



Alstonville RSL Sub-Branch



Standfast 2023

Issue 248

July 2023

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FOR YOUR DIARY:

Next sub-branch meeting
FRIDAY 11th Aug

@ 1200 hr. Followed by lunch

Alstonville RSL Sub-Branch Office Bearers

President	John Porter	0476 677 626	All emails to:
Vice President	Robert Wilson JP	0414 708 662	AlstonvilleSB@rslnsw.org.au
Vice President	Phil Skinner	0427 291 292	
Secretary	John Gordon	0437 509 790	
Treasurer	Garry Henderson-Smith	0400 474 413	

Dear Members,

I hope this finds you all well.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind all members of mental health issues. These are some of the symptoms:

- Feeling anxious or worried. We all get worried or stressed from time to time. ...
- Feeling depressed or unhappy. ...
- Emotional outbursts. ...
- Sleep problems. ...
- Weight or appetite changes. ...
- Quiet or withdrawn. ...
- Substance abuse. ...
- Feeling guilty or worthless.

If you are suffering from any of these conditions, we can assist you find help. Don't suffer in silence please seek assistance. I can be contacted on 0477773140, all calls are strictly private and confidential.

At our last members meeting we voted to change our monthly meeting day, once again. It was decided to trial Friday & Saturdays on a monthly rotation. I'm saddened to hear that this doesn't suit all, and unfortunately, we have lost one of our treasured members in Blue Skimmings. All the best Blue.

This month saw the 70th anniversary of the Korean War. We conducted a ceremony at the Alstonville War Memorial in honour of those who served. Lest we Forget.

Furthermore, we celebrate 50 years anniversary of the Vietnam War. Commemorations are gazetted for several venues. Lest we Forget.



From the President

Many thanks to those members who have assisted with selling raffle tickets. Special thanks to Bob and John for their tireless energy setting up and packing up each day.

Hope to see you at our next members meeting this Friday.

John Porter

President

Sub-Branch Meeting Minutes

MINUTES of the sub-Branch General Meeting Wed 12th July 2023.

The Chair, President John Porter, declared the meeting open at 11.05 hrs with the wreath laid by member Anthony Tyler, followed by the Ode and a half minute's silence.

Attendance was 19, with 7 apologies and one visitor.

MOTION: That apologies be accepted.

Moved – Bob Wilson **Seconded** – Rob Fry

CARRIED

Prospective member Morgan Miles was welcomed to the meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on 14 Jun 2023

MOTION: That the Minutes of the meeting on 14 Jun as printed, be accepted as a true record of that meeting.

One amendment, the seconder for the Apologies was not David Anderson.

Moved – John Gordon **Seconded** – Keith Row **CARRIED**

Business arising from minutes - Nil business arising.

Correspondence:

Secretary read the received and sent correspondence including:

State Circulars; Letters from BSC & Police re approval for Korean Vets Day and Vietnam Vets Day services; Letters from BSC, LJ Hooker, Bunnings & Wollongbar shops for raffle sales tables; Plateau Quilters – (rent increase) deferred to General Business; Blue Skimmings – Deferred to general Business (bus trip reschedule);

Outwards mail

Letters to BSC & Police for approval for EAB Park use for Korean Vets Day and Vietnam Vets Day; Letters to BSC, LJ Hooker, Wollongbar Shopping Centre & Bunnings for Raffle Ticket sales.

MOTION: That the Inwards correspondence be adopted, and the Outwards correspondence be endorsed

Moved - John Gordon

Seconded – Bob Wilson

CARRIED

Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer being an apology, Secretary gave the revenue Statement as at 30 Jun 2023 and the Accounts for payment.

MOTION: That the Revenue Statement as at 30 Jun be accepted, and the Payment of Accounts for Jun/Jul be approved.

Moved – John Gordon

Seconded – Rob Fry

CARRIED

State HQ – Nothing to report

FNCDC –

Next meeting Sunday 23 July, area there any issues? Silence was the loud reply!.

Welfare & Hospital visits

Grahame Gooding reported that visits to St. Vincent's still going ahead, averaging about 4-6 veterans. No other matters. Secretary mentioned that apparently Lismore Base is allowing visitors but you have to be invited. Would a letter to them requesting

visiting rights be advantageous? Grahame suggested that the District Council might be the better idea, John will take it to the DC meeting.

Hall Bookings

Grahame reported no changes. A letter from Plateau Quilters has been received, querying the rent increase. Grahame and John G will meet with them, the members stated that they can negotiate suitable fees with them.

Membership:

Membership is now 75 with Stephen Bryce transferring out. Morgan Miles was roundly welcomed as a potential new member.

Memorabilia

The Secretary stated that he had been contacted last week by Brian P, who feels he has to stand down from Committee & Memorabilia due to health related issues. His position will be temporarily filled until his return. Thank you, Brian, for all the work you have put in, you will be sorely missed, get well soon.

Fundraising

Tickets for the first Bear Raffle are still on sale, \$2 each, with Captain Murray, the wounded Great War Bear as the prize.

