



BEAUMARIS RSL SUB-BRANCH INC.

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APRIL 2025 MEMBERS NEWS



The Royal Australian Navy Band Marching On for the official arrival of Her Excellency Professor the Honourable Margaret Gardner, AC Governor of Victoria at the Castlefield Estate Centenary Celebration event.

Dear Member

Thank-you to all those who attended our AGM and engaged in the year that was. Certainly, a lot of momentum has been generated from what was a very productive year. We will be building on this in 2025 and looking forward to all of the occasions we have planned.

I welcome Greg Meir on to the committee replacing Andy Coogan. Andy has kindly agreed to stay on in the unelected position of Grants Officer, which provides many opportunities.

It was terrific for the Sub-Branch to be represented at the Castlefield Estate Centenary Celebration. For a single person to come up with the idea and build a whole team to ensure such a milestone was not lost is quite remarkable and a reminder of what can be done.

The ANZAC Appeal is about to kick off and I very much encourage all our members to get in touch with our Appeals team and do a shift or two on our famous local street stalls. The time spent selling badges is always enjoyable meeting so many members of our local community.

April is our busiest month with our annual Community ANZAC Commemorative March and Service, the ANZAC Commemorative Football Game and lunch and ANZAC Day at Fern Street. Looking forward to seeing you at one or all of them!

We are show casing for the RSL movement how the future for the non-poker machine Melbourne suburban Sub-Branches can survive and thrive through community partnerships.

Enjoy the news!

Annual General Meeting Wednesday 19th of March 2025



From RHS Steve Gage, Property Officer, Clarke Martin, Immediate Past President, Greg Mier, committee, Timothy Holden, Honorary Treasurer, Shayne Benedict, President, John Douglas OAM, Vice President, Andy Coogan, Appeals Officer, Gina Scott, Honorary Secretary, Membership Officer Jane Lapa (Not Pictured)

Our Sub-Branch has 4 executive positions with a two-year split tenure system to ensure continuity. Treasurer, Timothy Holden and Vice President, John Douglas OAM were re-elected unopposed.

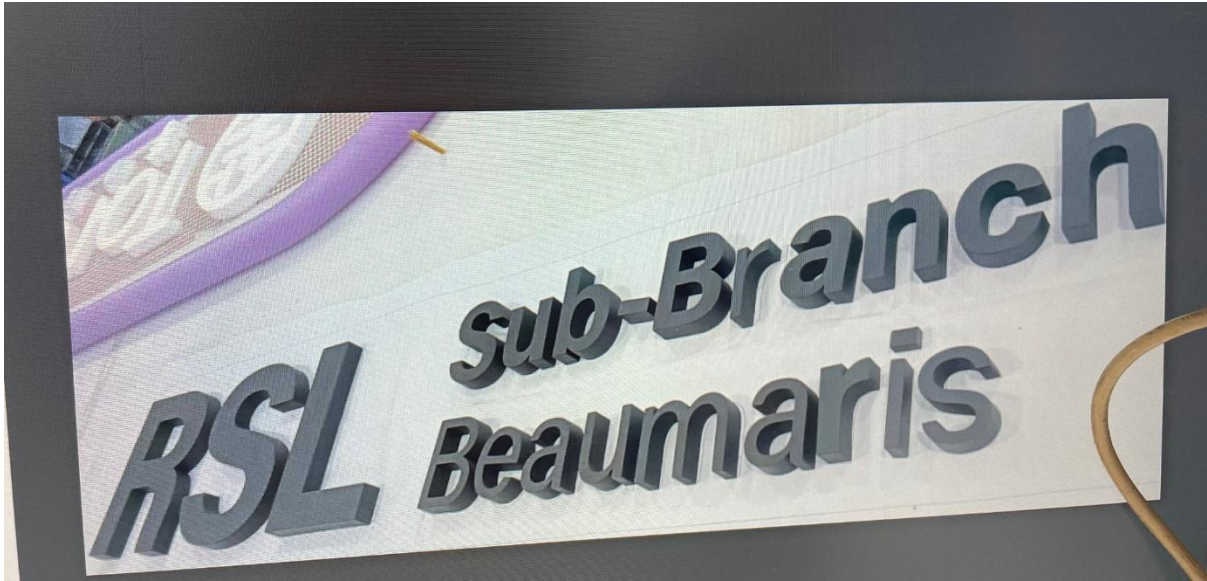
Our other 4 committee members were also elected unopposed: Stephen Gage, Jane Lapa, Clarke Martin, and Greg Meir. Our President Shayne Benedict and Secretary Gina Scott are halfway through their 2-year terms.

