

Southport RSL Sub Branch Newsletter

Volume 11 Issue 1

February 2025



REMINDER
General Meeting
Sunday 24 February
10.30am
Bring your Partner

From the President's Desk

As I begin the writing of this issue of our Newsletter, I find that I can still write to you under this banner. However, by the time you read this issue of our Newsletter I will no longer be your President and I would just like to put on record what a privilege and honour it has been to serve you in this capacity for almost ten years. That is longer than most who have held the position.

I look back now over the years I served and am amazed that I was able to carry out the tasks that I did. Most of you will recall that I took over the position of President after a rather turbulent time in the Sub Branch. Little did I know that the events leading up to my appointment were just a minor ripple on the function of the Sub Branch. In September of 2015, I had only been on the board of the Sub Branch for about a year and three months—not exactly enough time to be able to efficiently oversee the functioning of an RSL Sub Branch.

Your new President, Craig Thomas, will be going through the same steep learning curve that I had to negotiate. Craig's saving grace is that he has served on the board for enough time to have a fair idea of how things operate. I hope you can all give Craig the same support that I received during my time in the position.

It gives me a great sense of achievement to be able to leave the Sub Branch in a very good position for the foreseeable future. Our finances are solid and our association with the Bowls Club could not be better. I look forward to continuing my association with the Sub Branch on a more relaxed and laid-back fashion.

I guess one thing I should make clear here is that I have been asked to continue as the editor of the Newsletter, and I will as long as I can.

The Christmas Lunch Instead of the usual morning tea on the third Wednesday of the month, we decided it might be nice to put on a proper celebration of the festive season by having a sit-down lunch instead. We put our heads together and decided to apply for a grant from our District Office in order to help pay for the event. In doing so, it is a requirement that we have a contribution from those participating in the event. We thought a co-contribution of \$10 would be fair.

We began advertising the event a couple of months early and were very pleased at the response we received. We had planned for an attendance of forty and we soon had that number, and more.

Sub-Branch Newsletter – February 2025

The day arrived and the members and their partners began to arrive with many attired in a festive way. Even I had an elf's hat on!! We had some late attendees and had to quickly set up an additional table. In all, we had almost sixty happy people sit down to an excellent meal.

It was pleasing to see how many wandered around the tables, talking with others.

Our erstwhile secretary, Michael Burg, who had put an enormous effort into ensuring the day went off well, had written a speech which he kidded me into delivering.



We Had a special invited guest, Angie Bell MP, our own Federal Member, who unfortunately could not stay for the meal. But she spent time circulating and talking with most of the attendees and then, someone handed her the microphone. Whoever it was did not know the consequences of handing a microphone to a politician just before an election! But seriously, she gave a very nice speech which I am sure we appreciated.



My Grandson, Hayden, has attended most of the Christmas morning teas we have had over the past few years, and this year was no exception. He takes his job of handing out chocolates very seriously and enjoys the interaction with everyone.

Remembrance Day 2024

The day dawned bright and sunny and it stayed that way for the ceremony.

Craig Thomas, who was the Director that has organised almost single-handedly both of the major ceremonies we hold each year—ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day, had been up very early on the morning of 11 November, making sure everything was in place. Our gazebos were

all in place and one hundred chairs, supplied by the GCCC were all lined up under them.



People began to arrive early and it was not too long before we began to realise that we did not have enough chairs undercover. It is something to address next year.

We have always tried to time our ceremony so that the minute of silence coincides with 11:00 am. We have never got it right on the button but each year we adjust the running sheet so that we achieve our goal. We got pretty close this year.

It was estimated there were over two-hundred members of the public and the veteran community at the ceremony, which was most gratifying.

At the very end, I announced to those present that after being the Master of Ceremonies at both ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day for the past ten-years, this would be my last.

Following the ceremony there were a number of the public that joined us in some nice refreshing cold drinks and light refreshments.

Flight Sergeant, R.H. Middleton, VC Pilot Officer Rawdon H. Middleton, VC (part 1)

A new phase in Bomber Command strategy took place during the last two months of 1942 when Italy, which had thus far only been lightly attacked became the centre of a series of heavy attacks on Genoa, Turin, and Milan.

