



Mildura RSL Sub Branch Inc.

2024 Annual Report

VETERANS SUPPORT

COMMEMORATION

COMMUNITY BENEFITS

INTRODUCTION



Mildura RSL's Mission Statement

The mission of the RSL is to support the wellbeing 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 the broader community.



Mildura RSL's Vision Statement

The Mildura RSL will strive to provide a first class facility showing a high standard of service and veteran 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 of respect for each other and support of your mates.

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LIFE MEMBERS

† 1960	N.J. NOYCE
† 1963	E.C. VANDENBERG
† 1966	J.W. O'BRIEN
† 1966	W.H. WYNNE
† 1968	J.D. RICHARDS
† 1970	A. THOMSON
† 1978	S.G THOMPSON
† 1989	J.V. CALNAN
† 1992	E.P. GREEN
† 1993	H.A. BAXTER
† 1996	L.J. FRASER
+ 1997	A.B. BOX
† 1997	W.H. DUFF
† 1997	E.A. GRIFFITHS
† 1998	A.K. KENNEWELL
† 1999	R.C. STANDISH
† 1999	R. SHARPE
2000	K.J. BARCLAY
† 2003	S.J. PORKER
† 2003	K.G. DUTTON
† 2004	L.S. ANDRISKE
† 2005	R. HAYNES
† 2006	M.S. WHITING
2007	J.F SEARLE
2010	K. MUSTEY
† 2011	A. WILSON J.P
† 2017	K.M. WRIGHT
2018	P. MCDERMOTT
2022	J. BRANIFF

PAST PRESIDENTS

† 1919-20	G.I. PICTON
† 1921	L. LEVY
† 1922-23	N.F WELLINGTON
† 1924	R. EGGE
† 1925-30	DR H.H. MCWILLIAMS
† 1931-33	W.B.HOARE
† 1934-35	L.W MANSELL
† 1936-37	T.J. HOLMES
† 1938	H.M HARRISON
† 1939-40	T.J. HOLMES
† 1941-44	A. BAILLIE
† 1945	F.J. RANSOM
† 1946-47	A.J. RICE
† 1948-49	C.D. CAMERON
† 1950-54	H.E. DICKINSON
† 1955-56	N.J. NOYCE
† 1957	S.C. MILLS
† 1958	K. BARNES
† 1959	J.P. FARMER
† 1960	T.J.CHAMBERS
† 1961	L. WELLS
† 1962	DR C. BOWMAN
† 1963-64	A. THOMSON
† 1965	C. O'NEILL
† 1966	C.H. BIRD
† 1967-68	A. THOMSON
† 1969 70	F.T. GILSHENAN
† 1971-72	J.W. O'BRIEN
† 1973-74	S.G.THOMPSON
† 1975-76	W. DUFF
† 1977-79	E.P GREEN
† 1980-81	W. DUFF
† 1982-84	P. DALTON
† 1985-86	L.J. FRASER
† 1987	P. DALTON
† 1988-89	F.C RUSSELL
1990-91	R.N.MCCALMAN
† 1992	F.C. RUSSELL
† 1992-93	S.J. PORKER
† 1994-96	E.A. GRIFFITHS
† 1997-02	K.G. DUTTON
2003-04	K.J. BARCLAY
† 2005-10	A.J. WILSON
† 2011-16	A.J. OUCHIRENKO
† 2016-21	G.A. PEARSE

COMMITTEE 2024



PAUL McDERMOTT
PRESIDENT

Paul served 9 years in the RAN Air Branch performing meteorology and navigational tasks. On two occasions Paul served on HMAS Hobart (Gun Ship) in Vietnam. He returned to Mildura in 1975 where he worked in media for over 30 years.



BRAD McGLASHAN
VICE PRESIDENT

Brad served 6 years in the Army and was deployed to East Timor in 2002. Brad stood for the committee with commitment to help bring younger veterans into the RSL and to help with their transition into civilian life.



SCOTT RICHARDS
SECRETARY

Scott served in the Army for more than six years with 3RAR and deployed to Afghanistan in 2017. Originally from Mildura, Scott and his family moved back to the district in 2021.



ROBERT BIRNIE
TREASURER

Robert has served over 10 years in the Army, with the majority of his time spent in the 2nd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment. He has completed numerous tours of Iraq and Timor Leste.



JOSH FRASER
COMMITTEE

Josh is a local veteran whom served in the Australian Army for eight years from 2011 to 2019 as a Paratrooper. Josh was deployed on operations to the Middle East in 2014.



