

Caloundra RSL Sub Branch

<https://www.caloundrarsl.org.au/index.html>



Newsletter January 21, 2021

Life at our Sub Branch slowly starting to return to normal

There is still a long way to go in the fight to defeat Covid and see society go back to something resembling the normal life we enjoyed up until a year ago.

But there is some blue sky peeking out from behind the clouds, including the reopening of the Sub Branch bar.

For those who missed our rather exciteable bulletin a few days ago: That's right - an agreement with the Services Club means the bar will reopen tomorrow night (Friday, January 22).

This deal is temporary and will be reviewed regularly. It revolves around the Club's need to avoid loss-making activities while business is still down because of Covid, and means that the Club can rent out the Sub Branch lounge on Saturdays and Sundays for weddings, meetings, wakes and so on.

If the Club were to open the Bar only on Fridays it would be uneconomic because a lot of beer would be wasted during regular cleaning of the pipes. Instead, the potential three days' trading each week means the beer loss will be proportionally less and therefore manageable.

So, folks, get ready to party tomorrow from 1500hrs to 2000hrs with raffles, members' draw, trivia and conviviality. Come meet your friends again and celebrate the nearing of the end of the Covid Catastrophe.

SEE YOU THERE.

Give woodworking a thought

Looking for a new interest or want to sharpen up your skills (pun intended)?

Give Caloundra Woodworking Club a thought.

The club has 150 members and operates independently with the Sub Branch President as Patron. Sessions are Monday to Saturday mornings and ladies Wednesday afternoon with about 15-20 members each session.

The equipment available can cater to both large and small projects, and allows members to do carving or pyrography and use lathes, band saws, table saws and loads of other



equipment.

You're welcome to drop into the club (entrance off Ulm St South - next to STEPS) or phone the club on 5437 2007 or chat to Jan Cagney on 0414 727 681.

(If you want to see what's possible, check out Jan's brilliant work on behalf of the Sub Branch itself, its members and her friends, including the boxes used to store the snooker and pool balls in the Sub Branch lounge. - **Editor**)



Museum seeks military uniforms

The Caloundra RSL Museum is Loaded (repeat, Loaded) with male military uniforms but still needs some of the less common ones, and has a severe shortage of female uniforms.

It has some female mannequins it would like to dress (no jokes, please).

If anyone has suitable uniforms they would like to donate to the museum (or knows of a source anywhere that might provide some) please inform Joe Borg by ringing 0412 517 383 or by shirt-fronting him in the Sub Branch lounge on a Friday evening.



Tell us what's happening

This newsletter is your vehicle to tell your mates - and the world - what's happening: what's good, what's different. Send your news tips to editor Terry O'Connor, email TerryO@caloundrarsl.com.au.

Volunteers needed for advocacy and wellness roles

Senior Advocate Ian Harrison tells us he has space for a trainee advocate to replace Pam Gilvear, who has had to reduce her commitments for family reasons.

Ian, the only person in the Sub Branch authorised to mentor new advocates, acknowledges that it will be difficult to replace Pam, who is immensely experienced in handling the complex bureaucracy that handles veterans' issues.

"We are deeply grateful to Pam for her years of work on behalf of veterans and wish her the very best," he said.

The Sub Branch advocacy team also needs more Wellness Support Officers (WSOs) to conduct visits etc in homes or hospitals.

"This is an area we are severely lacking in at the moment," Ian said.

"Several people have already volunteered, which is great, but we always need more."

Anyone interested in either of these roles should phone Ian on 0481 373 885 or email him at ianh@caloundrarsl.com.au.

No Surrender

– A personal tribute to the Rats of Tobruk to commemorate 80 years since the siege of Tobruk

By Zoe Whittingham

The Rats of Tobruk consisted of the fearless 6th, 7th and 9th AIF divisions. Their determination, bravery and humour were the inspiration to our country's greatest feats of arms.

From April to December, 1941, the Rats of Tobruk fought to defend Tobruk, Libya. Because of the deep water in the surrounding coastal area, it was of particular interest to the German and Italian garrison.

Large ships would be able to access the coastal area and just on from Tobruk was an oil supply. Being able to control the oil was often a deciding factor in winning battles.

