

2025

WAVERLEY RSL SUB-BRANCH



ANNUAL REPORT



WAVERLEY
RSL CLUB

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OUR MISSION STATEMENT

To Support the wellbeing and betterment of servicing and ex-serving men and women of the ADF, our allies and their families, together with provision of welfare and commemorative services and contributing to worthy needs within the broader local community.

OUR MISSION

Supporting the well-being and betterment of our members, former and serving members of the Australian Defence Force, and their dependents, through the provision of welfare and commemorative services, high quality facilities and hospitality for members and guests and, where appropriate, contribute to the needs of the disadvantaged within the City of Monash.

WAVERLEY RSL VISION STATEMENT

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



OUR HISTORY

The Glen Waverley Sub-Branch of the Returned Servicemen's League, Victoria was formed on the 9th September 1950, when 25 Returned Servicemen met at the Mechanic's Institute Hall (The Waverley Hall) Springvale Road, Black Flat.

In 1960, our name was changed from Glen Waverley Sub-Branch to the Waverley Sub-Branch, at the time the City of Waverley was created from the Shire of Mulgrave.

In 1963, an adjoining block of land was acquired, and the first major expansion of our club rooms took place.

In 1968, newly liberalised Liquor Laws made it easier for clubs to obtain Liquor Licences. At a special meeting of the Sub-Branch in August 1968, it was decided that a Club should be formed, and application made for a Liquor Licence. Membership by this time had increased to over 200 ordinary members.

ABOUT US

Supporting the well-being and betterment of our members, former and serving members of the Australian Defence Force, and their dependents, through the provision of welfare and commemorative services, high quality facilities and hospitality for members and guests and, where appropriate, contribute to the needs of the disadvantaged within the City of Monash.



BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

EXECUTIVE



**NEIL SLAUGHTER
PRESIDENT**



**GEOFF DARE OAM
VICE PRESIDENT**



**GRANTLEY WOODS
SECRETARY**



**KEN VICKERY
TREASURER**

GENERAL COMMITTEE



**REX HIRST
COMMITTEE**



**RHONDA REID
COMMITTEE**



**TIM DAY
COMMITTEE**



**BRENDAN MAHON
COMMITTEE**



**GARY BROGDEN
COMMITTEE**



**ROGER SALVINI
COMMITTEE**



**JUSTIN CLEVERLEY
GENERAL MANAGER**



THE PRESIDENT

It is my honour to present the President's Report for the year ended 2025 and reflect on another significant year in the life of our Sub-Branch. The past year has been one of continued commitment, resilience and progress. As always, our core purpose has remained clear: to support veterans and their families, honour service and sacrifice, and maintain the traditions and values of the Returned and Services League of Australia. This has been achieved through good governance, hard work and determination by all concerned; the Executive, Committee members, sub-committees, portfolio officers, management and operations personnel, both front and back of house. This has resulted in a better-than-expected financial result which is evidenced in the Treasurer's and Manager's reports.

I would particularly like to commend our General Manager, Mr Justin Cleverley, for his hard work, leadership and professionalism. He took on board an incredible amount of extra work through 2025, particularly in relation to the SRLA works and endeavours to find a new location for the Sub-Branch.

The hard work and commitment by all our management and staff, behind the scenes and on the front line, are what keeps our RSL Sub-Branch strong and true to its purpose. All your efforts serving our veterans, members and families, or ensuring the day-to-day operations run smoothly, do not go unnoticed and are very much appreciated. Once again, the year 2025 brought its challenges, but it also highlighted the strength of our team, and the pride you take in what you do.

Membership remains the foundation of our Sub-Branch. I am pleased to report that we have maintained a strong and engaged membership base during the year. While, like many organisations, we face challenges in attracting younger veterans, we continue to explore ways to remain relevant, inclusive and supportive to current and future generations of service personnel.



THE PRESIDENT CONTINUED

Our welfare and advocacy has remained a priority, and I sincerely thank Mr Tim Day and Welfare Officer Fil Di Bianco for their leadership, in conjunction with those dedicated volunteers who work quietly but tirelessly to assist members and their families, often behind the scenes. Their dedication reflects the very best of the RSL spirit. You can read more detail in Fil's Welfare and Charitable Report for 2025 of all the great work undertaken throughout the year, especially her huge thank-you to our wonderful volunteers who dedicate their time to assist the Welfare Office in facilitating programs and activities.