TIM HAWSON
COMMITTEE

Tim served in the Army Reserve for 16 years and Full-Time for 2 years with 6RAR and was deployed to East Timor in 2000. He also served with Victoria Police for 21 years.



CHRIS MERLIN
COMMITTEE

Chris is a successful sole business owner and long time member of the Mildura RSL. He is a family member of local World War I and II soldier settlers.



GEOFF INGALL
COMMITTEE

Geoff joined the Australian Regular Army in 1976 and served as an infantry soldier until leaving the army in 1998, completing 22 years service and reaching the rank of Staff Sergeant.



COLIN HAMENCE
COMMITTEE

Colin is the son, brother and nephew of returned servicemen whom served in New Guinea, Vietnam and the Middle East. He is a long time member and supporter of the Mildura RSL.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Being President for the Mildura RSL for 2024 has been an honour and a privilege. We have witnessed the renovation come to a completion of a \$4 million refit including our front entrance, reception, main function room and bathroom facilities. From the moment you enter our premises you experience a total transformation, it's little wonder we've achieved outstanding growth as our membership now exceeds 7,000, whilst our service and affiliate membership had a combined increase of 53%.

Our new General Manager, Mark Turlan, who replaced Kim Archibald, our former longstanding GM, for 40 years of our Sub Branch, has proven to be a real winner with the changeover being extremely smooth.

The highlight of 2024 for me was the opportunity for our Sub Branch to be invited to the State Annual Conference which of course we accepted. Their request was for us to share our story on how we have managed to achieve such a wonderful outcome for the Mildura RSL and its membership. Fellow committee members Brad McGlashan, Scott Richards, Paul Mensch and myself delivered a presentation to those in attendance as well as those partaking online. We spoke of the variety of services and support we provide for our veterans and members. The presentation was well received and appreciated. It is hoped that this may provide other Sub Branches with ideas they may be able to implement.

Our committee members have also dedicated their own time towards RSL Active, a program set up to involve veterans, partners and their children to enjoy a monthly get together. During the year the RSL Units have received improved lighting and better security which has created a safer environment for our residents.

During the year we lost one of our Ladies Auxiliary members, Alice Griffiths, the wife of past President Ted. Alice was a most admired member of our RSL and will be sadly missed.

In closing, I'd like to thank the following people. Our members for your continued support and patronage. Our wonderful volunteers throughout the year, where would we be without you! The committee members, including Paul Mensch, Manager of Veterans Services and to our staff for your dedication and commitment, it's appreciated whilst serving the Mildura RSL.

Paul McDermott

President



TREASURER'S REPORT

It is my pleasure to present the Treasurer's report for 2024. I am pleased to report that an overall combined profit of \$1,102,219 was achieved.

The Sub-Branch Inc. (SB) reported an operating profit of \$762,936. Whilst this is down on 2023, this is still a very good result. There were several factors which contributed to this. The renovation of the function room was not completed until April 2024, which caused limitations with some of the normal day to day operations, in particular Bingo did not resume operating until May. With reduced seating capacity this too impacted the profitability of raffles.

Further, the RSL is not immune from cost of living pressures, which has seen our costs increase across the board, but particularly noticeable in the areas of wages, as well as electricity. Other areas where large increases occurred included repairs and maintenance (largely for roof, hot water and refrigeration repairs), as well as depreciation.

Despite this, bar and bistro sales were well up on 2023 (7.78%), as too was gaming revenue (4.96%).

The Patriotic Fund (PF) achieved an operating profit of \$339,284. The PF is the owner of the land and buildings and derives its income from charging the SB rent, predominantly for the purpose of maintaining as well as funding future improvements and renovations to the building. The PF must also spend a predetermined amount on veterans based on a percentage of the profitability of the SB.

Whilst the profit of the PF was down on last year, this largely related to an increase in veteran spend, particularly on security and lighting improvements at the RSL Nash Court Units.

An adjustment has been made to the 2024 Statement of Income, this was required as the renovations were funded by the SB, however are an asset of the PF.

During 2024, the Mildura RSL as a whole has provided \$498,243 in financial support directly to veterans as well as the wider community. Such support includes:

- Employment of a Veteran Advocate as well as funding their office operating costs.
- Veteran financial support.
- RSL Active Events.
- Discounted lunches each Wednesday for veterans and their partners.
- Veterans over 85 receive complimentary membership, meals and drinks.
- RAAF Memorial & Museum operational costs.