The roles of Welfare Officer, Grants Officer, Appeals Officers were appointed by the new committee on the night. Congratulations to Peter Corfield, Andy Coogan, Carolyn Strong and Ronda Corfield.

Annual Victorian RSL State Conference delegates Paul Maple and Clarke Martin were also appointed.

The [Annual Report](#) was tabled at the meeting along with the financial statements. Some very good questions from the floor provoked productive discussions with some actions for the committee to undertake over the year ahead.

Building Refurbishment Project



New Sign in the factory preparing for installation April 2025

Fabrication of our building signage was completed in March. The sign approved by both committees will come with a bronze cast RSL Plaque which has already been received. Other works to be completed include lighting for the lower shelves of the display cabinet, the hanging of memorabilia for both clubs (see below) and our memorial garden.

Our home is really taking shape and we are on the cusp of being able to start holding regular events and enjoying our accommodation.

Hanging the honour Boards and Art Works

Between the BRSC & the Sub-Branch we have more items than walls! To overcome this challenge Wilko was appointed to review all the space and items and provide a report with recommendations for the building Sub-Committee to review and then recommend up to both committee of management.

As you appreciate this is extremely sensitive work to ensure our new facility is positioned for the future and looking like a great place to be but also to ensure our history is not lost.

It is expected the final hanging will take place before ANZAC day after both committees complete the needed due diligence.

RSL Victoria President Dr Robert Webster OAM to retire

After more than 35 years on the State Executive, RSL Victoria President Dr Robert Webster OAM has advised that he will not be seeking re-election in the role of State President at the forthcoming RSL Victoria Annual State Conference in July.

This will end the Vietnam veteran's eight years as President where he has been the face and voice of the RSL in Victoria.

"It's been a privilege to be involved with the RSL, going right back to first joining the Henley & Grange RSL Sub-Branch in South Australia, eventually joining the Victorian State Executive in 1989 and then being elected State President in 2017," Dr Webster said.

"This is an organisation that exists to support veterans and their families, and I'm proud to say that has been my priority every day for those 35 years. But it is our volunteers, supported by the staff throughout our network, that makes that work possible."

"Last year across Victoria volunteers contributed more than 300,000 hours of work to support the RSL and to help veterans and their families."

"Thank you to all those volunteers who truly hold the RSL together."

The upcoming ANZAC Day Dawn Service and March will be Dr Webster's last as head of the organisation, his retirement officially taking effect when a new State President is elected at the Annual State Conference.

Dr Webster believes that the role of the RSL in Victoria is arriving at a crucial juncture.

"The outcome of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide gave us a reminder of just how much support will be required from the RSL in the coming years."

"The mental and physical scars from service are becoming more prevalent and the RSL will continue to be the community's pillar of support for veterans and their families in the future."

"I'm confident of the ongoing commitment of the State Executive and senior staff to provide leadership to the organisation into the future. By working together with the network, the RSL will be ready to meet the complex challenges that lie ahead."