Likewise, through our Appeals Officer, Mr Gary Brogden, and another dedicated team of volunteers, 2025 saw an outstanding result, in the team raising \$85,000 plus in our annual ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day poppy appeals, all of which goes to the resources for our veteran welfare and community activities. Specific details are provided in Gary's report.

Our Committee members acknowledge, and are grateful, for the tremendous support of all our volunteers, and we held a "Thank you" dinner in February for our team of volunteers to express our gratitude for their ongoing, outstanding contribution to the Sub-Branch.

Our annual ceremonial events were again well received and attended in 2025. Ceremonial Officer, Brendan Mahon, and another team of volunteers did an outstanding job in facilitating these events. It is clear that our ANZAC Day Dawn Service at the Glen Waverley Reserve Cenotaph has significantly increased in community attendance, which is giving us more incentive to promote and market this event even further. As documented in Brendan's report, regrettably we were unable to hold our local Glen Waverley Pre-ANZAC day march and ceremony due to the State Government's Rail Loop works in the precinct surrounding our Sub-Branch; sadly this situation will be the norm for this year. My sincere thanks to Brendan, Mal Carson for his enduring assistance and, of course, once again to our dedicated band of volunteers.



THE PRESIDENT CONTINUED

As always, our Women's Auxiliary has done amazing work in their fundraising through 2025. Led by Rhonda Dare, this hard working and committed group of ladies has provided significant financial support to various worthwhile charities. On behalf of our Committee and our membership we acknowledge your tremendous work, and your efforts do not go unnoticed.

Chairman of our Norman A Smith Scholarship (NASS), Mr John Coulson, and his NASS committee members have once again facilitated a very successful Scholarship in 2025. Our Scholarship has endured the passage of time since its inaugural launch in 1986; this year, 2026, we will be celebrating its 40th anniversary. This is a testament to the incredible efforts by so many NASS committee members over the 40 year journey, and what a great community achievement that our Sub-Branch has been able to sustain this Scholarship for the benefit of so many young students in progressing their further education and their professional career paths. Congratulations to our current NASS committee team, led by Mr John Coulson and supported by Heather Woods, Rhonda Reid, Lyn Clugg, Glenda Bushell, John Morgan, Jeff Lester, and also Secretary, Grantley Woods for his administrative assistance.

At the time of writing this report I am unable to give any clarity as to our ongoing efforts to find a new home for our RSL Sub-Branch. Needless to say, 2025 has again been an incredibly challenging year in the ongoing saga of negotiations with the SRLA and the task of finding a suitable relocation site. Our WRS� project team, comprising Grantley Woods, Ken Vickery, Tim Day, Rex Hirst, Roger Salvini, Justin Cleverley and myself have all worked tirelessly, devoting so much of their time in this ongoing process. I wish to highlight and acknowledge the outstanding support from Tim and Justin in really "stepping up to the plate" in doing that extra "hard yards" when required. Mr John Taylor has also been of great support along the journey. I hope to be able to provide our members with a more detailed update at our AGM on the 17th March.



THE PRESIDENT CONTINUED

The WRSL Sub-Branch celebrated its 75th anniversary in 2025. We had a number of very successful occasions and events to mark this special milestone in our history. I wish to thank Mr Gary Brogden for his organisational skills in facilitating these events through the year. And a special thank you, Gary, on behalf of the many members that supported and took part in the celebrations; their compliments and feedback have been amazing.

Neil Slaughter

President



THE TREASURER

It gives me great pleasure to provide this snapshot of our financial position for the year ending 31st December 2025.

The operating profit for the Sub-Branch for the financial year was \$730,615, a substantial increase from \$306,049 in 2024.

The cornerstone of our profit is derived from our 67 gaming machines and has allowed us to focus on containing costs and minimising the impact of inflation on the pricing of food, beverages and entertainment offers to members of the club.

A very pleasing milestone was achieved during the year when we became “debt free”, having paid out our Sub-Branch loan liability to the NAB and our loan against the purchase of our gaming machines.

The compulsory acquisition of the Sub-Branch by the Suburban Rail Loop Authority during the year has provided us with the financial assurance in our endeavours to find a suitable alternative location going forward.

We continue our commitment to supporting our member community, particularly veterans and their families. The expenditure on maintaining these services through our Veteran’s and Community Welfare office was over \$450K. This figure does not include the numerous hours worked by our unpaid volunteers.

In closing I would like to extend special thanks to our General Manager, Justin, his management team and all staff for their contribution towards another year of strong financial results.