Attacks against these targets generally presented few problems to the crews after the nightmare German defences and because of the inefficiency and gutlessness of Italian gun, searchlight and night-fighter crews, Air Marshal Harris was able to order attacks on moonlit nights. This aided visual recognition of the target and led to unusually good marking by the Pathfinders and very effective bombing results as a consequence.

The first of these attacks undertaken by the squadron was on 28th November, 1942, when they provided 11 crews of a total force of 192 bombers in a raid on the Fiat works at Turin.



Short Stirling Mk I
OJ-H
Flown by F/SGT R. H. Middleton VC

The crews could see the bends in the river east and south of Turin clearly outlined by the flares which were well concentrated around the aiming point. All crews reported good results and only Sergeant Brooks' crew had to contend with any degree of belligerence on the part of the Italians. He withstood four separate night-fighter attacks but his rear gunner, Sergeant R. Harris, fought off each one quite successfully.

No record of this particular raid would be complete without reference to the superb courage of Flight Sergeant, R. H. Middleton who, although not a member of 460, was an Australian captain serving No. 149 RAF Squadron. Middleton's aircraft was the only one lost on this particular raid and his valour earned him the first RAAF Victoria Cross of World War II.

On 28 November the target for the squadron was the Fiat works at Turin, which involved a flight over the Alps. Flight-Sergeant R.H. Middleton was flying Stirling BF372 (OJ:H) when, in the low-level attack, he was hit and badly wounded, losing his right eye. Other members of the crew were also wounded. Despite desperate wounds the two pilots flew the aircraft all the way back to the English coast, where Middleton kept the aircraft flying until most of the crew had bailed out successfully; Middleton was lost when the aircraft crashed into the sea, but for his bravery he was awarded the VC.

This award was regarded after the war as possibly the finest V.C. of the Second World War and his courage moved an RAF commentator at the time to write: "It does not seem possible that even death could have had the heart to seek out and destroy such tenacious, valiant and enduring courage...No man will know what force uplifted that tortured body in its last struggle for the lives and liberty of a faithful crew. They had urged him to abandon ship over France while strength was still in him, but he refused to leave them prisoners. Rather, he elected, in that inner wisdom with which suffering transcendentalizes the mind, that in the balance their fit lives against his maimed one were the thing for which he must fight and plan with his last strength.

In proof that his plan succeeded there are now in this country five men ready to fight and fly again. They have in their hearts the memory of perhaps the greatest captain of aircraft under whom any crew will ever have the honour to serve, and of a front gunner and engineer to whom comradeship and company of that captain meant more than the certainty of safety, and who determined to be with him to the end as long as any faint hope of his rescue remained. They stuck to him to the last. ...In such men as these is the finest inspiration ever sent to us as people to use our minds and our

limbs – not in the same way, for only to the immortals is given such perfection of service – but for the same purpose, and in order that in our victory the foul indignity of war may be wiped forever from the earth."

RAAF Flight Sergeant Rawdon Hume Middleton, of Yarrabandai, New South Wales, Australia, served in 149 Squadron, RAF in 1942. His promotion to Pilot Officer came after his death, which occurred on 28th November, 1942.

The story of the events in which he earned the Victoria Cross are told in his citation.

(continued next Newsletter)

The Letter "E"

by Anonymous

An interesting bit for English Lovers –
Absolutely brilliant!

One Ishwarchandandrd Vidyasagar, Bengali poet and scholar, jokingly asked Michael Madhusushan Dutt, an Anglophile poet of great repute; "As you are a Master in English, can you make a sentence without using a single 'E'?"

Dutt, the genius, wrote this:

"I doubt I can. It's a major part of many, many words. Omitting it is as hard as making muffins without flour. It's as hard as spitting without saliva, napping without a pillow, driving a train without tracks, sailing to Russia without a boat, washing your hands without soap. And, anyway, what would I gain? An award? A cash bonus? Bragging rights? Why should I strain my brain? It's not worth it."

Political Correctness - Excellent Explanation

We are constantly hearing from the press that Trump is too opinionated and not being politically correct

So, what is meant by the modern term referred to as **'POLITICAL CORRECTNESS'**.

The definition is found in 4 telegrams at the Truman Library and Museum in Independence, Missouri. The following are copies of four telegrams between President Harry Truman and General Douglas MacArthur on the day before the actual signing of the WWII Surrender Agreement in September 1945. **The contents of those four telegrams below are exactly as received at the end of the war - not a word has been added or deleted!**

(1) Tokyo, Japan 0800-September 1, 1945

To: President Harry S Truman

From: General D A MacArthur

Tomorrow, we meet with those yellow-bellied bastards and sign the Surrender Documents, any last-minute instructions?