Bob Wilson and John have commenced selling tickets in the Annual Quilt Raffle with 8 or 9 prizes, books of 19 are available from the Secretary. Members are needed to man the sales tables of the coming week, a roster sheet is at the back of the hall.

General Business

- Bus Trip – Blue advised that the Ballina SB Bus is now booked for Tuesday 22 Aug to go to Evans Head Bowlo for lunch, the meal will be subsidised by the sub-Branch by \$10 hd. Names to the Secretary by 18th August please.!

- Meeting days – There was general agreement that the current format (Committee, General Meeting then lunch) is excellent, then began a general discussion about the meeting days, one proposal was to try an evening meeting, but it wasn't very well supported. We are not able to please everybody, but we would still like to try to get many members to meetings and to attract new members. Wed meetings are not preferred, so Mondays or Fridays were suggested. David Anderson commented that we need to think of the younger cohort, as most of us won't be here, we should look at what would be more attractive to them. It was finally agreed that to cover both worlds we will modify the trial and alternate the meeting days between a Friday one month and Sat. the next and keeping the current format. This will commence for the next meeting, which will be on Friday 11 Aug – Committee Meeting 10am, General Meeting at 12 followed by lunch. The members resolved to make it so!
- Korean Veteran's Day = Thursday 27 July in EAB at 1200 – a volunteer is needed as Flag Hand.
- Vietnam Veteran's Day – 18 Aug – service at EAB commencing at 1100. Are there any suggestions for a guest speaker?
- EAB Park – Council now have the funds for the final stage of the EAB Park upgrade, the removal of the garden beds and installation of the pathway & additional seating. They hope to be completed by Nov. but we don't want to interrupt the process seeing as how long it has taken to get here!!
- Legacy Centenary Torch Relay - Friday 23 Jun – Grahame Gooding wished to thank Secretary John and Vice President Phil for running the sausage sizzle for the relay, it was greatly appreciated.

Meeting closed at 11.50.

Next Meeting: Friday 11th Aug 1200hrs.

Australian World War II soldiers' partial remains recovered off Kokoda Track, grave sites untouched for 80 years

By PNG correspondent [Tim Swanston](#)

The partial remains of 15 Australian World War II soldiers may never have been found if not for a Papua New Guinean landowner upgrading his property.

Key points:

- Australian archaeologists have recovered partial remains of WWII soldiers on the Kokoda Track
- They are believed to belong to 15 soldiers who were buried in temporary graves before being transferred elsewhere
- A local landowner found the remains in 2018, but plans to examine the site were delayed

Templeton's Crossing is deep into PNG's Kokoda Track — accessible either by several days' walk or a helicopter flight from Port Moresby.

The area marks the site of a series of battles fought in October 1942, during Japan's withdrawal along the Kokoda Track.

During the fighting, 65 Australian soldiers were buried in temporary graves at Templeton's Crossing, among more than 600 soldiers killed in the Kokoda campaign.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P02423.015

A team of local stretcher-bearers carry a wounded Australian soldier through difficult jungle terrain near Templeton's Crossing in 1942. ([Arthur Francis Hobson/AWM P02423.015](#) via [Public Domain 1.0](#))

As the war drew to an end, the graves were systematically cleared, said Andrew Bernie, from the Australian Army's Unrecovered War Casualties Team.

"However the task was an extremely challenging one, with small teams under time pressure, without logistic support, without air support — it was a terrible job and a difficult job," he told the ABC.

The soldiers' remains were transferred to the Bomana War Cemetery in Port Moresby.

But more than eight decades on, a chance discovery revealed the task was not quite complete.

Star pickets used to mark original graves hadn't moved since

In 2018, a local landowner was carrying out terracing of the hilly terrain on his property when he came across what appeared to be human remains.

He alerted local trekking companies to his discovery, and eventually the Unrecovered War Casualties Team was brought in.

After years of COVID-related delays, the team finally made it to the site last month.

Archaeologist Marc Oxenham said when they arrived, landowners told the team they believed that star pickets that stood near where the discovery had been made were simply commemorative.

At the time, his team agreed.

"Because who would have expected star pickets to last for about 80-odd years in tropical conditions?" Professor Oxenham said.

"[But] when we investigated the site, we discovered they were actually original ... they haven't been moved since they were placed to mark the graves.

"With that discovery, it sort of started to make sense — this is why we have people here, because no-one actually thought this was the actual cemetery."

Professor Oxenham's team began the painstaking work to identify and exhume all 65 graves at Templeton's Crossing.

It's no simple dig — the operation involved people trained in human skeletal anatomy, archaeological excavation as well as an officer specialising in crime scenes, who photographed all of the remains.

Working against inclement weather, the team flew into the remote site and camped out nearby for nine-day stretches over several months.

The team retrieved partial remains of 15 soldiers, which have now been sent back to Port Moresby for forensic processing.

Remarkably, the graves are in full view of the well-trodden Kokoda Trail.

"We've had trekkers going through the region for years, there was no reason to dig on that particular river terrace and there was no real reason to believe we would have found anything there anyway," Professor Oxenham said.