Ken Vickery

Treasurer



THE GENERAL MANAGER

2025 was a year marked by resilience and progress as the Waverley RSL navigated the ongoing challenges associated with the Suburban Rail Loop construction works. Despite significant disruptions affecting access and parking, the RSL Club delivered positive outcomes across several operational areas.

The Waverley RSL was also compulsory acquired by the State Government for the Suburban Rail Loop during the year, adding an additional layer of complexity to operations and future strategic challenges.

Key achievements

The bar and beverage department recorded 4.4% growth compared to the previous year.

Gaming revenue increased, achieving 2.3% growth year on year.

Challenges

The restaurant experienced a noticeable decrease in trade, serving a total of 5,415 fewer customers during 2025, representing a 6.8% decrease on the previous year. Covers averaged 69 at lunch and 90 for dinner each day.

The Function department also recorded a decline.

These declines were largely driven by ongoing construction-related disruptions, particularly customer frustration regarding venue access and reduced parking availability.

Entertainment and activities

Although the entertainment programs were reduced during the year due to construction impacts, member support remained strong. Offerings included regular dinner and shows.

Free bingo, Mah-jong and Morning Melodies continued to be well attended and positively received.



THE GENERAL MANAGER CONTINUED

Welfare department

The Welfare department maintained its vital role in supporting veterans and their families. Programs included Balance and Mobility sessions, social and wellbeing activities and financial assistance initiatives. This work remains central to the RSL mission and was successfully maintained throughout 2025.

Financial management

In August the RSL Club achieved a significant financial milestone by fully repaying all outstanding loans to the bank, including a \$2.2million general loan and the \$570,000 gaming machine loan.

As a result, the RSL Club operates debt free and strengthens our long-term financial position moving into the next chapter of Waverley RSL's existence.

Future outlook

Looking ahead, we anticipate continued challenges as Suburban Rail Loop works progress over the coming years. To prepare for the future, we are developing strategies aimed at sustaining growth through 2029 and beyond. A key priority for the upcoming year is the purchase of a property to support the RSL's long term future.

Appreciation

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all the staff, managers and board members throughout 2025. Working with such a dedicated team has been a privilege.

Finally, I would like to thank our members and guests for their ongoing support of the Waverley RSL. I look forward to 2026 and the opportunities the coming year will bring.

Justin Cleverley

General Manager



COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Welfare and Charitable Report

The Welfare office continued to support our veterans, widows, younger veterans and members of the community throughout the year by way of the following:

Services:

- Support phone calls and welfare checks
- Financial support
- Lawn mowing
- Smoke alarm program
- Key safe program
- Home maintenance
- Funerals
- ANZAC Day / Remembrance Day commemorative services
- Student support program

Welfare Activities:

- Day Club
- Balance & Mobility exercises
- Women's support chat group
- Women's Auxiliary

Grants (received from)

- \$1,000 from DVA
- \$2,000 from Women's Auxiliary



COMMUNITY SUPPORT CONTINUED

Networking Efforts - Ongoing networking efforts include:

- Collaborating with other RSL sub-branch welfare coordinators for support and guidance
- Engaging with pension advocates from other ESOs
- Work alongside DVA, RSL Victoria, RSL Active, Vasey RSL Care, Vet Central and aged care facilities within the Monash community
- Connecting with other veteran support groups such as Open Arms, Soldier On, Carry On, Vasey RSL Care, V Centre, Ward 17 and IGY6 Foundation.

Other Support Initiatives

- DVA enquiries, including applying for gold and white cards and the Australian Defence Veterans' Covenant
- Mental health referrals
- Navigating My Aged Care online portal
- Crisis accommodation
- Fostering friendships and connections with other veterans and widows, reconnecting them with the community or the RSL
- National Servicemen's Association

Professional Development

The Welfare coordinator continues to enhance the level of service provided to the veterans and general community members by engaging in significant upskilling and attending various educational and professional development courses to broaden her vocational knowledge.

Conclusion

A huge thank you to our wonderful volunteers who dedicate their time to assist the welfare office in facilitating programs and activities.



APPEALS

Our volunteers continue to do themselves proud, raising a lot of money to support our veterans.

Thank you to the pickers/packers for getting the badges ready for sale, to the distributors for getting the trays and boxes to schools and businesses, and to the face-to-face sellers who engage the public for their support.

With this engagement we ensure the message is delivered to our next generation. Our primary school teachers continue their work to ensure the sacrifices are not forgotten.

Remember, all money collected is remitted to ANZAC House, with 50% returned to the Sub-Branch to be used solely for our veteran welfare activities. When these monies are exhausted, additional welfare expenditure is taken from the Patriotic Fund.