1. **1989** – joined State Executive
2. **1992** – appointed Deputy Treasurer
3. **1994** – named State Treasurer
4. **2001** – assumed a Vice Presidency role
5. **2008** – elected Senior Vice President

2017 – elected President of RSL Victoria

A Hero Unearthed

Date	Hour	Aircraft Type and No.	Pilot	Duty	Date	Hour	Other
1st May	11:30	Spitfire 914	Sgt. Eastman	Wingham St.	1st May	3-05	
2nd May	11:30	Spitfire 914	Sgt. Eastman	Wingham St.	2nd May	6-52	
3rd May	11:30	Spitfire 914	Sgt. Eastman	Wingham St.	3rd May	6-34	1-00
4th May	11:30	Spitfire 914	Sgt. Eastman	Wingham St.	4th May	1-35	
5th May	11:30	Spitfire 914	Sgt. Eastman	Wingham St.	5th May	3-40	1-00
6th May	11:30	Spitfire 914	Sgt. Eastman	Wingham St.	6th May	1-00	
7th May	11:30	Spitfire 914	Sgt. Eastman	Wingham St.	7th May	6-55	1-00
8th May	11:30	Spitfire 914	Sgt. Eastman	Wingham St.	8th May	1-30	
9th May	11:30	Spitfire 914	Sgt. Eastman	Wingham St.	9th May	3-40	1-00
10th May	11:30	Spitfire 914	Sgt. Eastman	Wingham St.	10th May	1-35	
					TOTAL TIME... 381-10		

Flying Log Book Warrant Officer Ted Hanlon May 1945

RSL Sub-Branched provide an enormous diverse range of formal and informal services and assistance to their communities. Beaumaris is no different as this story attests.



Jenny Reardon accepting her first membership card March 2025 from Gina Scott, Honorary Secretary

Our newest member Jenny Reardon made some enquiries regarding her late WW2 Veteran father Ted Hanlon's war service. A meeting was arranged with Jenny to bring in 'what she had' so the Sub-Branch could assist with a review.

It turns out Ted was part of a very secret operation during the war that may have required him to take his secrets to the grave. Like so many WW2 Veterans they took this secrecy requirement very seriously and often the family had very little understanding of what their parents actually did during the war. Luckily Jenny had Ted's Flight Log, photo of his squadron in front of a Dakota and his original Warrant Officer certificate.

With the material at hand the research began and to date has uncovered that Ted was part of 357 (Special Purpose) Squadron RAF based in Digri, Bengal, British India (now Bangladesh). Very late in the war but very importantly in May 1945 the Squadron was tasked to insert 'Agents' and provide supplies to a guerrilla effort in neighbouring Burma.

These Agents were Allied Officers trained to organise local villages into fighting units to disrupt the Japanese invaders.

Flying in treacherous monsoon conditions often at night these flights led to many forced landings, crashes and the death of flight crew. The mission ultimately led to the successful liberation of Burma and thus the freeing of Australian Prisoners of War.

Ted, a radio operator, flew largely in Dakota aircraft that were perfectly suited to guerrilla operations. The air drops included thousands of flyers (named Nickles) written for Japanese troops to receive real information about the dire situation they were in.

Below is an extract from the 357 Commanding Officer's address to all Ground Forces on the 8th of May 1944. Just imagine attending such an update at your workplace!!!

Drive on Rangoon

After the capture of Mandalay the main axis of advance of the 14th Army was obviously going to be down the road and railway to Toungoo, and then direct to Rangoon. In order to make the drive as quickly as possible so as to arrive at Rangoon before the monsoon, protection from the flanks to left and right of the valley running down to Rangoon was necessary. Without this protection, the Jap would have little difficulty in ambushing our armoured vehicles and transport columns as they moved south down the road to Rangoon.

To provide the necessary protection, the Army asked for airborne troops to be landed in strategic positions to harry the Jap forces and prevent them interfering with the advance of the main army.

Use of Guerrilla Forces – Supply Drops

Now on the map you will see the areas into which those airborne troops were parachuted. The country is very wild and mountainous, and it was a difficult job to put the men down in the right places without injury, and unfortunately casualties did occur. The men that were put in were British Officers commanding small parties of 10 to 15 Burmans, and their job was to organise the local Burmese living in the villages into guerrilla parties of considerable size. The parties were then armed with weapons dropped by Liberators in large quantities. Rifles, Sten guns, hand grenades, mines and many other gadgets were dropped, and, of course, food.

