

# ANNUAL REPORT 2024

Leongatha RSL Sub Branch



Community | Veterans | Commemoration

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# Introduction

## *Leongatha RSL's Mission Statement*

The mission of the RSL is to support the well being and betterment of our members - serving and ex serving men and women of the ADF, our allies and their families - with provision of welfare and commemorative services and, where appropriate, contribute to worthy needs within our broader community.

## *Leongatha RSL's Vision Statement*

The Leongatha RSL will strive to provide a first class facility showing a high standard of service and community support. We recognise our role in the education of the public, especially young people, on the sacrifices made by those who have served their country. We aim to promote a living community spirit and uphold the values and respect for each other and support of your mates.

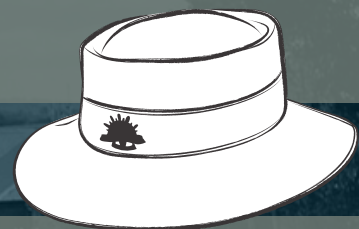


# Past Presidents

1919-26	H. Pern	†	1968-69	G.S. Peacock	†
1927-31	V.Amos	†	1970-71	M. O'Brien	†
1932-36	H.Pern	†	1972-73	D.R. Tuff	†
1936	E.R. Harding	†	1974-75	E.D. Rixon	†
1937-38	V.Amos	†	1976-77	G.E. Martin	†
1939	J. Dowling	†	1978-79	L. Goldsworth	†
1940	E. Bellingham	†	1980-81	R.S. Gaudion	†
1942	J. Luckie	†	1982-83	A.A. Marshman	†
1942	R. McIndoe	†	1984-85	J.A. Dowling	†
1943	E.J. Vagg	†	1986-87	W.L. Shergold	†
1944	T.R. Dalliston	†	1988-89	A.G. Foster	†
1945	F. Vagg	†	1990-91	D.R. Tuff	†
1946	Rev. D. Southey	†	1992-93	E.J. Martin	†
1947	N.A. McDonald	†	1994-95	J.A. Dowling	†
1948-49	R. Rutherford	†	1996-97	A.A. Marshman	†
1950	H. Stone	†	1998-99	*R.J. Matthews	
1951	D. Murphy	†	2000-03	K. F. Rooney	
1952	A.N.L. Murphy	†	2004-05	J.A. Dowling	†
1953	A.R. Perrett	†	2006-07	L.W. Canobie	†
1954	A.G. Miles	†	2008-09	R.E. Cameron	†
1955	L. Longmore	†	2010-11	*D.H. Edwards	
1956	R.S. Eccles	†	2012	G.F. Heath	
1957	K. Wightman	†	2013-15	P.J. Carruthers	†
1958-59	R. Seidel	†	2016-17	S.J. Wisdom	
1960-61	L. Trotman	†	2018-19	K.W. Wanklyn	
1962-63	W. Tilson	†	2019-20	K.W. Wanklyn / C.A. James	
1964-65	A. Spencer	†	2021-23	G. Cooper	
1966-67	S. Gaudion	†	2024-25	W.J.A. Verboon	

# Life Members

E.R. Harding		†	H. Tilson	1994	†
L. Trotman		†	W.L. Shergold		†
R. Fletcher		†	J.F. Rourke	1998	†
A.G.L. Crombie		†	A.A. Marshman	1999	†
V.D. Cahill		†	A.Davies	2010	
R.S. Gaudion	1991	†	A.G. Foster	2013	†
R.E. Cameron	2004	†			





# Presidents Report

Bill Verboon

We started the year with the resignation of our Treasurer Ross Newton due to ill health. Mark Carruthers took over at short notice and has done an outstanding job with his professionalism towards the task. The club is in safe hands with Mark at the helm. My thanks go to the Committee for their support over the past 12 months while I transitioned into the role of President.

We undertook a major change in the last 12 months with new paint, carpet and furniture to update the ambiance. This was coupled with a new direction in the progression of the RSL to be more Community Based. Our community nights each Friday have become popular with many community clubs now joining in.

During the year I had the privilege of attending the ANZAC Day service, Koorooman House and the Salvation Army on ANZAC Day.

The selling of badges was a highlight for me and this year was the first time that we hosted a thank you morning tea for all those volunteers that did a magnificent job selling badges on behalf of the RSL.

This year the committee identified a gap in the participation of service members on the committee. This led to us sending out an expression of interest letter to fill the vacant roles on the committee on a co opted basis. After an exhaustive process the Committee invited Peter Graham, Andrew Ashton and Gary Quinn to join the committee for the remainder of the year in a non-voting capacity.

During the year we were pleased to be able to assist Meeniyan RSL who struggled for members and have decided to go into recess.

