 50 years, please contact Deborah as soon as possible. Thank you.

If you know of any Commonwealth service member, regardless of RSL affiliation, the Sub-Branch can arrange an RSL tribute.

Welfare

Our Welfare and Membership Officer can assist you with enquiries regarding war pensions, obtaining service records, membership eligibility and any other queries you may have.

Please contact Deborah Carter on 8401 0785, or send an email to: pittwaterssubbranch@gmail.com

We Need Your Profile

Many members have already provided their profiles. If you haven't done so, how about making 2019 the year to provide 250-300 words about your career.

Please email your copy to Sandra at smay44@bigpond.net.au Thank you.

VALE LEST WE FORGET



With great sadness, we report the passing of two Sub-Branch Members

Cecil Sly DFM

Service Number: O33287
RAAF, 77 Squadron
12 Dec 1926 - 16 Apr 2019
Funeral held on 24 Apr 2019

Colin Petersen

RAAF Service Number: A24889
23 Jul 1935 - 27 May 2019
Funeral held on 03 Jun 2019

Welcome to our recently joined
Sub-Branch Members,
Konrad Gebels and Ted Curtis



We look forward to your participation and support.

Colin Petersen's profile will be published in the October 2019 Newsletter.

ON THE HORIZON



Sun 14 Jul	10:30am	Meeting	Viola Café
Sun 11 Aug	10:30am	Meeting	Viola Café
Fri 16 Aug	10:30am	Nashos Vietnam Veteran's Day	Manly Cenotaph
Sun 18 Aug	10:30am	Vietnam Veteran's day (Northern)	Palm Beach RSL Club
Sun 08 Sep	10:30am	Meeting (Christmas Lunch tickets on sale)	Viola Café

Executive Committee - Contact Numbers

Deborah Carter	President	0414 470 913
Michael Carrodus	Senior Vice President	0414 669 190
Darren Crabb	Vice President	0407 042 547
Graeme Lee	Secretary	0490 014 693
John Ward	Treasurer	0408 236 628
Bob Wood	Assistant Treasurer	0409 712 349
Joan Wood	Pastoral Care Officer	0407 931 987