All this started in February, and as soon as the Japanese discovered what was happening, they despatched troops to the hills to destroy the parachutists. Unfortunately for the Japs, they did not realise what they were up against, and before very long they had committed large forces to attack the guerrillas in the hills, who were becoming more powerful every day.

while the Japs were thus engaged in a major battle with our forces, the 14th army started to advance with lightning speed down the road to Rangoon, and any Jap reinforcements which were brought north up the road from Rangoon were ambushed by the guerrillas and destroyed. A Jap Major-General was killed in his staff car in this way.

Squadron's Responsibility

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357 Squadron

The entire responsibility for keeping these chaps supplied and reinforced has been ours, and of course, 358 and 200 as well. but I think we have played the biggest part in the operation, as the majority of the personnel was dropped by the Dakotas.

Excerpt of Commanding Officer of 357 Squadron 8th May 1945

News article. Possibly The Age 1945. From fellow WW2 RAAF Veteran EWP Martin Estate

FORGOTTEN ON BURMA FRONT

Australians With the R.A.F.

Flying over some of the most treacherous mountain country in the world to bomb Japanese bases and supply the Allied troops behind the enemy lines, are a little group of Australian airmen who are serving on the Burma front with the R.A.F. These lads call themselves "Aus's Forgotten Men"—and they have good reason for doing so, according to a correspondent of "The Age," "W.H.K.," East Malvern, who has drawn attention to the conditions under which they are waging war against the Japanese and the monsoons.

These airmen, who got their training in Canada, England and Rhodesia, and are serving now with the R.A.F., have long been forgotten by the R.A.A.F., he contends. Not only are they handicapped in the matter of promotions, recommendations and decorations, but they get little news and less comforts from their homeland. Usually their mail takes from eight to 10 weeks to reach them, and they count themselves extremely lucky if they ever get papers or parcels. Many of the lads, who have an impressive record of operational flights, are still sergeant-pilots and flight-sergeants—surely an anomaly, "W.H.K." points out, when men who have never left their native State or flown over enemy lines have been granted commissions. But then, he adds, "promotions in the Air Force are beyond the understanding of all Air Force crews."

Typical of the flying record of some of these "forgotten men" in India and on the Burma front is that of one lad, whose case "W.H.K." cites. This lad left Australia in October, 1941. He gained the Diploma of Navigation in Canada, was then transferred to Prince Edward Island for advanced instructional purposes, finished third in a class of 24 officers, and was then posted to reconnaissance and patrol work off the coast of Nova Scotia and Newfoundland for six months. He then flew the Atlantic to England, and after doing duty there was instructed to proceed to India with his Canadian crew, flying down the western coast of Portugal to Morocco, over the Atlas Mountains to Alexandria, down the Arabian coast to Jodhpur, and finally on to the Burma front, where he is now stationed.

Declaring that it is high time some action to investigate and improve the conditions under which these Australian airmen are serving in India and Burma, "W.H.K." quotes from a letter received from an Australian journalist who recently visited India, and was asked by the editor of an official magazine of the R.A.A.F. to write an article on the Burma front. For the article the newspaperman was to receive no remuneration; it was to be a patriotic gesture on his part, and he gladly undertook it. "Before the war ended," his letter states, "I had flown 4000 miles, spending four weeks and jeep among the Liberators, Wellington, Hurricane and Spitfire pilots. On return I furnished my experience to an official paper of the R.A.A.F. only to receive the greatest snub of my career. But Burma is not in the news. Invasion comes first, also New Guinea."

Returned Soldiers Castlefield Estate Centenary



AAFC Cadets from 417(City of Bayside) Squadron , (which led to the Cadets from 302 AA CADET UNIT (OAKLEIGH)) Natilie Suleyman, Honourable Minister for Veterans' Affairs Victoria with Ryan Batchelor SE Metropolitan MLA and the RAN Band Melbourne in the background.