The British and Australian navies were able to keep the Rats of Tobruk and allied troops supplied for eight months. Sometimes supply was hard because of the constant enemy attacks by air, so the navy used the night to supply the troops as best they could.

Thus they were able to fight off the German and Italian troops in what would be the first time the German "blitzkrieg" style of fighting had been beaten. Previously, no one had been able to stop the Germans in this style of fighting. The seemingly invincible Germans had met defeat and a loss of superiority with the aggressive style of the Australian commanders and the relentless assault of the Australian Infantry with the support of British and Indian soldiers.

During the siege, the Rats of Tobruk lived in extreme heat and worked to defend Tobruk from artillery and air bombardment. The Germans used the Panzer tank to attempt to overwhelm and capture Tobruk. This was unsuccessful as they ran out of fuel. During the siege, a German was heard on the radio and referring to the Australian troops as "rats" because of the tunnels and caves they dug and lived in to survive and to attack the German enemy from, sometimes crawling for miles at night to attack their enemy in silence.

The diligence, commitment, tolerance, courage and determination of the Rats of Tobruk inspires discipline, team morale and excellence in any theatre to engineer our Australian soldiers to victory – and to me, every day.

I bought a rose from a company called Treloar Roses early this year. The company cultivated a rose with a yellow centre to represent sand, and red outer petals to symbolise the blood shed in Tobruk. The roses were sold to commemorate 80 years since the siege and \$2 from every plant is being donated to the Rats of Tobruk association. I bought a rose plant named "No Surrender".to put in the Bob Mc Innes Memorial Garden.

Grounds keeper Phil helped me to find a spot for the rose and I go to the garden and put rose food and water on it sometimes.

When it was first planted it was just a stick and I thought it was not very healthy. To my surprise it grew, and it has produced some lovely roses.

The garden is a beautiful memorial for the bravest and most courageous men and women in our country. It is a place for us to show our respect to the people who fought to preserve our nation's identity, and it is a place for us to re-focus, re-commit, and stay proud of who we are and how hard we have fought to win. Since joining the Caloundra Sub-Branch, I have had a sense of belonging and I have made some nice friends who have been able to give me advice, listen to me, and to enjoy some fun trivia.

I also helped with the petition to save the Bob Mc Innes memorial Garden. A few sub branch members and I took to the streets collecting signatures. I enjoyed hearing stories from the members and helping

them save the garden. I hope we are successful in saving the garden. My dad also built the stand for the Huey helicopter in the garden. Bob asked him to for a carton of beer years ago.

I will hopefully get to meet everyone one day and celebrate all the hard work the Defence Force organisation has been able to achieve.

– **Dedicated to my Grandpa, Henry James Whittingham, Rat of Tobruk, Infantry Division.**



Social bowls report

Great to see such a good roll up for our first social day of bowls on January 10. We had 28 attendees and 26 played. A big thank you to Bonny Perry and Gene Nipperess for cooking the BBQ which was delish, also a big thank you to Pelican Waters Bowls club for allowing us to use their facilities in these very restrictive times. All Covid protocols were followed. Our lovely treasurer Carol informed us the trip to Stradbroke would be going ahead as planned. Carol would like anyone else interested in going to pay their \$100 ASAP so final arrangements can be made.

We welcome new members Donna Thomas and Gari Gibson(Gibbo).

Results: Hooter: Richard Evans

Highest Winning Margin: Harry Ferris and Gibbo Gibson.

Breakfast tray raffles: Gary Sawdy and Margaret Rose. (Big Thank you to Noel Harm for organising the raffles.)

PWBC Vouchers: Margaret Rose, Sharyn O'Connor, Richard Evans and Gene Nipperess.





We will remember her

With deep sorrow we acknowledge the recent death of Myrtle Armstrong Smith, WAAAF WWII. A Poppy Service was carried out for her.

Committee contacts

President: Geoffrey Gardiner 0411 066 251

Senior Vice-President: Heather Christie 0403 625 006

Junior Vice-President: Terry O'Connor 0401 147 107

Treasurer: Ian Harrison 0481 373 885

Committee member: Trevor Smith 0408 033 380

Committee member: Jeff Faulkner 0414 675 509

Please feel free to contact any of your committee members.

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