During 2025 we raised \$48 030 for the ANZAC Appeal and \$38 615 during the Poppy Appeal, making for a total of \$86 645.

I am pleased to advise that SRLA employees actively engaged in both appeals.

Our revenue stream is being affected by the cashless society, and this is reflected by the almost \$9 000 collected during last year via the introduction of QR codes and putting more EFTPOS machines into businesses, a pleasing outcome.

We continue to look for new areas to raise funds to support our veterans and all ideas are welcome.

Gary Brogden

Appeals Officer



WOMEN'S AUXILIARY

I would like to thank all members of the committee for all their hard work in assisting me with the successful operations of the Women's Auxiliary. Special thanks are extended to Ann Brooks and Judy Lester for their tireless work on the co-ordination of the raffles and the Christmas market stall; what a great success they were.

Funds raised during 2025 totalled \$9,817, by way of trading table (\$258), meeting raffles (\$473), Mother's Day stall (\$418), Easter raffle (\$1,939), book sales (\$660), quilt raffle (\$1,920), Christmas market (\$1,144) and Christmas raffle (\$3,105). Thanks to the efforts of all the ladies involved.

A total of \$8,200 was disbursed to the following various organisations in 2025:

Angel Flight	\$500
Dogs for Diggers	\$1000
Riding for Disabled	\$700
The V Centre – Vasey Care	\$1000
Ward 17 – Austin Health	\$2000
Waverley RSL Patriotic Fund	\$1000
Waverley RSL Welfare Office	\$1000
Young Diggers	\$1000

I look forward to working with all our members again in 2026.

Rhonda Dare

President



NORMAN A SMITH MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

On behalf of my wonderful committee, I am pleased to report that the Norman A Smith Memorial Scholarship program had another highly successful year in 2025.

The committee consisted of John Coulson, Heather Woods, John Morgan, Jeff Lester, Rhonda Reid and Lyn Clugg. During the year we were joined by Glenda Bushell. President Neil Slaughter attended most meetings and Secretary Grantley Woods provided valuable support. I also acknowledge the continued support and advice from Geoff Dare.

2025 was the 39th year of the scholarship since its inception in 1986. At that date it was decided that the scholarship be available to year 10 students who are Australian citizens and reside in the City of Monash and/or attend a secondary school in the City of Monash.

The committee contacted all schools within the City of Monash, and we were disappointed that some schools didn't participate, namely Caulfield GS, Highvale SC, Wellington SC and, surprisingly, Mazenod College, which has been a strong supporter in the past. Outside Monash, the committee made contact with Melbourne Boys HS, MacRobertson Girls HS, Presbyterian Ladies College and Kilvington College.

The 14 schools that did participate were Ashwood HS, Avila College, Brentwood HS, Glen Waverley SC, Huntingtower School, John Monash HS, Kilvington College, MacRobertson Girls HS, Melbourne Boys HS, Mt Waverley SC, Salesian College, South Oakleigh SC, Wesley College and Wheelers Hill SC.

Last year we had 47 registrations, which was reduced to 32 candidates by the time we conducted the exam at Wesley College. At the exam the committee was ably assisted by Daryl Michie. May I take this opportunity to thank Wesley College for their ongoing support over many years.



NORMAN A SMITH MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP CONTINUED

Our assessment program consisted of a ninety-minute multiple choice exam covering such issues as Australia's people and culture, parliament and judiciary systems and military history, as well as an essay on an aspect of leadership. Based on the results from the exam, the essay and candidates' personal profiles we would normally form a final panel of five. This year, the results were so close that the committee decided to add two candidates to the final panel.

The seven finalists selected for interview on Monday 11 August were Joanna Praveen (Avila College), Chiara Strang (Avila College), Mia Pountney (Huntingtower School), Sahitya Iyer (Huntingtower School, Svara Joshi (Huntingtower School), Shreya Kalani (MacRobertson Girls HS) and Alex Robertson (South Oakleigh College).

Joanna Praveen was selected as the Scholar for 2025.

A presentation function was held at the RSL on 11 September in the presence of RSL members, the finalists and their families and school representatives, as well as several scholars from past years - Anthony Klein, Teresa Porritt, Kelly Pountney, Isabelle Devadass, Thomas Maguire-Nguyen and Jack Wright.

We were also pleased to welcome John Mullahy MP and Paul Klisaris, City of Monash Mayor, who assisted with presentations. Another welcome guest was the 2024 Scholarship winner Jack Wright, who was given his second instalment of \$4000.

