



RSL

Mount Barker
Sub Branch



Newsletter

August 2026

Inside this issue

Presidential Ponderings	2
Secretaries Scribbles	3
Treasurer's Tidbits.....	3
DVA Reforms: 1 Month On	4
Vietnam Veterans' Day	5/6
Commemoration 18 Aug.....	7
Memorial Unveiled	8
Christmas In July Photos	9
Bingo	10
Friday Meals Menu	11
Sudoku	12
Sponsors.....	13
Significant Dates.....	14
Membership Forms.....	15/16

Don't Forget

BBQ's
1st August—Aston Hills
16th August— Showground

Vietnam Veterans' Day
18th August

They shall grow not old,
As we that are left grow old,
Age shall not weary them,
Nor the years condemn,
At the going down of the sun,
And in the morning,
We will remember them.

General Information

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LEST WE FORGET



As we move into August, I would like to begin by extending my sincere thanks to everyone who supported our **Christmas in July** Dinner. It was a wonderful evening of friendship, laughter and good company, and it was terrific to see so many members and guests enjoying the event. A special thank you goes to our dedicated sub-committee members whose planning and hard work ensured the evening ran so smoothly. I would also like to acknowledge the

fantastic team from **Olive Branch Café**, whose delicious meal and professional service received many favourable comments throughout the night. Events such as these only succeed because of the many people willing to volunteer their time and support our Sub-Branch.

I would also like to thank everyone who continues to support our regular fundraising activities. Our weekly Tuesday Bingo sessions remain one of our most important sources of income, while our monthly BBQs at the Aston Hills Market and the Mount Barker Community Craft Market continue to raise valuable funds and promote the work we do within the local community.

Planning is also well underway for our **2026 Christmas Raffle**, one of our most important fundraising activities for the year. The majority of our sponsorship letters have now been delivered to businesses throughout the Mount Barker district, and I am pleased to report that donations have already started arriving. Thank you to those businesses and individuals who have committed their support so early. If you know of a business or individual who may be willing to donate a prize or sponsor the raffle, please let a committee member know—we would be delighted to follow up any opportunities. Our goal this year is to sell **1,000 tickets at \$10** each, and to achieve this we will need the support of our members. Raffle tickets are expected to be available from **October**, and we encourage everyone to help by taking a book of tickets to sell amongst family, friends and colleagues. Every ticket sold helps us continue supporting veterans, their families and our local community.

The strength of any RSL Sub-Branch comes from the participation of its members. I encourage everyone to become involved wherever possible—whether it's lending a hand at an event, attending our social activities, joining us for Coffee and Chat, or simply coming along to meetings and sharing your ideas. Every volunteer, no matter how much time they can offer, helps make our Sub-Branch stronger and ensures we can continue supporting veterans and their families.

This month we also pause to remember **Vietnam Veterans' Day on 18 August**. It is an important opportunity to recognise the courage, sacrifice and service of those Australians who served during the Vietnam War. For many veterans, recognition came far too late, making this day especially significant. I encourage all members to take a moment to reflect on their service and, where possible, attend commemorative activities to honour those who served and those who never returned.

As our Sub-Branch continues to grow, so too does our need for new members and fresh ideas. If you know an ex-service man or woman, a currently serving member of the Australian Defence Force, or someone who has an interest in supporting veterans and our local community, please encourage them to visit the Sub-Branch and consider becoming a member. Every new member strengthens our organisation and helps ensure the Mount Barker RSL remains a vibrant and sustainable part of our community for many years to come.

Looking ahead, there are several exciting events and commemorative activities planned over the coming months. I encourage everyone to keep an eye on our noticeboards, website and social media pages so you don't miss out. Your continued support, enthusiasm and willingness to get involved are what make our Sub-Branch such a welcoming and successful organisation.

Thank you once again for everything you do. Together, we are building not only a stronger RSL, but also a stronger community for veterans, their families and future generations.