Our support is not limited to the veteran community, we have also provided financial support to community events such as the Mildura Airshow as well as organisations such as the Dareton Men in a Shed, Mildura Lions Club and the Lake Primary School Memorial Garden.

In summary, the Mildura RSL has once again had a very strong financial result in 2024, and is in a very sound financial position with excellent cash reserves and a solid equity position.

Rob Birnie

Treasurer



VOLUNTEERS, GETTING THE JOB DONE

- Veterans Funerals
- RAAF Air Museum
- Anzac Appeal
- Memorabilia
- Poppy Appeal
- Commemoration
- Hospital Visitations

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

With building refurbishments mostly completed in July 2024, the Sub-Branch has seen strong growth particularly in the later parts of 2024.

An increase in our membership base throughout 2024 has been encouraging with a service member increase of 8% and an affiliate membership increase of 45%. Total Sub-branch membership stands at over 7,500 at the conclusion of 2024.

With the retirement of our long serving General Manager, Kim Archibald and the legacy he has left, my transition into the role has been simple and straightforward. Whilst much has been achieved with our recently completed refurbishments there is still much to do. The re-tiling of the bistro kitchen was completed in late July. New carpeting throughout the bistro has been completed in February 2025. New furniture to update the dining experience will be installed in the coming months. An update to seating in the gaming room will also be completed shortly.

An overall profit of \$1,102,219 as detailed in the Treasurer's report was slightly up on the budgeted figure for 2024. High electricity costs in the past 12 months continue to put pressure on profit margins. Repairs and maintenance is an area that has seen higher than expected costs in 2024 due to

roofing repairs, along with high depreciation costs associated with the recent refurbishments.

With the current Victorian State Government still planning to increase restrictions on Gaming Machine usage by introducing mandatory pre-commitment across Victoria by 2026, the next 12 months could prove challenging to border communities such as ours. Still, maintaining \$4M in cash reserves places us in an enviable position as we head into 2025.

I would like to thank all our wonderful staff who continue to go above and beyond when asked, especially our Finance Manager Leigh Blenheim, Operations Manager Alana Ashelford and Admin/Marketing Officer Tammie Doering.

I would like to thank all the committee for their continued support and encouragement through the management transition this year. And to the members of the Mildura RSL Sub-Branch my door is always open for your feedback and concerns.

Mark Turlan

General Manager



MANAGER OF VETERANS SERVICES REPORT

The Mildura RSL Veterans Centre continued to be there to assist veterans and their families throughout 2024, and with the addition of Veterans Counsellor, Mark Pavilach, our services on offer have expanded.

My primary role is to support veterans and their families with pensions and welfare support, but I also am now involved in the administration of the Mildura RSL's Retirement Village which consists of 20 units, and conducting RSL Funerals. Other responsibilities include overseeing the operation of the Mildura RSL's RAAF Air Museum, the coordination of appeals, coordinating RSL Active events and the administration of Commemoration Services.

In 2024, the Mildura RSL conducted Anzac Day, Remembrance Day, Vietnam Veterans Day and the Bombing of Darwin Day ceremonies. On top of that, the Sub Branch was also involved in helping The Lake Primary School create and open their new memorial at the school.

More than 120 veterans and their families have come to the Veterans Centre during 2024 to seek help with DVA claims and welfare. We have secured more than \$3 Million dollars in compensation for local veterans along with Gold Cards and pensions.

The RSL Active events throughout 2024 were very well attended and enjoyed by veterans and their families alike. I would like to thank Brad and Bree McGlashan for their tireless support to make these events happen.

The Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide released its final report in 2024, and the Australian Government adopted almost every recommendation.

Hopefully, the implementation of these recommendations happen in a timely manner, and the scourge of veterans suicide starts to be a thing of the past.

I would like to thank President Paul McDermott, General Manager Mark Turlan and the entire committee for their continued support. It is their dedication to the support of veterans and their families that make my job possible.

I am committed to helping all veterans and their families in our community and my door is always open.

I can be found weekdays at the Mildura RSL Veterans Services office in the RSL carpark and can be contacted on 0409 049 290 or email paulmensch@mildurarsl.com.au

Paul Mensch

*Mildura RSL
Manager of Veterans
Services*



ANZAC DAY 2024



The Dawn Service was a somber affair with a massive crowd coming together to commemorate those who made the ultimate sacrifice for our country.

Henderson Park was full with the crowd spilling out onto the footpath and even the median strip in the middle of Deakin Avenue. More than 450 people returned to the Mildura RSL for breakfast for a gold coin donation.

