

Clayton RSL Sub-Branch

“Communicator”

Registration No A0036695E

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FROM THE SECRETARY'S DESK

Well, here I am again and as I think about the cold & wet days and nights we have had recently, I wonder and hope that our members are keeping warm & well. If this is not the case and you need help please come and talk to us and we will see what we can do to assist. If you need assistance

contact **Ann Coram** our **Welfare Officer**, Ann can be contacted through the Staff at reception. Hopefully, you have noticed the new carpet in the George Foster room and into the reception area, it has been a while coming and at long last it has been laid and looks great.

Friday the 27th May we had as you may remember our Frank Sinatra night and what a night, the big Band music, the songs and the atmosphere in the “George Foster Room” was electrifying, those that went along had a wonderful night. By demand he is performing at the club again on **Friday 15th July in the George Foster room.**

For those who missed out this is your chance to catch up and see a wonderful show, take your family have dinner at the club and then enjoy a wonderful night's entertainment in the George Foster Room.

The night is headed up by Hans DeZilwa who sings a charade of Sinatra songs and is he good!

**DON'T
MISS
OUT**



School holiday Fun for the kids



Oh! Get this, **something for the kids**; I know I will be there with my Grand children. **On Wednesday the 13th July at 11.00 am**, we have coming to the club “**Bethany Fisher**” to entertain the kids. Bethany will sing the songs of **Justin Beiber, Hanna Montana** and many more so bring the kids join in all the fun with lots of prizes to be won. Book now at the reception. Adults are free children are \$5 and that includes morning tea. *Great Value*

Morning Melodies

A great morning of entertainment and really great value as the show and morning tea is \$8 and the show, morning tea and a roast lunch is only \$13. Shows starts at 10.30 am

11th July Kingsley Koonwhyte



8th Aug Rick Charles

Secretary's Desk

From my desk not a great deal happening at the moment perhaps winter has slowed us all down. The next R.S.L activity we are heading to is "Remembrance Day" and we will need volunteers to sell Poppies and all should remember that what ever dollars we



collect go towards the Welfare funds at our Sub-Branch, so start thinking about it now as you will note, I am already, as we need to get sellers and without that we cant expect to raise funds for our people who may need support into the future, **SO COME ON be part of this activity.** Get your name down so that we have a list of **Volunteers to speak to during late October** when selling begins. This reminder is not just directed at our members but also our **Auxiliaries, Sporting Clubs and the Day Club as well,** it will be from your support that helps us gain funds for Welfare.



Of course already we are talking to our Primary Schools regarding our Scholarships with the eight (8) local Primary Schools and at the time of this report all our schools wish to take part again this year. The scholarships are for the year 5 & 6 children and the winners at each school receive the scholarship towards the cost of books when they attend their nominated secondary school. The kids put in a brilliant effort and when the winners place there projects in the club in the week prior to Remembrance Day come along and see what they do and perhaps even join us in the George Foster room for the scholarship presentations. More on that as the time comes closer.

On the recent members night (**24th June 2011**) the members key draw was drawn four (4) times and to the delight of many the names drawn were those of members of who were not in the club so the jackpot remains at \$800 and

we all have further chances to win **but you must personally be in attendance** and if it is not claimed over the coming weeks another 4 key draws will be made **on the next members night the 29th July** at the times of **6.05, 7.05, 7.35, 8.05 pm.** However if the draw is won before that date or on the night it will revert back to \$100.00 and again increase each week if the draw is not won. The 4 draws will then cease on the \$800 being claimed..

It was also nice to see a number of new faces in the members Bar on that Friday night as our chefs put on a Webber BBQ tea for members in the sports bar at a small cost of \$10.00. The meal was well received by the members and hopefully we will see more functions in the "**Keith Leake Sports Bar**" Keep your eye out for notices around the club, and then come along and enjoy a hearty BBQ tea and also enjoy the company of other members and their guests. Of course guests are welcome and the cost is only \$15 for them very cheap for a good scrumptious meal with plenty to eat.

On **Wednesday the 6th July** four committee members including myself are heading to the State conference at Caulfield Racecourse, this should be a busy day and in viewing the agenda of the day, there are a number of remits that talk about numerous items EG. Rule changes, other items that relate to Veterans and there Welfare into the future and those of us who are heading there will be looking at the items of interest that effect our members and we will be working to make sure any benefits that come from the remits are voted with the interests of our members in the fore front.