(2) Washington, D C 1300-September 1, 1945

To: D A MacArthur

From: H S Truman

Congratulations, job well done, but you must tone down your obvious dislike of the Japanese when discussing the terms of the surrender with the press, because some of your remarks are fundamentally not politically correct!

(3) Tokyo, Japan 1630-September 1, 1945

To: H S Truman

From: D A MacArthur and C H Nimitz

Wilco Sir, but both Chester and I are somewhat confused, exactly what does the term politically correct mean?

(4) Washington, D C 2120-September 1, 1945

To: D A MacArthur/C H Nimitz

From: H S Truman

Political Correctness is a doctrine, recently fostered by a delusional, illogical minority and promoted by a sick mainstream media, which holds forth the proposition that it is entirely possible to pick up a piece of shit by the clean end!

Now, with special thanks to the Truman Museum and Harry himself, you and I finally have a full understanding of what 'POLITICAL CORRECTNESS' really means.....

The (Senior Citizen) Proposal

Anonymous

He was a widower and she was a widow. They had known each other for a long time having been high school classmates and, without fail, attended class reunions every year.

On the 60th reunion of their class they had a wonderful, high-spirited evening, the widower throwing admiring glances across the table, and the widow coyly smiling back.

Finally, he picked up the courage to ask her, **'Will you marry me?'**

After about six seconds of careful consideration she answered, **'Yes —yes, I will!'**

The widower was elated as the evening ended on such a happy note. But the next morning he was troubled. Did she say 'Yes', or did she say 'No'? Try as he did, he couldn't remember.

At that point of his remembered proposal his mind was blank.

With fear and trepidation, he picked up the phone and called her. First, he explained that he couldn't remember as he used to, then he reviewed the past evening and renewed his courage to explain, **'When I asked if you would marry me, did you say yes, or did you say no?'**

'Why you silly man, I said: Yes—Yes I will! - and I meant it with all my heart!'

The widower was delighted. He felt his heart skip a beat.

Then she continued..... **'And I am so glad you called because I couldn't remember who asked me'.**



"I don't want to worry you, but the guy who delivered the pizza was your financial planner."



Southport Bowls Club www.southportbowlsclub.com
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 2 Marine Parade, Southport southportbowls@gmail.com
 (07) 5531-2626



Function Rooms for Hire:

- 3 function rooms available to hire.
- We cater to large groups for varying events including: conferences, Seminars, Birthdays, weddings & gatherings.
- Food and beverage packages available.
- Barefoot bowls available.



Bar and Bistro

- Club open from 08:30am.
- Barista coffee available with cakes
- Bistro open Friday- Sunday lunch. Friday dinner and Sunday breakfast (from 8am)
- Weekly specials
- Happy Hour on Fridays 5-6pm



Weekly Events

- Twilight Bowls is on each Thursday, (weather permitting).
- Every Friday night 6pm live music, raffles, & members badge draw.
- Barefoot bowls available each day.
- Social bowls Tues, Wed, Fri, Sat



Proudly Celebrating our 110th Year



“It’s just a backup system for your pacemaker.”

Veterans’ Morning Teas

All members, their carers, partners, friends, and volunteers are welcome to come to our Veterans' Morning Teas. They are held at the Southport Bowls Club every **third** Wednesday of the month, commencing at 10:00 am.

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|---------------------|---------------------|
| 19 March | 16 April |
| 21 May | 18 June |
| 16 July | 20 August |
| 17 September | 15 October |
| 19 November | 17 December* |

***Note:** The December Morning Tea may change depending on arrangements with the Bowls Club

Meeting Dates 2025

Meeting	Date
AGM	Sun, 25 May 25
General	Sun, 24 Aug 25
General	Sun, 23 Nov 25
All meetings start at 10:30	

Current Board Members

John Riebeling	President
Ken Orr	Deputy President
Harold Hansen	Treasurer
Michael Burg	Secretary
Claude Palmer	Director 1
Sandra Riebeling	Director 2
Geoff Young	Director 3
Kevin Lloyd-Thomas	Director 4
Craig Thomas	Director 5
Roger Broady	Director 6

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