St. Joseph College students did a magnificent job at the War Graves ceremony at 8.30am, before a large crowd lined Deakin Avenue for the March at 11am.

Our guest speaker, Rear Admiral Brett Wolski, delivered a poignant speech, while Lillian Bertalli sang a wonderful rendition of the Australian National Anthem.

Ex-service organisations and schools from around the district laid wreaths at the cenotaph as the Mildura Brass Band played Abide with Me.

Back at the Mildura RSL, Two-Up was the flavour of the day as veterans and their families took time to catch up and reminisce.

Anzac Appeal Raised \$24,047.20

KIM ARCHIBALD, 40 YEARS AT THE MILDURA RSL

After 40 years of dedicated service to the Mildura RSL, manager Kim Archibald retired in June 2024.

Kim's achievements are many. He has brought prosperity to the Mildura RSL and has been instrumental in many projects that have benefited and honoured veterans.

Kim became one of the most highly respected managers in the Victorian RSL. He had the unique ability to steer the Mildura RSL into being a financially successful RSL whilst ensuring veterans were provided for with the best support possible.

Kim's grandfather served in the western front during WW1 and his uncle was killed in action in Borneo in WW2. That family connection underpinned Kim's belief that the RSL had an obligation to support veterans and their families.

The accolades bestowed upon Kim by the Victorian RSL have been many; Honorary Life Membership, Victorian RSL Hall of Fame inductee, and Vic RSL Australian Day medal recipient to name a few.

Being so highly regarded, Kim was appointed to many Victorian RSL Sub Committees, the positive outcomes from these committees would ultimately benefit all RSL's in Victoria.

Kim's passion and unwavering commitment to the Mildura RSL was quite extraordinary. He has left an indelible mark on the Mildura RSL and wider community.

It would be fair to say that Kim has well and truly earned his retirement, we wish him and his family all the very best for the years ahead.



THE LAKE PRIMARY SCHOOL MEMORIAL



The idea for The Lake Primary School's ANZAC memorial garden originated from Trevor Roelofs, the school's maintenance coordinator.

Passionate about all things to do with our country's military history, Trevor proposed the concept of a memorial garden which was discussed with the Mildura RSL's treasurer over several brief meetings.

These ideas were then taken to the RSL's committee meetings, where the treasurer, secretary and vice president helped promote the memorial and secure donations.

The Mildura RSL contributed \$2,500 to the project.

Additionally, after collecting and confirming all the relevant service history information, memorial pavers

were purchased by the local community to help fund the project, with names and unit details of family service members engraved on them.

Local businesses donated building materials, and The Lone Pine Tree, which is the centerpiece of the memorial garden, was donated by one of the school's teachers Kate Barnes.

Trevor also conducted all the installation work for the memorial.

Following the completion of construction, the ANZAC memorial garden was officially opened by the Mildura RSL and The Lake Primary School on the 7th of November 2024, with the planting of The Lone Pine Tree and the unveiling of a plaque dedicated to the occasion.



RSL ANGLING CLUB

The Mildura RSL Angling Club continued to go from strength to strength in 2024.

With more than 30 members, the club conducted 10 fishing trips throughout the year with an average of 10 participants for each trip.

The club has continued to fundraise and apply for grants allowing them to purchase \$6,000 worth of Murray Cod fingerlings that were released below Lock 9.

These baby fish were purchased locally from North West Aquaculture

and were released with the assistance of proprietor, Gavin Maynard.

The club have enough funds to purchase \$6,000 of Golden Perch fingerlings which they intend to release in early 2025.

Anyone interested in becoming a member should contact Wayne Coghill on 0419 123 915.

PICTURED: Angling Club members, Robert Van Blanken, Charlie Dowdy and Gary Deal with North West Aquaculture's Gavin Maynard.



SCHOOL VISITS IN 2024

In the weeks leading up to Anzac Day, members of the Mildura RSL committee visited with schools from the Sunraysia area.

During these visits, the committee addressed students from Prep through to year Six, as well as High School Students at St. Joseph's College.

The importance of Anzac Day was discussed as well as the experiences of the committee members in the Australian Defence Forces.

The schools that were visited in 2024 leading up to Anzac Day were, Mildura South Primary School, Irymple Primary School, Irymple South Primary School, Koorlong Primary School, Gol Gol Public School, Nangiloc/Colignan Primary School, Red Cliffs Primary School, St Joseph's College, Nichols Point Primary School, Happy Turtle Day Care and Mildura Central Early Learning Centre.