RSL Australian war Graves Service

As the year is progressing and this communication covers July & August I should remind you not to forget the "RSL War Graves Service at Springvale Cemetery. **An annual RSL event held at the Australian War Graves site at Springvale Botanical Gardens on Sunday 6th November 2011 at 2.30 pm.** I will be speaking with the committee and hopefully a bus will be made available to transport our infirm to the Service, more about that in September/October, "Communicator"

Thought of the Day: - Life is too short to wake up with regrets.

So love the people who treat you right.

Forget about the ones who don't.

As someone recently said to me:

"Don't worry about old age-----
It doesn't last that long."



A. Boxhall

J. Burland

E. Nathan

Well that's about all I have this time except **our Treasurer Aranka Illia heads of overseas in August** for a couple of months and I am sure we would all wish her **Bon Voyage and hope she enjoys heading to her homeland** and all the other places she is off to. Have a great time Aranka and we will see you back in October. We will take care of the finances for you!!!!

Profile of a member *"Harold Ramsay"*

Indeed for those who are **Legacy Members** you may have noticed the article on **Harold Ramsey (Life Member of our Sub-Branch)** Harold is a credit to our Sub-Branch and the RSL in general and obviously has seen things in past history as a **"Soldier"** and as a **"Prisoner of War"** that he will never forget. Hopefully we will never again have to go through what our men and women in the 40's were required to put up with and certainly like the discomforts that Harold suffered with many other POW's and he and all those who helped to make our country the safe place it is today and they are thanked for what they did and suffered for our country to make it a better place for us to live in as other Australians have done in later conflicts in the 50's 60', 70s to the current conflicts around the world where our diggers are serving today.

An extract of that news item of Harold Ramsey follows:-

Harold Ramsey's story of wartime survival and persistence



Harold joined the Australian Army at the age of 18. He was captured in Java in early 1942 and was taken to Singapore. Then, with other POWs, he began an 18 month nightmare building the Burma-Thai railway. "We had no medical supplies at all and only three small bowls of rice a day," Harold says.

By the time he was brought back to Singapore Harold had wasted to 38kg. In September 1944 the Japanese ship that he and his fellow POWs were aboard was torpedoed and sunk by a US submarine.

Another Japanese ship rescued them. Over the next 22 days they saw much death and destruction. When the ship finally reached Japan Harold and his remaining mates were sent to a prison camp where they were put to work and bashed daily. Australian military officials had written to Harold's mother informing her that he was now almost certainly dead. "There was a huge US air raid one night and we ran through the gate of our camp just as a bomb blew it to bits," Harold said. About 100,000 Japanese died that night. On 16 August 1945 the bombing stopped and the POWs suspected that the war was over.

The newly freed Australians made their way to Yokohama where they were photographed and filmed in triumphant pose. The pictures

appeared in *The Sun News Pictorial* and were featured on a newsreel. Back home in

Melbourne Harold's girlfriend, Irene, later to

become his wife, clung to the hope that he was alive. Harold's mother who had been told a year earlier of her son's death, saw the Yokohama footage and was overwhelmed. "That's my boy, that's my boy," she cried with joy.

In March 2011 Harold returned to Japan and, once again, attracted wide media coverage. Harold, known for his sense of humour said, "The food and service have improved and I was able to sleep so much better staying in a \$500 a night hotel than when I was a POW sleeping on bamboo with not so much as a blanket.

At the invitation of the Japanese Government five former POWs were selected to go to Tokyo to receive an apology from Japan's Foreign Minister 'for their treatment at his country's hands while they were in captivity'. Harold said, "If you go through life full of hate, the only person you hurt is yourself. I don't forgive but I do believe the apology was sincere".

Harold Ramsey has been a Legatee for over 40 years. Harold was recently invited to Kirribilli House for the announcement by Prime Minister Gillard that the Federal Budget will provide

Australia's ex-POWs extra recognition of their special service and sacrifice. Legatee Ramsey turns 90 this year and still enjoys coming into the city every Tuesday for the Legacy Members' Luncheon. He is now a Reserve Legatee and is proud that many

widows still ring him for a chat or to ask his advice. "When people comment on the number of widows that I have assisted over the years, I say to them that Legacy has been very good for me," said Harold. "When my wife, Irene, died in 1977 I was grief-stricken and it helped me to keep busy by assisting Legacy widows. I tell newly bereaved widows to get out and keep busy". He said his advice to interested people is, "Take on Legacy work – help a widow and it will make you feel ten foot tall".