As always, there has been plenty happening around the Sub-Branch, and it has been encouraging to see members continuing to support our activities, whether attending functions, volunteering at our fundraising events, or simply dropping in for a chat. Your involvement is what makes our Sub-Branch such a welcoming place for veterans, their families and our wider community.

Our regular activities continue as normal throughout the month. Tuesday Bingo remains a highlight of the week, while Wednesday Coffee and Chat provides an excellent opportunity to catch up with friends in a relaxed environment. Friday evening meals continue to be well supported, and we'd love to see even more members and guests join us throughout the month.

Preparations are already underway for our annual Christmas Raffle. Thank you to everyone assisting with approaching local businesses for donations. The generosity shown by our local community each year is remarkable, and we look forward to another successful raffle.

As always, if you have recently changed your contact details, please let the Secretary know so we can keep our membership records up to date. Accurate records help ensure you receive newsletters, notices of meetings and information about upcoming events.

I look forward to catching up with many of you around the Sub-Branch during August.

"It always seems impossible until it is done"

~ Nelson Mandela



As we move into August, I would like to thank everyone for their continued support of our fundraising activities. Every dollar raised through Bingo, BBQs, raffles and our social events goes directly towards maintaining our Sub-Branch and supporting the services and activities we provide for veterans and the local community.

Our weekly Tuesday Bingo continues to be one of our strongest and most reliable fundraising activities. Likewise, our monthly BBQs at the Aston Hills Market and the Mount Barker Community Craft Market not only generate valuable income but also increase awareness of the work our RSL performs within the community. Thank you to everyone who volunteers their time to help make these activities successful.

As always, the Committee remains committed to managing the Sub-Branch's finances responsibly. We continue to monitor our operating costs carefully while ensuring our facilities remain safe, welcoming and well maintained. Responsible financial management today helps ensure we can continue supporting veterans well into the future.

Thank you once again to everyone who contributes—whether through volunteering, attending events, purchasing raffle tickets or simply supporting our fundraising activities. Your generosity allows our Sub-Branch to continue serving those who have served Australia.

Together, we are building a financially strong and sustainable future for the Mount Barker RSL Sub-Branch.

My Motto: In God we trust—Everyone else brings receipts!

DVA Reforms— One Month On!

After one month, the new DVA legislative reforms appear to have settled in reasonably smoothly, although it is still far too early to determine whether the reforms will achieve their long-term objective of significantly reducing claim processing times. There have been no reports of major system failures or widespread payment disruptions since the reforms commenced on 1 July 2026. Existing payments have continued as promised, and accepted conditions under the VEA and DRCA have automatically transferred to the improved MRCA without veterans needing to re-establish liability.

The main "teething problems" so far have been those many expected:

- ✓ **Confusion over transitional arrangements.** Many veterans remain uncertain about which legislation applies to claims lodged before 1 July versus new claims lodged after that date. Questions about Permanent Impairment assessments and reassessments have been common on veteran forums.
- ✓ **Understanding new entitlements.** Veterans transitioning from DRCA incapacity payments and those who may now qualify for a Gold Card are still working through how the changes affect their individual circumstances.
- ✓ **Waiting to see improvements in processing times.** While the legislation has simplified the framework, claims lodged under the previous Acts still need to be completed under those Acts. As a result, DVA is effectively operating both the old and new systems during the transition period.

Where to now?

The real test of these reforms will come over the next 12 to 24 months. The legislation itself was never intended to be a "silver bullet"—it provides the framework for a simpler system, but improvements will depend on how effectively DVA can administer it.

The areas many veterans and Ex-Service Organisations will be watching closely include:

- ✓ Whether average claim processing times begin to reduce.
- ✓ Whether veterans experience fewer requests for duplicate information.
- ✓ How consistently the improved MRCA is applied across new claims.
- ✓ Whether the promised rehabilitation focus results in earlier intervention and better outcomes.
- ✓ Whether veterans report a simpler, less stressful claims experience.