As part of our commitment to educating the public and respecting the service men and women of Leongatha we undertook 2 projects over the past 12 months.

Firstly, the Ode was placed on the window facing Smith Street and Michael Place. This received great feedback.

Secondly, we commissioned a mural painted by member Rob Wood near the main entrance of the club. This also received great feedback with many people stopping to have their photo taken in front of the mural.

I would like to thank our welfare advocates, Phil Head, Terry Busk and our Chaplin Cyril Payne for their tireless work in assisting our service men and women in their claims with the DVA.

Wendy Wyhoon and Kerryn Wylie do a great job in looking after our veterans needs and the trip to the Botanic Gardens for Veterans Health week was a great day.

Finally thank you to Greg Nugent and his staff for the way that they have worked hard to ensure that the Leongatha RSL operates in a professional manner .



# Treasurers Report

Mark Carruthers

The overall result for the year 2024 was a net loss of \$318,585.00. The majority of this loss is due to non cash items which have been written off, including

- Increase in annual leave liability \$110k
- Increase in LSL liability \$42k
- Additional depreciation on gaming machines/ software \$88k
- Loss on changeover of gaming machines \$25k
- Additional EGM entitlement interest \$14k

After taking these items into account, the actual operations of the Sub Branch made a \$26,450.00 profit.

The operations for 2024 have seen a marked increase in bistro and bar trade especially in the second half of the year after some minor renovations had been done. We have also invested in new gaming machines and upgraded a few games which has meant our gaming turnover has again seen an improvement over the past 12 months. I believe with the foundation put in place over the past year, the Sub Branch is in a terrific place to be able to make even more improvements to the venue in the medium term.

## **Patriotic Fund Financial Result for 2024.**

The overall result for the Patriotic Fund was a deficit of \$195,276.00 a marked improvement from the prior year \$430,167.00 loss in 2023. A significant portion of our expenses are in relation to depreciation expenses of buildings totalling \$410,439.00.

The cash flow for the Patriotic Fund was positive for 2023, increasing by approximately \$3,000.00 to \$469,135.00, up from \$466,545.00 at the end of 2023.

Overall, financially the Sub-Branch and Patriotic Fund are in a sound position going into the next few years, with plans for future improvements over the coming years. We should hopefully see an increase in patronage over the next few years.

Full copies of the Financial Report are available at the Sub-Branch on request.



# General Managers Report

Greg Nugent

It is with great pleasure that I write this report as General Manager of Leongatha RSL Subbranch.

The past 12 months have been very exciting with initiatives being introduced to increase our presence as a community club as well as some great work done by our Veteran Services team.

The introduction of our Community Nights has been well received with a number of clubs taking advantage of the opportunity to raise much needed funds for their community group or sports club. Since its inception to the time of writing \$14,000 has gone back into the coffers of local clubs.

It is pleasing to see that most members have embraced the changes that have been implemented, and our results are beginning to reflect that. There are many people that have contributed to our improvement over the past 12 months.

I would like to thank President Bill Verboon for his support over the past 12 months. It is refreshing to have a President that cares for the staff and members like Bill does.

Treasurer Mark Carruthers has been an immense help, having come into the position in the latter half of the year. Mark and I have worked closely together to deliver results to the members

The committee of the Leongatha RSL have been very supportive in embracing change and while we have had a couple of hiccups along the way the result is that we are all moving in the one direction.

A big thank you to the Management team led by Ricky McNaughton who have supported me since my appointment to the role. I know sometimes they think I am from a different planet (in a good way!) but they have always been supportive in any new initiative.

Our Head Chef Jake, supported by Bistro manager Nicole heads up a very busy kitchen operation and the improvement in quality and service has been amazing.

I would like to acknowledge the amazing work that our welfare and advocacy officers do in looking after our Veteran's needs. They all go far above and beyond for their clients in assisting them achieving their outcomes.

During the last year one of our staff members Kate Gourlay was the winner of the Statewide RSL Loyalty Champion of the Year award. Congratulations go to Kate on a job well done.

Finally, looking to the future, we are well positioned to become the hub of the local community in the delivery of Veteran services, entertainment and hospitality. I hope the members of the Leongatha RSL share our enthusiasm to make our Club a destination Club in South Gippsland.

# Our Volunteers



Our fabulous volunteers once again out did themselves this year, raising staggering amounts of money through the Anzac and Remembrance Day appeals. Once again we're blessed to have our valuable volunteers step up to give up their valuable time. Our volunteers wear many hats including driving vulnerable people to appointments, delivering hampers, raising money through selling merchandise, helping with veteran assistance and much, much more. We thank them for their amazing contribution to their community.

# Compensation Advocates

Terry Busk



Phil Head



Our Compensation Advocates Terry and Phil do an immense amount of volunteer work assisting ex service men and women and their families to ensure that they receive any assistance that is required. Terry and Phil are available by appointment on Thursdays at our Welfare Hub and we thank them for the amazing work that they do.