Note: - Extract of this members profile was by the courtesy & approval of "Legacy" and we thank them for that.

Well; what a story! and as long serving Sub-Branch Service members are aware; Harold was an inaugural member of our Sub- Branch and has held numerous committee positions over many years and has been more than active in our Sub-Branch since our

formation. In my humble opinion Harold is one who you could say, "**I am proud to know such a fair dincum Aussie**"

A little antidote from an Aussie Soldier (hope you enjoy)

Life in the Australian Army...

(Text of a letter from a kid from Eromanga to Mum and Dad. (For Those of you not in the know, Eromanga is a small town, west of Quilpie in the far south west of Queensland)

Dear Mum & Dad,

I am well. Hope youse are too. Tell me big brothers Doug and Phil that the Army is better than workin' on the station - tell them to get in bloody quick smart before the jobs are all gone! I wuz a bit slow in settling down at first, because ya don't hafta get outta bed until 6am. But I like sleeping in now, cuz all ya gotta do before brekky is make ya bed and shine ya boots and clean ya uniform. No bloody horses to get in, no calves to feed, no troughs to clean - nothin'!! Ya haz gotta shower though, but its not so bad, coz there's lotsa hot water and even a light to see what ya doing!

At brekky ya get cereal, fruit and eggs but there's no kangaroo steaks or goanna stew like wot Mum makes. You don't get fed again until noon and by that time all the city boys are buggered because we've been on a 'route march' - geez its only just like walking to the windmill in the bullock paddock!!

This one will kill me brothers Doug and Phil with laughter. I keep getting medals for shootin' - dunno why. The bullseye is as big as a bloody dingo's arse and it don't move and it's not firing back at ya like the Johnsons did when our big scrubber bull got into their prize cows before the Ekka last year! All ya gotta do is make yourself comfortable and hit the target - it's a piece of piss!! You don't even load your own cartridges, they comes in little boxes, and ya don't have to steady yourself against the rollbar of the roo shooting truck when you reload!

Sometimes ya gotta wrestle with the city boys and I gotta be real careful coz they break easy - it's not like fighting with Doug and Phil and Jack and Boori and Steve and Muzza all at once like we do at home after the muster. Turns out I'm not a bad boxer either and it looks like I'm the best the platoon's got,

and I've only been beaten by this one bloke from the Engineers - he's 6 foot 5 and 15 stone and three pick handles across the shoulders and as ya know I'm only 5 foot 7 and eight stone wringin' wet, but I fought him till the other blokes carried me off to the boozier.

I can't complain about the Army - tell the boys to get in quick before word gets around how bloody good it is.

Your loving daughter,

Susan

Now all the SOCIAL ACTIVITIES IN OUR SUB-BRANCH

Bingo is conducted in the **George Foster Room** each **Tuesday & Saturday** and all are welcome. Come along and enjoy this day.

Our **Bluebird Day Club** is a very active group and meets in the **George Foster** room every Thursday and they would welcome new members.

Every Saturday night you can book in and **head down to the Jazz nights**, it is well worth coming along and hearing some great music. Our girls at reception will give you a contact number for bookings and before hand, why not have dinner in the "**Sovereign Bistro**", great meals at reasonable prices are offered by Lisa.



Friday night Members **Happy Hour** continues with a **Key Draw & Raffles** being run for the enjoyment of all.

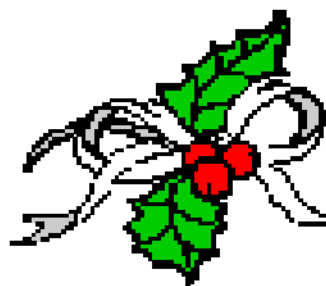
Then we have **MEMBERS Night** the last Friday of the month, so come along swipe your card and participate in the **special bonus members draw with a prize value of \$200.**

Our Sovereign Bistro is fully functional with a great Menu at very competitive pricing and they are enjoying good numbers attending each day & nights and if you wish to have.

Your special private or business Function at the club contact Lisa and she will be more than pleased to assist your needs. Seniors lunches are available weekdays.