The committee members were met with extremely positive reactions from the students and staff of all the schools and day cares.

The students were given the opportunity to try on some of the committees Ex-Service equipment which left them wide eyed.

After each presentation, the students were able to ask questions, which generated a wide range of topics and queries.

A colouring competition was organised with the schools that wished to participate, with the prizes being books that all tied back to the military. They included, Anzac Ted, my granddad marches on Anzac Day and other titles, this was very well received by the schools and students.

The committee members even engaged with some Day Care centres, where they read a book to the kids, and the kids all had a turn trying on equipment.

There has been even more interest for these visits in 2025, something our committee is looking forward to.



RSL RETIREMENT VILLAGE

The Mildura RSL Retirement Village provides quality independent living in a safe and peaceful setting for eligible veterans and widows.

Graeme Matthews has been a resident at the Village since April 2024, and absolutely loves the environment.

Graeme joined the RAAF in 1964 and worked as an Airframe Fitter for 6 years.

He took a 6 month break before re-enlisting in the RAAF, this time training as an Engine fitter, serving for a further 6 years.

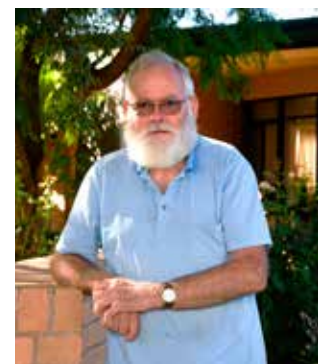
Graeme says that life at the village is

great and he regularly takes part in social gatherings in the Archibald Centre.

He also took part in some of the RSL Active events and appreciates the lovely gardens at the village that are maintained by the Mildura RSL.

Graeme has also taken it upon himself to create a community veggie garden with the help of gardener, Suzanne, which grows tomatoes, cucumbers and lettuce among other things.

Graeme has purchased a caravan and intends to take trips away, using his home at the village as his base.





CLIFF MAGOR 50 YEARS

Cliff Magor served his country in Vietnam, from 23rd of April 1969, until the 16th of April 1970. Serving with Number 1 Australian Reinforcement Unit.

In 1972, Cliff joined the Broken Hill Sub Branch of the NSW RSL, and in 1974 he transferred to the Mildura RSL Sub Branch, where he has remained a member for 50 years.

Cliff has also been a longstanding member of Mildura Legacy, where he has dedicated himself to the support of war widows and their families in the Sunraysia area.

On Wednesday, September 25th, the President, Paul McDermott, Vice President, Brad McGlashan, Secretary, Scott Richards and General Manager, Mark Turlan, presented Cliff with a certificate from RSL National.

This certificate was in appreciation of 50 years of membership in the RSL.

MILDURA RSL MEMORABILIA REPORT 2024

After many months off display, the Mildura RSL Sub Branch collection of swords is now housed in the Snooker Bar. The former dartboard cabinets were successfully converted for this purpose.

There were two major donations of memorabilia to the Sub Branch in 2024. Firstly, we were fortunate to obtain a WW1 German Maxim light machine gun which was captured by the 20th Australian Infantry Battalion at Mont Saint-Quentin on the Western Front, France, on August 31, 1918. This weapon came to us from Anzac House.

Secondly, we received a collection belonging to the late Donald Joseph Watt. Donald was living at Irymple when he enlisted in Mildura in January 1940. On completing his training, he left Melbourne for the Middle East in April 1940 with the 2/7 Australian Infantry Battalion. In June 1941 he was captured on Crete. Sadly, Donald spent the next four years as a prisoner of war in Poland and Germany.

Donald returned to Australia in July 1945. The collection includes Donald's service medals, photos and related paperwork.



As curator of the RSL memorabilia I am always happy to assist veterans and their families with medal entitlements and research. I can be contacted via the Mildura RSL.

Stephan Hawkes

*Curator of memorabilia
Mildura RSL*





1 SQUADRON VISIT

William Archibald, the son of former General Manager, Kim joined the RAAF in 2021 and after 18 months of training was posted to 1 Squadron in Amberley, Queensland.

It was during a visit to the Squadron during a family day, that Kim met with the commanding officer, WGCDR Sean Hamilton, and extended an invitation for the Squadron to visit Mildura with the Super Hornets.

On Thursday, August 29th, the Squadron did just that, with 2 F/A-18F Super Hornet Jets, flying into the Mildura Airport as part of ongoing training.