The finalists were presented with certificates, books and an RSL gift card. Joanna received the Scholar's certificate, and her family will receive \$4000, being the first instalment of her \$8000 scholarship.

The committee sincerely thanks Daryl Chang-Phillips, Daryl Michie and Linda Steers for their support and cooperation throughout the year.

2026 will be a big year for the committee and the club. It is the Scholarship's 40th anniversary and we are planning on an appropriate celebration in conjunction with our Presentation Night in September.

John Coulson OAM RFD ED

Chairman



WAVERLEY
RSL CLUB

CEREMONIAL

Last year's ceremonial activities commenced with the ANZAC Day Dawn Service. Unfortunately, the traditional ANZAC Day annual march and ceremony was not conducted, due to the disruptive and unpredictable Suburban Rail Loop works. The same works will prevent the march and ceremony being held again this year, due to uncertainty over road closures and construction.

ANZAC Day fell on a Friday in 2025, marking the 110th anniversary of the Gallipoli Campaign. The weather was again mild and attracted about 1000 people. A moving service was led by the Reverend Derek Jones from the parish of St Stephen's and St Mary's Church, Mount Waverley. 'In Flanders Field' was read by Tiffany Gip and 'O Valiant Hearts' was read by Arjun Kapoor, both vice captains from Glen Waverley Secondary College. 306 Army Cadet Unit Monash provided a catafalque party and the Police Academy (Glen Waverley) attended in parade formation. Mr James Cooper, accompanied by his sons, performed the bagpipes during the laying of the wreaths, continuing a 40-year tradition for the Waverley RSL. Melbourne High School again provided the bugler, Band Sergeant Joshua Lobo.

In recognition of their support of ANZAC Day, the Waverley RSL made donations to the following organisations:

- The Melbourne High School Band
- The Welsh Choir
- Training Ship Melbourne
- 306 Army Cadet Unit Monash
- The Waverley Squadron of the Australian Air League.



CEREMONIAL CONTINUED

The Remembrance Day service was conducted on a Tuesday in 2025. Mr Malcolm Carson OAM was the emcee again for the service. Mr Neil Slaughter was joined by the Monash City Council mayor, Cr Paul Klisaris, and other dignitaries in laying wreaths. Jamie Howells read a moving poem that he authored. The readings were performed by Olive Roodenburg and Archie Keough, school captains from Wesley College (Glen Waverley campus) and Jason Liu and Xavier Pace, middle school captains from Glen Waverley Secondary College.

Brendan Mahon

Ceremonial Officer



VOLUNTEER HOURS

Waverley RSL volunteers are some of the most incredible people you will meet. Not only have many already given through the Australian Defence Force, they also freely choose to provide service with their involvement with their local RSL.

In celebration of our volunteers' work over the previous year the following statistics provide a glimpse of their efforts in 2025:

Registered Volunteers	Active Volunteers	Total Volunteer Hours
121	68	5350

Total Monetary Value*	Admin & Management	ANZAC & Poppy
\$275,00	2030 hours	850 hours

Veteran Support	Womens Auxiliary
\$550,00	1130 hours

* Rates determined by Volunteering Victoria

The Project Development Sub-Committee within the Admin & Management portfolio contributed almost 900 hours (or 17% of all volunteer hours) during 2025; a most significant indication of the dedication, willingness and desire of this group of members to seek a viable alternate site of the Waverley RSL due to SRL works.

Whether it is the 'newbie' assisting at our Appeals in a local shopping centre, a 'hardened' Board member or everyone in between our volunteers are recognised and supported for their individual and collective efforts.

Grantley Woods

Secretary



WAVERLEY
RSL CLUB

VALES

It is with regret that we record the passing of the following Service members between the 2025 AGM and 28 February 2026:

Ian Jemmeson	James Wells	John Blackley
Kerry Collinson	Robert Molnar	Maxwell Harris
Lewis Eadie	Thelma Dreger	Henry Puszka
Don Boles	Barrie Dexter	Beverley Ogilvie
Keith Murray	Trevor Walsh	Frank Mitchell
Brian Cartwright	Graeme Hewitt	Alexander Powell
James Pagonis	Jeffrey Perkins	Frederick Hunnam
Karl Romich	James Cahill	



FINANCIAL STATEMENT

[2025 Annual Report - Patriotic Fund Account](#)

[2025 Annual Report - Waverley RSL Sub-Branch](#)