You're Family, their Children your Grandchildren & Friends would be made more than welcome in the Sovereign Bistro.

Don't forget Xmas in July in the Bistro with a seniors 2 or 3 course meal starting from \$13.90 for 2 courses. Enjoys the warmth of the club and a hearty Xmas Lunch bring your family and friends and enjoy the hospitality. The lunch is available from Monday the **18th to the 22nd July.**



**Ask our staff
about our in
house
promotion**

Of course we also have several very active Sporting Sub-Clubs in the Sub-Branch they are: - Angling, Bowls, Darts, and over 55's Snooker & Billiards.

Not forgetting of course our **Ladies Auxiliaries** the War Widows Auxiliary, Women's Auxiliary and Legacy Auxiliary and all our Sub clubs and auxiliaries have vacancies. If you have interest in becoming a member of any of these clubs please ask for a contact from the reception staff.

In closing; I ask for your participation in helping with our **volunteer work** such as Hospital visits to members who need our support or are lonely and nowadays have no local family to visit them. You are invited to come along to our **Welfare meetings that are held on the 4th Tuesday of the month at 3.30pm. Any member is welcome to attend and see what the Welfare members do for our Sub- Branch and its members. Ann Coram heads up this committee and she would make you more than welcome.**

Finally, I noticed this sign recently!!



Memorabilia

Recently; as you would have noted the Propeller from the front display room has been removed. It was a nightmare in having it dismantled as it weighed in excess of 80 pounds (37 Kg) and due to water damage to the room it was necessary that it be removed. I am told when it was located in the room; the room was then built around it with no thought to how it may be taken out in the future. In considering how it was to be removed and what its future would be it was decided to **speak with the RAAF Museum** at Point Cook and see what the best outcome would or could be (the task of us removing it and relocating it was unfortunately to difficult due to its weight and size) so after several discussions it was decided to **“donate the propeller to the RAAF Museum at Point Cook”** and with their expertise it was disassembled and taken to the museum where eventually it will appear on show as a **donation from the Clayton RSL Sub-Branch**. I have heard numerous comments about its worth well to set the story straight had it had its inner workings (Several parts were missing) and we had the log books then yes it was worth a few bucks, but as it is, it is not worth much it appears as we have no history on the item at all. But to the likes of the RAAF museum it is a wonderful display piece. It appears it is from an English plane and the museum after investigating its identification will get back to me and tell us what it came from and when it was flying. We can rest assured that this propeller is in the best place and will be well cared for.

In the room was a **Navy hat from HMAS Australia** and we are told by the registrar at RAAF Museum that it is quite rare and we are lucky to have it. Does any member know where it came from or its owner as I would like to have it recorded? We also have a RAAF cap and a Slouch hat and we think we can trace who owned these as they do have service numbers with the hats and I will follow this through. I

am also currently reviewing our memorabilia in the Members Bar and attempting to identify and record what we have as unfortunately we have no records of any of our Memorabilia. If any member has any knowledge of our items on display would you please inform me to enable a register to be put into place? I am currently organising display cards for our weapons and the RSL Armourer is helping with that. If you have any information on the swords (one or more are of Japanese origin) I would be most appreciative of it.

NOTE: **Just some house keeping for the benefit of members.**

If you have a concern or suggestion and want it addressed please **do not hassle our staff as they cannot help you**. Direct all your inquiries to the undersigned and it will be attended to without hesitation in due course. I can be contacted via email reception@claytonrsl.com.au I will then make contact with you ASAP.

Remember, your committee is there for the management and control of all matters that relate to Our Sub-Branch and its members or any matters relating to the RSL in general and they are there to address your inquiries. Please do not direct your concerns to Staff Members as mentioned above.

Well, on that note I look forward to catching up in the club. By the way I am available and at the club on most Tuesdays from **11.00 am to 2.30 pm approx** or **Thursdays between 11.00 am and 1.00pm approx**, other times by appointment.

Well; by for now look forward to seeing you around the club.

Bruce

Bruce Williams Sub-Branch Secretary.

Disclaimer The views and articles expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the policy and views, official or otherwise of the committee and/or Management of the Clayton RSL Sub-Branch.

NOTE: This news letter can be found on the web site and copies around the club and in the members bar.
www.claytonrsl.com.au