The training consists of two aircraft, maned by 4 personnel, flying into an unsupported (civilian, not military) facility, where the crew must power down, re-fuel their aircraft and restart, and take off all without any external assistance.

The Squadron do this at airfields throughout the country and incorporated Mildura into their rotation.

The Mildura RSL Sub Branch were on hand to watch the aircraft land and were shown around the Super Hornets before taking two of the aviators to lunch at the Sub Branch, where they were shown the hospitality the Mildura RSL is famous for.



On returning to the aircraft, a packed lunch was also supplied to the two aviators who had stayed behind to guard the aircraft.

The commanding officer sent a letter of thanks to the committee of the Mildura RSL and we hope that we will see the Super Hornet in the skies of Mildura again in the near future.

MILDURA AIRSHOW

It was a beautiful day when the Mildura Air Show took place on Sunday, September 9th.

The Mildura RSL Sub Branch were heavily involved with the planning and staging of the fantastic event, which saw more than 5,000 people from across the region and beyond attend.

For nine months leading up to event, The Mildura RSL,

The Mildura Airport, Mildura Rural City Council, Paul Bennett Air shows and 2OTU Heritage Inc. worked together to bring this event to Mildura.

Vintage aircraft from the RAAF 100 squadron, the Roulettes, the RAAF Balloon and aerobatic aircraft from Paul Bennett Air Shows made for a magnificent display on the day.



VIETNAM VETERANS DAY 2024



On Sunday, 18th of August, the Mildura RSL Sub Branch conducted a poignant service at the Seventh Street Memorial on what was a beautiful afternoon.

The ceremony commenced at 12.30pm with Mildura RSL President, Paul McDermott giving a tribute to those who served in the Vietnam War.

A healthy crowd was on hand to hear Joel Thomas deliver a Prayer of Remembrance, before the guest speaker was introduced.

Merbein RSL Sub Branch President, Brian Munro gave a speech about his time in Vietnam and what Vietnam

Veterans Day means to him.

On hand to play the Last Post and Reveille was Don Maine and Lilliana Bertalli once again did a wonderful rendition of Advance Australia Fair.

During the wreath laying ceremony, Gary Klippel sung an acoustic version of the always moving, I Was Only Nineteen, which has become an anthem for those who served in the conflict.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, veterans and their partners were invited back to the Mildura RSL for refreshments.

VETERANS HEALTH WEEK

Each year in October, the Department of Veterans Affairs in conjunction with RSL Victoria promote Veterans Health Week.

The Mildura RSL has always supported Veterans Health Week and was delighted to offer the cruise on the Paddleboat Rothbury and winery tour, sampling some of our regions foods and wine.

We had more than 40 people who took part in the cruise that was free to veterans and their families.

The trip from Mildura to Trentham took just over two hours, and on arrival at Trentham Estate, participants were treated to a lovely lunch, wine tasting (and purchasing) before re-embarking for the trip home.

What a perfect way to spend the day, cruising along the Murray River from Mildura to Trentham Estate, being wined and dined along the way.

A family BBQ was also held for those who couldn't make the trip. The new Buronga playground was a perfect place for kids to utilise the play equipment and bike track.

The Mildura RSL are committed to supporting events that assist with the health and wellbeing of veterans and their families. Another event for Veterans Health Week will be organised in 2025.



MILDURA RSL RAAF AIR MUSEUM

What a difference three years makes in the life of a historic aircraft.

For the past three years, the Dareton Men in a Shed have been working away, slowly restoring a Sabre Jet for the Mildura RSL and the RAAF Memorial and Museum.

Tucked away in the corner of a massive shed, they have bought the 1950's jet back to its former glory, and they have done an exceptional job.

In December, the jet was packed onto a truck (kindly supplied free of charge by Pickering's Transport) and moved to a hangar at the Mildura Airport.

It is here that the final assembly of the undercarriage and wings will occur before the Jet takes up its permanent display position in front of the RAAF Memorial and Museum.

This Sabre Jet will be an awesome attraction for the Museum, and it is hoped that many more locals and visitors alike will stop to look at the jet, and to take time to go through the Museum.

The Museum is dedicated to those men and women who served in Mildura during WW2 and those who were from Mildura who served in the RAAF.



REMEMBERANCE DAY 2024



On Monday, 11th of November, the Mildura RSL Sub Branch conducted a poignant service at Henderson Park to commemorate the 106th year since the end of the First World War.