After World War 1 housing as it is today was a major issue. The War Services Commission created Estates across the country to provide the much needed housing for Returned Servicemen. These were known as war service homes. Felicity Frederico OAM an owner of one of the 300 heritage listed homes led the organisation of this event and wisely approached our own Vice President and Commemorations Officer John Douglas OAM to assist the parade and ceremonial operations of the day.

Therefore it was not surprising that at exactly 11am on Sunday 23rd March 2025 the Royal Australian Navy Band (Melbourne) marched on in presence of Her Excellency the Governor of Victoria, Margaret Elaine Gardner AC and the three services chiefs of Victoria. A short ceremony was conducted including the playing of the Australian Anthem, Advance Australia Fair and raising the Australian National Flag. It was an incredible sight for a local park in Hampton. The City of Bayside's short 30 year history had not been able to attract the Governor so Felicity had pulled off quite a coup.

The MC and fellow organiser Rob Curtain introduced the Governor, Minister and Mayor Cr Hanna El Moullem to make speeches along with Felicity. The speakers all drew upon the stories of the families from the estate many of whom were or became widowers of the WW1 servicemen. Considering they confronted the depression and WW2 their dedication to family and neighbours is the reason of the high standard of the Castlefield Estate today and an incredible testament to their dedication.

Students from St Marys Primary School completed the proceedings by singing two beautiful songs finishing with Happy Birthday joined by the entire 1000 attendees.



LtoR Felicity Frederico OAM, Captain Ben Favelle CSC, RAN, Senior Naval Officer Victoria, Commanding Officer HMAS Cerberus, Major General David McLachlan AO AO (Ret'd) (ex President of RSL Victoria) Major General Jason Blain DSC, AM, CSC Australian Army, Group Captain Gregory Lamb, Director Logistics Capability Airforce Training Group RAAF, John Douglas OAM and Zoe Daniels MP for Goldstein with the Captain.

For all those that attended it was a very enjoyable morning with plenty of food stalls and local services organisations having stalls. These are the type of events that make our community so strong.

ANZAC APPEAL 2025



APRIL ANZAC Dates to Remember

Sunday 20th Community ANZAC Commemorative March and Service Reserve Rd Beaumaris

Friday 25th ANZAC Day at the Sub-Branch Fern Street.

Saturday 26th Commemorative Football Game and lunch Oak Street Beaumaris (call 0412 259 631 for tickets).

Manning the stall at the concourse and Metro Black Rock is a lovely way to both contribute to Veterans and enjoy meeting and hearing the stories of our local residents. The stalls will be operating from the 10th April till the 24th April and we need the roster filled to make this year another successful. Time slots are for 2 or 3 hours starting at 9.00am.

If you can help please contact Rhonda Corfield, Appeals Roster Co-Ordinator 0429 647 481



**RETURNED SERVICES LEAGUE
BEAUMARIS (Sub-Branch Victoria) WOMEN'S AUXILIARY
ABN Number 88265918231**

**President: Mairi McIntosh OAM - 0419 882 501 Secretary: Reg Black OAM - 0408
324 866**

**Treasurer: Rhonda Corfield 0429 647 481
Women's Auxiliary Newsletter March 2025**



**Happy 100th Birthday
to our much loved
Women's Auxiliary
Life Member**

What a wonderful achievement! Congratulations to Beth who has been a consistent hard working member of our Auxiliary. Since joining 49 years ago her contribution has been remarkable.

After time as a general member and embracing the work of the Auxiliary, Beth put herself forward as an executive member on the Committee.

As often happens, once you become a committee member you remain a committee member! Beth's input started with being Publicity Officer and then increased her workload to being Secretary. Due to her long association within the RSL and the Auxiliary, she made lifelong friends with many of the members. Beth loved to be connected with people and in 2005 she was appointed Welfare Officer, a task she did extremely well. No birthday was forgotten. No new grandchild celebration was overlooked and every illness or hospital visit was acknowledged by her beautifully written cards of positive thoughts and well wishes.