Genealogists and World War II historians help piece together final clues

Along with the partial remains, the team recovered pocketknives, part of a bayonet and other personal items in the graves, with the help of an expert in World War II artefacts.

"Even a signet ring that one of the soldiers had ... well over half of the graves had something in them," Professor Oxenham said.

With the remains now recovered, the operation moves into the identification phase.

"We know we have a good start as to who was in each grave and then where they should end up," said Mr Bernie, from the Army's Unrecovered War Casualties Team.

"With the remains that are possible to be further tested, they will be anthropologically analysed to confirm that their stature, age and similar features are consistent with who we should have expected to be coming across.

"Where possible, we'll also use DNA technology to try and confirm that we will get the right soldiers from their temporary cemetery location and marry them up with their substantive remains in their substantive grave."

The team will now engage genealogists to track down the families of these soldiers, so that they can see their ancestors finally laid to rest.

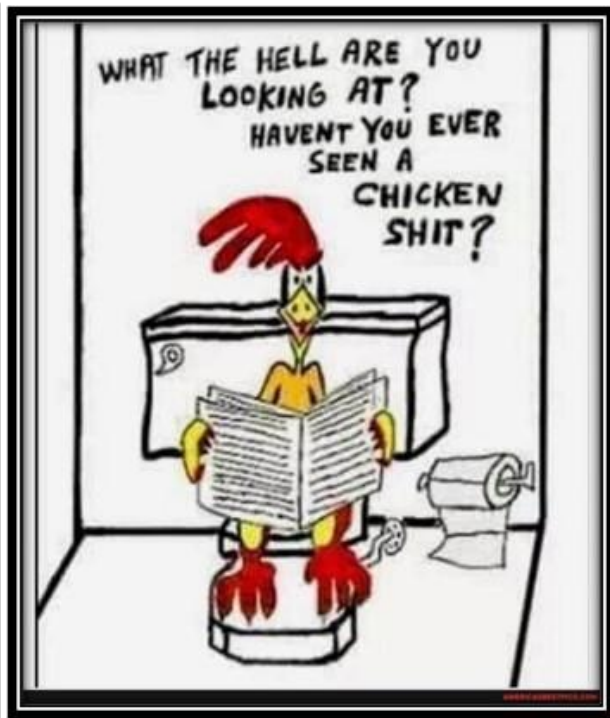
"Now they're going to be with the rest of their bodies and the rest of their mates in the cemetery," Professor Oxenham said.

"It's extremely satisfying work and well worth the effort that's gone into it."

It is believed that the partial remains belong to 15 of the 65 soldiers already identified as having been buried at Templeton's Crossing. ([Department of Defence, Commonwealth of Australia 2022](#) via [Creative Commons 4.0](#))

Posted 25 Jul 2023 25 Jul 2023, updated 25 Jul 2023

The funny side of life:



Happy birthday

David Anderson – 3 Aug

Alan Brown – 4 Aug

Rob Wilson – 13 Aug

Ron Nowlan – 18 Aug

Harry Wood – 24 Aug

Alanna Luvisi – 28 Aug

Mel McGoldrick – 29 Aug

Kev Quinnell – 30 Aug

Many Happy returns! Wishing you a fantastic birthday and wonderful year ahead. Make every day count!

Information:

DVA – Lismore VAN Office:
Suite 8 Level 1 17 Conway Street
Lismore (next to Australian Hearing)
Email: NSWVANLismore@dva.gov.au
Ph 1800 838 372
Mail to
DVA
GPO Box 9998
Brisbane QLD 4001

DVA Gold Card – Many Vietnam and other Returned from Active Service Veterans are not aware of their entitlement to a DVA Gold Card which is not means or asset tested.

To check for your entitlement complete the DVA form D3057 “Application for a Gold Card for Veterans of Australia’s Defence Force”. Those under 70 and not in receipt of any DVA payment can complete DVA form D0506 “Claim to determine Qualifying service by current or ex-member of the ADF”.

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- Guardian Funerals – Alstonville, Ballina, Lismore
- McGraths Real Estate, Alstonville



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Please call:

Ross - 0488078987 or Kim - 0400 983 113

(Image by macrovector/a on freepik)

RSL Tibouchina Day Club

When: Wednesdays @ 10:00am

Where: Rous Mill Hall

What: Enjoy good company, live entertainment, light exercise (suitable for the elderly). Mental stimulation activities, morning tea, lunch
A bus will pick you up and return you to your home within the Alstonville / Wollongbar villages for a \$10:00 contribution.

Who: For members of our community who are looking for social interaction in a friendly welcoming environment.

Contact Marett for more details: **0421 272 643**

Recommended Coffee Shops in Alstonville Main St.

Miles & Henry Coffee Shop

86 On Mail

ESP

The Crossing

All have great coffee and friendly, helpful staff.

Jo Jo's Coffee & Sandwich Shop in the Plaza

Great coffee, scrumptious hamburgers, with friendly and helpful staff.

Jo Jo's supports our badge sellers with coffee and is a favourite of the Lower Deck as a lunch order!