The reforms were one of the major recommendations arising from the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide, which found that navigating three separate compensation Acts contributed unnecessarily to stress and frustration for veterans. The move to a single legislative framework is intended to address that complexity, but its success will ultimately be measured by the experience of veterans rather than the legislation itself.

For now, the early signs are cautiously encouraging. The transition has largely occurred without significant disruption, but the real measure of success will be whether veterans begin to see faster decisions, clearer communication and improved support over the months ahead. It is likely that the remainder of 2026 will be a period of refinement as DVA, advocates and veterans continue to identify areas where further improvements can be made.

If you need further information you can contact DVA or accredited advocate. If you are not sure where to find information or how to contact an advocate, come and talk to us and we can help point you in the right direction.

Vietnam Veterans' Day (Honouring Service, Sacrifice and Mateship)

18 August holds a special place in Australia's military history. Each year, Vietnam Veterans' Day provides an opportunity for Australians to recognise and honour the more than 60,000 men and women who served during the Vietnam War, to remember the 523 Australians who lost their lives, and to acknowledge the more than 3,000 who were wounded during the conflict. The date commemorates the Battle of Long Tan, fought on 18 August 1966 in Phuoc Tuy Province, South Vietnam. It was one of the most significant engagements involving Australian forces during the war and remains a powerful example of courage, leadership and determination under extraordinary circumstances.

The Battle of Long Tan

On the afternoon of 18 August 1966, D Company, 6th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (6RAR), comprising just 108 Australian soldiers, found themselves confronted by an enemy force estimated at between 1,500 and 2,500 North Vietnamese Army and Viet Cong troops. As torrential monsoonal rain reduced visibility and radio communications became increasingly difficult, the Australians fought for more than three hours against overwhelming odds. Ammunition ran dangerously low, casualties mounted, yet the soldiers held their ground through disciplined fire, exceptional leadership and unwavering teamwork. One of the defining moments of the battle came when Australian artillery batteries at Nui Dat provided remarkably accurate and continuous fire support, despite the dreadful weather. Their precision prevented the Australian position from being overrun and demonstrated the importance of cooperation between infantry and artillery. As darkness approached, Australian armoured personnel carriers from 3 Cavalry Regiment and reinforcements finally reached the battlefield, forcing the enemy to withdraw. The Battle of Long Tan became one of Australia's most famous military victories, not because of the number of enemy casualties inflicted, but because of the courage, professionalism and resilience displayed by those who fought.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

EKN/67/0130/VN



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

DNE/65/0113/VN



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

BEL/69/0742/VN

Vietnam Veterans' Day (Continued)

Australia's Commitment

Between 1962 and 1973, approximately 60,000 Australians served in Vietnam. They included members of the Australian Army, Royal Australian Navy and Royal Australian Air Force, supported by nurses, medical personnel, engineers, signallers, logistics specialists and many others. The war presented challenges unlike previous conflicts. Soldiers operated in dense jungle, often unable to see the enemy until they were only metres away. The tropical climate, difficult terrain and ever-present threat of ambush made every patrol dangerous.

The Royal Australian Navy played a vital role transporting troops, conducting patrols and providing clearance diving teams, while the Royal Australian Air Force supplied transport aircraft, helicopters and Canberra bombers in support of coalition operations. Many Australians also served under the National Service Scheme, with young men conscripted through a ballot system. For many families, Vietnam was the first war in which sons were selected by lottery to serve overseas.

A Difficult Homecoming

For many Vietnam veterans, the greatest battle began after they returned home. Unlike previous generations of servicemen and women, many Vietnam veterans came home to a nation divided over Australia's involvement in the war. While opposition was generally directed at government policy rather than individual servicemen, many veterans felt their service was misunderstood or unrecognised. Parades and public welcomes that had greeted veterans of earlier conflicts were largely absent. Some veterans chose not to wear their uniforms or medals, while others rarely spoke about their experiences for many years. The effects of combat, combined with the lack of public recognition, contributed to significant physical and psychological challenges for many veterans and their families. Thankfully, attitudes have changed considerably. Today, Australians recognise the distinction between the politics of war and the service of those who answered their nation's call. Vietnam veterans are now widely acknowledged for their professionalism, courage and sacrifice.