A large crowd was on hand to hear Pastor Andrew Tonkin say a prayer of remembrance and Mildura RSL President, Paul McDermott deliver a touching

tribute. Flanders Fields was recited by Secretary, Scott Richards and Vice President, Brad McGlashan, while Treasurer, Robert Birnie delivered The Ode.

The National Anthem was performed beautifully by Lilliana Bertalli, while Geoff Dea played the Last Post and Reveille. The 8/7th Army Reserve Unit provided the Cenotaph Guard on the day.

Poppy Appeal Raised **\$15,439.09**

LIFE MEMBERS



Ken Mustey

Ken served in Vietnam in 1966 and 1967 and joined the Mildura RSL in 1989. During the 1970s Ken was a founding member of the Mildura Vietnam Veterans Association and played a pivotal role in having a memorial constructed to honour those locals who served in Vietnam, Korea and South East Asia.

For more than 25 years Ken was a member of the Mildura RSL's Honour Roll Steering Committee which oversaw the introduction of Honour Rolls into Henderson Park.



Ken Barclay

Ken served in the Army for 10 years including a deployment to Vietnam and Papua New Guinea.

Ken was instrumental in establishing the Sunraysia Regional Veterans Centre and has worked tirelessly for 20 years supporting veterans, widows and their dependants with pension and welfare support.

It would be fair to say Ken has helped improve the well being of some 1000 veterans. This is an exemplarity contribution to the veteran community.



John Searle

John was born in 1945 and joined the RSL on returning from active service in Vietnam in 1968.

In recent years John played a crucial role in the education of school children in the Mildura area in his role as the Mildura RSL's Education Officer. He has been involved in supporting veterans through his volunteer work with the Sunraysia Regional Veterans Centre, but his real passion is getting younger people to understand and appreciate Australian Military history. John is extremely proud of the Mildura RSL and continues to offer his support in any way possible.



Paul McDermott

Paul served nine years in the RAN including a deployment to Vietnam.

In 2001 Paul became a volunteer at the Sunraysia Regional Veterans Centre and in that capacity has been assisting veterans, serving members of the ADF, war widows and their dependants for over 18 Years.

Paul continues to support veterans and is the current Mildura RSL President.



John Braniff

John had a distinguished military career serving with 3RAR/ SAS Coy and SAS Regt. During his service John was deployed to Vietnam, Borneo, the Philippines and Papua New Guinea.

John joined the Mildura RSL Sub Branch in 2003 and was elected to the position of Treasurer in 2008 and held that position until 2023.

Coming from a corporate background John has been the corner stone of the Mildura RSL committee. His astute manner has helped steer the Mildura RSL through many complex matters.

MARK PAVILACH VETERANS COUNCELLOR

Situated in the Veterans Centre at the Mildura RSL Sub Branch, Director of Veteran's Counselling Services, Mark Pavilach is making a difference for local veterans and their families.

Mark specialises in helping Australian Defence Force and Emergency Services personnel who are experiencing stress or mental health issues to keep working.

Mark said that they are particularly complex cases and many of them have anxiety, depression and PTSD.

"There are 1500 veterans in the Sunraysia area and then you add their families as well."

"There are about 1 in 20 households that have a serving or ex-serving defence person and there's

nearly 500,000 veterans in Australia.," Mark said.

Mark works closely with Paul Mensch, Manager of Veterans Services at the Mildura RSL who both refer veterans to each others services.

Mark is trained in three major treatments for PTSD—Prolonged exposure therapy, cognitive processing therapy and eye movement desensitisation and reprocessing therapy.

Veterans can access Mark's services through their DVA Gold or White card. Mark can be contacted for an appointment on 0417 511 914.



KENTLEY MILES



Born in Leongatha, Victoria, in 1948, Kentley John Miles was a teenager when he moved to Mildura in 1963. With his father in hospital, Kentley was unable to go to school. As Kentley says, "someone had to put food on the table, even at 14 years of age."

Kentley was called up as a National Serviceman in October 1968 as part of the 14th intake while living in Mildura. He served in 6 platoon, B Company, 6th Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment. He completed recruit training at Puckapunyal, infantry training at Singleton, and jungle training at Canungra before leaving on a Qantas midnight flight for Vietnam in May 1969. Kentley says there were "no day flights as there were too many anti-war protesters."

Kentley spent less than two months in Vietnam, his time there ending when his company ran into a bunker system and "all hell broke loose" on the Firestone Trail.