Beth's phone bills must be enormous, as she keeps in constant contact with members ensuring that they we in good health and coping.

The Concourse was her haven. Popping into IGA for a carton of milk would turn into a lengthy social event as Beth's friends were always there and enjoying a "quick" chat. Beth is a very attentive listener and always had happy and encouraging words of wisdom.

In 1998 she was awarded a Silver Star and this was followed by a Gold Star in 2006. These acknowledgements were given for commitment far beyond the guidelines of her committee profile and were very well deserved.

For all her work and dedication Beth received the highest award from Women's Council of Life Membership in 2007.

Without Beth's ongoing guidance and support, our Auxiliary would not have been as successful as it is today. We are extremely proud and grateful for her continuous work.

Unfortunately Beth celebrated her birthday at Holmesglen Hospital as she had a fall days before her special day. She is in good spirits and is looking forward to formally celebrating her birthday at a later date.



We all wish you a speedy recovery!

Women's Auxiliary AGM

We held our AGM on March 19 and I would like to congratulate members who were voted onto the Executive for 2025/26.

President	Mairi McIntosh OAM
Secretary	Reg Black OAM
Treasurer	Rhonda Corfield
Welfare Officer	Donna Spandel
W C Delegate	Shirley Bare OAM

Your commitment is appreciated and we look forward to working together in 2025

Thank you to State RSL Honorary Treasurer, Timothy Holden, who represented the RSL and conducted the investiture of our new committee.

We also congratulate Donna Spandel who was awarded a Silver Star. Well deserved.

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Women's Auxiliary Member's Draw and Weekly Raffle

We hold our weekly raffle after Stand To each Wednesday night. This funds the fortnightly Member's Draw.

The Member's Draw pot stands at \$350. Hopefully you will be present when your name comes up on the screen. The member's draw is held fortnightly.

Just remember, you must be present to collect winnings if your name is drawn



ANZAC Appeal

WE NEED YOUR HELP

Preparations are underway to organise the ANZAC Appeal and Rhonda has already worked hard in the past fortnight to get everything ready. Boxes have been filled and are ready for distribution.

These appeals take an enormous amount of Rhonda's time. Schools and local businesses have been contacted to ensure that there are sufficient Badge boxes in the community and at sales venues to remind people of the importance of the great sacrifice made by others on our behalf.

Rhonda has contacted the venues where poppies are to be sold and this appeal will be held at:

- Bunnings in Mentone
- IGA in the concourse
- Metro in Black Rock
- Seaview shopping Centre

If you have any time to assist with the badge sales, please give Rhonda a call.

Invite a friend to assist you and enjoy being a part of the community and having a chat with the passers by. It can be great fun and also rewarding.

Rosters are available and even if you are only able to give 1-2 hours it will help relieve those who are rostered on for 3-4 sessions.

Badge sales begin Thursday 6th April

Rhonda's phone number is 0429 647 481

Dates to pop into your diary.

ANZAC DAY Sunday 20th April

Our ANZAC March and Service will be held on April 20th at the Cenotaph at Beaumaris Community Centre with a march off from the Concourse at 2.45. Light refreshments will be served after the commemoration by the Auxiliary at the Beaumaris Bowls Club. If you are able to assist with catering on the day please contact Reg on the number above.

Women's Auxiliary WINTER SOLSTICE Luncheon

Will be held at Sandy by The Bay on WEDNESDAY June 18. NOTE the change of day to WEDNESDAY this year.

Please mark this date in your diaries and start to think about who you would like to invite onto your table.

A flyer will be sent out closer to the event

Women's Auxiliary CHRISTMAS Luncheon December 10th 2025

We have booked our end of year Christmas function at Sandy by the Bay and ask that you please keep this date free. We again have booked the Repeters for this function and they have been a wonderful support to our Auxiliary. This gives you all sufficient time to get out of your comfy seats and start to increase your fitness level so that we can fill the dance floor with active motivated dances of all persuasion. Hopefully we can encourage some of our partners to accompany us!