Remembering Their Service

Vietnam Veterans' Day is more than remembering a single battle—it is about recognising everyone who served during Australia's involvement in Vietnam. It honours those who made the ultimate sacrifice, those who returned carrying physical and emotional wounds, and the families who supported them both during and after their service. The values demonstrated by Vietnam veterans—courage, endurance, mateship and commitment—continue to inspire new generations of Australians and remain central to the traditions of the Australian Defence Force. As members of the RSL, we have a responsibility to ensure their stories are remembered and their service is never forgotten. On 18 August, take a moment to reflect on the contribution made by Australia's Vietnam veterans. Attend a commemorative service if you are able, wear your medals with pride, and thank those who served. Their service forms an important chapter in Australia's military history and deserves our enduring respect and gratitude.



Lest We Forget.

VIETNAM VETERANS' DAY



HONOURING THEIR SERVICE • REMEMBERING THEIR SACRIFICE
THANKING THEM ALL



COMMEMORATION AT
11:00 AM



18 AUGUST
MOUNT BARKER CENOTAPH



**LIGHT REFRESHMENTS
AT THE RSL**
All Welcome



*We honour our Vietnam Veterans
and thank them for their service
to our nation.*

LEST WE FORGET



Memorial Unveiled—MBHS

In May a few RSL members were invited to attend the unveiling of a new War Memorial at Mount Barker High School. It features a WWI soldier and a WWII pilot, to represent the service of the former scholars whose names are immortalised on the bricks on the path leading up to it.

The occasion was also to celebrate the addition of two men to the WWII bricks. Edward Keith Hender and Johnny Hunt both attended the school in the 1920s, but they had been omitted when the path was created. They join four other WWII servicemen, including Bruce Paech. Five of these six WWII men served in the RAAF, and their enlistment forms mention their schools.

After researching the two men for her book 'Stories in Stone' Clare Dorey approached the school for permission to add their names to the path and create a memorial. A Veterans SA Grant provided the funds to create the memorial area. Custom Steel Appeal in Mount Barker designed and created the simple feature and Michael Woodcock installed it shortly before the unveiling ceremony.

Speeches at the unveiling included Clare and school staff and a student Tyler Hender, who is related to Edward and helped Clare unveil the memorial. It was an occasion to tell Hunt & Hender's stories, as well as remember Harold Mitchell, who fell on that day in 1917 in France. The morning was also attended by local councillors, students and parents.

It is hoped that the school will use the path and memorial to educate the school students about the men who served our country.



Christmas in July—Photos



BINGO at the RSL

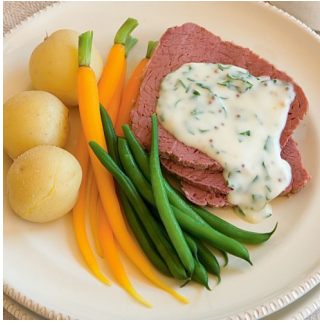


- ✓ Every **Tuesday** at the RSL, in the downstairs dining area.
- ✓ Doors open at **12 midday**
- ✓ Eyes down at **1:00pm**
- ✓ 10 games plus a flyer game (side games if numbers permit)
- ✓ Cash Prizes - Lucky Door Prize.
- ✓ We will always endeavour to have a snack available on the day at a very reasonable cost.
- ✓ Come along and bring your friends and neighbours for a fun afternoon.
- ✓ Scheduled to finish around **2:45pm**

WINNERS



Dinner Menu — August



Friday 7th of August

- ✓ Corned Beef with Vegetables and Mustard Sauce
- ✓ Mocha Mousse Cake



Friday 14th of August

- ✓ Fried Whiting with Wedges and Salad
- ✓ Sticky Date Pudding with Toffee Sauce



Friday 21th of August

- ✓ Roast Beef with Vegetables and Gravy
- ✓ Mango Cheesecake



Friday 28th of August

- ✓ Fellowship Evening....
- ✓ Food and activities to be advised

Members are eligible for a FREE meal during the month of their Birthday!