"Eight of us got medivacked out, including the Company Commander. I was shot in the lower left leg and spent nine months in Heidelberg hospital in Melbourne undergoing a lot of operations. I signed to have the leg amputated in Vung Tau, Butterworth Airbase in Malaysia, and Richmond Airbase in Sydney. A good doctor in Melbourne saved it."

It took over a week to get Kentley back to Australia as

infection had set in; "I was in a bit of a mess, physically and mentally."

After he got out of the Army, Kentley returned to Mildura and got a job at the Mildura RSL, firstly as a barman, then bar manager. He spent about six years working for the RSL before taking up a role at the Mildura Golf Club as bar manager for a number of years before his first marriage broke up.

Kentley summarises his life as "four marriages, three kids, been TPI (Totally and Permanently Incapacitated) for 35 years, lived in various countries in South East Asia for the last 30 years. Not your average 75 year old, but still above ground."

He says he has a million stories about welfare work for the Vietnam Veterans Association Australia, the first PTSD course held in Australia and generally surviving day to day living. He sends his regards to his fellow Vets in Sunraysia.

By Lisa Cooper

In the coming months, a book written by Dr Lisa Cooper, telling the stories of those men whose served in Vietnam from Mildura, will be released. Stay tuned for more details.

RSL ACTIVE

Throughout 2024, the Mildura RSL continued to host RSL Active events for veterans and their families.

These events have been extremely well attended and enjoyed by all of those who have taken part.

In February, it was Ten Pin bowling, followed by Easter Family Day at Lake Cullulleraine.

In April, we were off to the Sunraysia Field and Game complex for clay target shooting, and in May it was Laser Tag.

In June, a bus trip was organised to Lake Boga and the Catalina Museum, and in July it was golf simulation at the Nitro Golf Centre.

August saw the kids have a crack at MMA and things

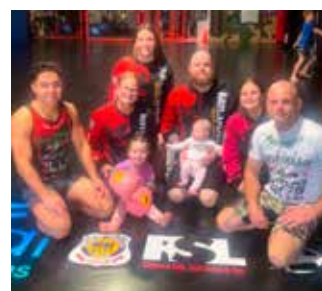
really stepped up in September with smashing axes, which saw everyone get into the action.

October saw us take a bus tour through the RAAF War Graves, bombing ranges and crash sites before arriving at the RAAF Memorial and Museum.

In late November we were back at Lake Cullulleraine for our Xmas party, and although the weather wasn't kind, everyone had a great time.

Throughout the year we also had weekly pilates classes, which will change to a walking club in 2025.

A huge thanks to Brad and Bree McGlashan who worked tirelessly behind the scenes to make it all happen.



2024 VETERAN SUPPORT & COMMUNITY BENEFIT

*Financial Support—\$498,243

Veterans Support/Commemoration:

- Welfare/Pensions Office
- Veterans & Family Welfare Grants
- RSL Vic. League Support
- Veteran Meals
- RSL Active
- Veterans & Widows Garden Maintenance
- Veterans & Widows Home Maintenance
- Memorial Maintenance
- RAAF Memorial & Museum
- TPI
- Vietnam Veteran Book Research

Community Support:

- Dareton Men in a Shed
- Mallee Living Histories project
- Mildura Air Cadets
- Mildura Airshow
- Mildura Army Cadets
- Mildura Bowls Club
- Mildura District Brass Band
- Mildura Lions Club
- Mildura Naval Cadets
- Mildura Pipe Band
- Mildura RSL Angling Club
- Mildura RSL Day Club
- Mildura RSL Retirement Village
- Sunraysia Field and Game
- The Lake Primary School
- Willys Car Club

*As per the Audited Accounts for the:-

Mildura RSL Sub Branch Inc. Welfare & Charitable
Mildura RSL Sub Branch Inc. Welfare Agency Account
Mildura RSL Sub Branch Inc. Patriotic Fund





- VALE -

The Mildura RSL recognises the passing
of the following service members during 2024.

Vic Stephens	Harold Rogers	George (Jim) Keppler
Kieth Tulloch	Arthur Miller	Kelvin Edwards
Jeffrey Francis	Peter James	Matthew Stephens
David Spark	John (Jack) Braidie	Alphonsus Homburg
	Roger Laity	

Mildura RSL Sub Branch Inc. extends its' deepest sympathy to the
families and loved ones of our departed comrades.

At the going down of the sun and in the morning we will remember them.

Lest We Forget



Mildura RSL Sub Branch Inc.

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Mildura veteran, Ian Felton, who served in Vietnam from the 19th of November 1970 until the 30th of September 1971 as part of the Australian Army Training Team Vietnam.