# Welfare and Volunteers

For Veterans Health Week our Welfare Officers Wendy and Kerryn took a bus trip to the Cranbourne Botanical Gardens. The weather was wonderful and a great day was had by all meandering through the beautiful gardens, having lunch and some even lucky enough to enjoy a shuttle ride with a tour guide pointing out the special features.

Wendy and Kerryn continue to do a fantastic job of supporting our veterans and war widows through our Welfare Support Program by visiting, helping with shopping and appointments and through wellbeing checks over the phone. They are also instrumental in organising our volunteers who assist by driving veterans to hospital and medical appointments, sometimes even in Melbourne. In previous years they have organised hampers for veterans, families, war widows and people in need around Christmas, this year instead of hampers, gift cards to the RSL or IGA were given and were very well received.

Kerryn's monthly Wednesday veterans lunches have been increasing every week and continue to be a great outlet for guests to socialise and get out and about, with some new friendships being formed and a lovely afternoon being had by all.

As always we couldn't do the things that we do for our community without all of these people. A big thank you to everyone who contributes to our welfare, veterans and volunteer programs.



Welfare Officer  
Wendy Wyhoon



Welfare Officer  
Kerryn Wylie



# Commemoration

As always, the Leongatha RSL actively commemorated ANZAC Day, Remembrance Day and Vietnam Veterans Day where we joined the nation to acknowledge, honour and remember those who have served our country in all wars, conflicts and peacekeeping operations.

## ANZAC Day

Our Dawn Service was held at 6am at the Cenotaph in Leongatha with a good crowd in attendance, followed with a Gunfire breakfast back at the RSL. At 11am our Commemorative Service began with M.C. Noel Laing and President Willem Verboon opening with introductory remarks. Music was provided by South Gippsland Shire Brass Band followed by an address by Melina Bath MP. The ANZAC Requiem was performed by Leongatha Secondary College students Bodhi Abernethy and Chloe Challis followed with the singing of both the Australian and New Zealand national anthems by Jen Holm. Light refreshments were provided back at the Leongatha RSL after the closing of the service. We must also acknowledge the wonderful volunteers that helped out on this day and the kind donations of food from local businesses for the breakfast.



## Remembrance Day

President Bill Verboon welcomed all guests and gave a commemorative address. Wreaths were laid by various dignitaries and community members, followed by a moving rendition of 'The Last Post' by Natalie Meadows, a minute silence and the 'Rouse'. A light morning tea was enjoyed back at the RSL.

## Vietnam Veteran's Day

On Vietnam Veterans Day, August 18<sup>th</sup> we held a Commemorative Service at the Cenotaph in Leongatha at 2pm followed by a light afternoon tea at the Leongatha RSL listening to local veterans share their stories to music and a slideshow.

# Committee

In 2024 the Leongatha RSL Sub Branch committee consisted of 9 members - 5 Executive and 4 Committee members.

Bill Verboon  
President

Geoff Cooper  
Immediate past  
President

Gordon Vagg  
Vice President

Vivian Carroll  
Secretary

Mark  
Carruthers  
Treasurer

Susan Weir  
Committee

Peter Graham  
Committee  
Co Opted

Andrew Ashton  
Committee  
Co Opted

Gary Quinn  
Committee  
Co Opted

# VALE 2024

The Leongatha RSL recognises the following members who passed away during 2024

## Service Members

Da Silveira, Kevin  
Fennell, Robert  
Fischman, Roy  
Hill, Eric  
Hopkins, Patrick

Hunter, Donald  
McDonald, Leo  
O'Connell, Michael  
Pearson, Robert  
Riches, George

Thornborrow, Brian  
Thurlow, Benjamin  
Washfold, Graham  
Wright, Gregory

## Affiliate Members

Alexander, Frances  
Atkin, Peter  
Barrie, Ian  
Crawford, Carole  
Cruickshank, Jess  
Emmerson, Rodney

Glasgow, Jack  
Harper, Margaret  
McDonald, Nellie  
Millett, Edwin  
Opperman, Alexander  
Seys, Kaye

Smith, Christine  
Spaull, Graham  
Tobias, Graeme  
Wallis, Gary  
White, Trevor  
Wisdom, Eileen

## Social Members

Bellingham, Cynthia  
Boag, Alan  
Bowler, John  
Church, Andy  
Davis, Suzanne

Doull, Mark  
Evison, Gwen  
Horobin, Frank  
Lovie, Shirley  
Michael, Geoffrey

Parry, Jan  
Runciman, Graeme  
Smith, Greg  
Tuckett, Lynette  
Young, Graham

## Lest We Forget