Reg Black OAM
Hon Secretary.
Beaumaris Women's Auxiliary
27th March 2025

Vale/Welfare Report



Sadly we lost two members recently, Margaret 'Marg' Couper-Johnston and Wendy Shenfield. Marg was a member of The Heathland Day Club. Marg helped make Wellington Ave one of the friendliest Streets in Melbourne.

Wendy Shenfield will be remembered at a Memorial Service at The Sandringham Yacht Club on April 1. R.I.P. Margaret and Wendy.



Rhonda and I visited Beth Carruthers on her 100th Birthday and presented her with a Birthday Card and Shawl on behalf of all her friends at The RSL



Geoffrey Goode, Service Member was recently nominated and subsequently shortlisted for The Prestigious Award 'Bayside City Council Senior Citizen of The Year'. Another candidate ultimately was chosen, however it is gratifying to know that his service to the community has not gone unnoticed. Geoff never hesitates to volunteer his services to our two most significant yearly appeals, ANZAC and Remembrance Day.

To date we have nine members who have nominated to be 'transported' in one of our Limousines, kindly coordinated by John Humphries to this year's ANZAC Commemoration on Easter Sunday. If any member knows of someone who would be interested in participating and 'transported' please let me know via mobile phone 0417351493.

Peter Corfield
Tel 0417351493
Welfare Officer



Partnering with community comes with so many opportunities and benefits!



Families enjoying the new deck Friday 28th of March 2025

With such lovely weather it was terrific to see the new deck being used by so many families. Our joint venture with the BRSC is only in its infancy and we have lots and lots of ideas to connect with our younger members of the community. As part of our presentations to State Branch regarding our proposed partnership these sort of occasions were highlight.

Although not a Sub-Branch event these patrons and their kids had the opportunity to be exposed to the RSL movement through our display cabinets and soon to be hung memorabilia. Many members of our Sub-Branch are attending our home on the Fridays and we strongly encourage more to come along.

I hope you have enjoyed this newsletter and if you ever want a chat or have an idea, please do not hesitate to call me or any of the team.

Shayne Benedict, President, Beaumaris RSL Sub-Branch
0418 318 862

Please contact Jane Lapa our membership officer with any enquiries.

Phone 0415 935 513 or email jane.lapa@icloud.com

If you have any feedback or an item you would like to include in the newsletter, please email it through to beaumarisrsl@gmail.com



ANZAC DAY@BRSC

FRIDAY 25th APRIL

FAMILY DAY ON THE LAWN CEREMONY BEGINS AT 1.00PM

Blessing of Club and Organization Flags

Flag Ceremony

Kids Flower Laying Activity

Sing Australia Bayside Choir



MUSIC BEGINS AT 2.15pm

ONE NIGHT BAND

Harry and Friends Jazz & Swing Band

Celtic Sounds

Two up Circle



ASL - Catering Kitchen Open plus BBQ
Carlton and Stone & Wood Bar

World of Gin

Live football on the BIG Screen



SUNDAY 06 APRIL | 10AM - 4PM | FREE TICKETED ENTRY

HMAS CERBERUS OPEN DAY 2025

Navy Technical Training Displays
Navy Small Boats & Seamanship Displays
Navy Recruit School Displays

Navy Band Concerts & Displays

ADF Careers Presentations & Information

Survival At Sea Training Centre Demonstrations

Ship Damage Control Demonstrations

Navy, Army & Airforce Interactive Displays

ADF Cadets Information & Displays

Vintage War Plane Flyovers

Military Aircraft Displays

Australian Maritime College Display

Defence Force School of Signals Displays

Kids Bounce Castles, Face Painting

& Much much more to see



Scan QR Code for full event information & registration

Register online from 12pm 03 March 2025

Enquiries - cerberus.openday@defence.gov.au