Cost is: \$27.00 for members
\$27.00 for under 18yrs

\$30.00 for non-members
\$22.00 for children under 12yrs

Bookings are essential. Either in person or call/text **0436 934 286.**
Bookings must be made by 12 noon on the Wednesday prior.

Sudoku

Easy

				8		4	7	
7	4	2	3	9	5		6	1
6				4	7			3
1	7	8		5	2		3	9
3			8	7				
2	5	4	9	6	3			
				3				6
		5		1	9			7
9				2			4	

Medium

5		3		8	6			
	4		3		5	8		1
6	8	1	2	4				
1	7	8	4					
				7				
2	5	4			3			
	2				4			
			6			2	8	
	1					3		5

Hard

	9							
			3					1
6		1		4			5	
1			4	5				
		9			1			
	5		9	6				
	2			3	4		9	6
4		5	6		9			7
						3		

Harvey Norman

Mount Barker



Specsavers

NOVA

HAIR & BODY

Tim Adams

CLARE VALLEY

urbancellars

Woolworths



NAIRNE
COMMUNITY
PHARMACY



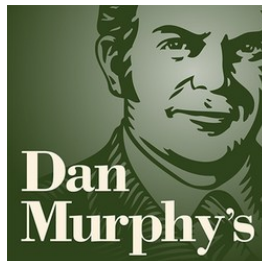
Mount Barker Central

Simply Style

Mount Barker



FROM THE FAMILY FARM
BEERENBERG
SINCE 1839



Dan
Murphy's



ROOS
MBFC

Bakers Delight

STRAND
Strandbags Mt Barker



BROWSE IN & \$AVE



AstonHills
nail&beauty

THE
Coffee Tin



About the RSL

We are Australia's largest ex-service organisation, founded in 1916 to support veterans and their families. Initially focused on repatriation and medical services for WW1 veterans, the RSL's mission has evolved to address the changing needs of each generation of servicemen and women.

Core Functions:

- Veteran Welfare
- Advocacy
- Commemoration
- Support for Families
- Camaraderie
- Public Education

Membership

We are always looking to bring new members into our group! If you know anyone that may be interested in joining us, please pass them our contact details, or even just give them this newsletter.

No doubt, there are many Veterans out there in the community that have not thought about joining their local RSL. There are many more community members that we would like to invite into our ranks as well. They just need to be aware that we are here!

We are here to provide a place for the Veteran community and members of the community in general to mix, relax and enjoy some like-minded company.

Change of Contact Details

We don't want to lose contact with members. So please let the Secretary know if you change your address, phone or email details.

Significant Dates

General Meetings	Committee Meetings	Morning Tea and Chat
Monday—3 Aug 2026 Monday— 7 Sep 2026 Monday—5 Oct 2026	Committee Meetings will be called as deemed necessary.	Don't forget that the Sub-Branch hosts a Morning Tea every Wednesday morning at 10:00am. Light refreshments available for a small donation. This is open to everyone, so bring along a friend or neighbour!

On This Day	Event	Remarks
2 Aug 1990	Kuwait invaded by Iraq	Leading to Australia's involvement in the 1st Gulf War
4 Aug 1914	Australia enter WWI	Following Britain's declaration of war on Germany
6 Aug 194	Post Hiroshima Bombing	Australian prisoners of war witnessed the aftermath.
7 Aug 1942	Landing at Guadalcanal	Australian Navy support landing
9 Aug 1942	Bombing of Nagasaki	2nd atomic bomb dropped on Japan
12 Aug 1945	Japanese Surrender	Australian forces accept surrender of Japanese across Borneo
14 Aug 1945	Japanese Surrender	Japan accepted terms, bringing hostilities to an end
15 Aug 1945	Victory in Pacific	Australians marked the end of the war against Japan
18 Aug 1966	Battle of Long Tan	108 Australians repel a force of over 2,000 at Long Tan
24 Aug 1942	Battle of Eastern Solomons	HMAS Australia participated in the battle of Eastern Solomons
25 Aug 1945	Liberation of Hong Kong	Australian Forces landed in Hong Kong to assist.
27 Aug 1945	Allied Prisoners Treated	Australian medical team began treating liberated POW in South-East Asia.



RSL-SA Application for Service Membership

I hereby apply to be admitted as a Service Member of the Returned & Services League of Australia and a member of the: _____ Sub-Branch.

Personal Details

Title: _____ Given Names: _____
Surname: _____
Honours / Awards / Decorations (Post Nominals): _____
Sex: _____ D.O.B: _____ Country of Birth: _____
Postal Address: _____
Suburb: _____ Post Code: _____ State / Country: _____
Phone(W): _____ (H): _____ (M): _____
Email: _____

Service Details (Please attach proof of service)

Service Number: _____ PM Keys Number: _____ Rank: _____
Service: ☐ Air Force ☐ Army ☐ Navy Type: ☐ Regular ☐ Reserve ☐ National Service ☐ Other
If Other: (Provide Details) _____
Date of Enlistment: _____ Discharge Certificate No (if applicable): _____
Date of Discharge: _____ Length of Service: _____ Years: _____ Months: _____
Campaign & Service Medals: _____

Theatres of Operations or Conflicts (Check all applicable)

☐ World War 2 ☐ Vietnam ☐ Peacekeeping ☐ Regular Forces ☐ East Timor
☐ Korea ☐ BCOF (Japan) ☐ Somalia ☐ Reserves / CMF ☐ Afghanistan
☐ Malayan Emergency ☐ Borneo Confrontation ☐ Gulf War / Kuwait ☐ National Service ☐ Iraq
Other: _____

Previous Membership Details (if applicable)

Previous Membership: ☐ Yes ☐ No Date first joined the League: _____
Badge number of previous membership: (if applicable) _____
State & Sub-Branch of previous membership: (if applicable) _____

Declaration and Agreement

☐ I declare that the above information is true and correct.
☐ I agree to uphold the Constitution of the League and its By-Laws

Signature of Applicant: _____ Date: _____
Proposed By: _____ Seconded By: _____
Accepted by Sub-Branch: Sub-Branch Member _____ Sub-Branch Member _____
(Honorary Secretary) Date: _____

Privacy Statement

We will not use any of the information on this membership form without your specific permission in writing, other than to record you as a member of the League and will not pass that information to anyone outside the League.
ABN 19 219 796 904

October 2017



RSL-SA Application for Affiliate Membership

I hereby apply to be admitted as a Affiliate Member of the Returned & Services League of Australia and a member of the: _____ Sub-Branch.

Personal Details

Title: _____ Given Names: _____
Surname: _____
Sex: _____ D.O.B: _____ Country of Birth: _____
Postal Address: _____
Suburb: _____ Post Code: _____ State / Country: _____
Phone(W): _____ (H): _____ (M): _____
Email: _____

Are you related to a Service person ☐ Yes ☐ No

If "yes" please specify: Service Number: _____ Name: _____

Unit Served With: _____ Conflict: _____

Previous Membership Details (if applicable)

Previous Membership: ☐ Yes ☐ No Date first joined the League: _____

Badge number of previous membership: (if applicable) _____

State & Sub-Branch of previous membership: (if applicable) _____

Declaration and Agreement

☐ I declare that the above information is true and correct.

☐ I agree to uphold the Constitution of the League and its By-Laws

Signature of Applicant: _____ Date: _____

Proposed By: _____ Seconded By: _____

Accepted by Sub-Branch: Sub-Branch Member _____ Sub-Branch Member _____
(Honorary Secretary) _____ Date: _____

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ABN 19 219 796 904

October 2017