



ANNUAL REPORT

2024



SHEPPARTON
RSL



INDEX

Page	Subject
3.	Index
4.	What We Do
5.	President's Report
6.	General Manager's Report
8.	Secretary's Report
10.	Treasurer's Report
11.	Health, Wellbeing & Veteran Support Report / Appeals Report
12.	Memorabilia Report
13.	GV Veterans Centre Report
14.	Greater Shepparton Veterans Group
15.	Vales & Life Members
Financial Papers for 2024	
	Financial Statements [pages separately numbered]
	A. <i>Independent Auditors Report</i>
	B. <i>Shepparton RSL Sub-Branch In Financial Report</i>
	C. <i>Shepparton RSL Sub-Branch Patriotic Fund</i>
	D. <i>Shepparton RSL Sub-Branch Patriotic Fund Return</i>
	E. <i>Shepparton RSL Sub-Branch Appeals Patriotic Fund Return</i>

WHO WE ARE & WHAT WE DO

The RSL was founded in 1916 to provide comradeship and support to Australia's Veterans and their families.

That core mission has never changed but has continued to evolve to meet the needs of each generation of servicemen and women.

We have a branch network that covers Australia and any veteran who needs help will get it and every serving ADF member and Veteran will be warmly welcomed at their local RSL.

We advocate for the best possible conditions for our serving men and women and for those who have served the nation in the past.

We foster respect and thanks from the nation for all those who have made sacrifices in Australia's name and we will provide a strong voice on issues of national unity and security.

In addition to this, however, we are a community organisation and our community support is wide and varied including:

- Local sporting groups and clubs
- Educational institutions with grants and scholarships
- Emergency services with equipment and funding
- Health and aged care & kindred organisations such as Legacy, Open Arms and others.
- Other mainstream charities doing great work across Victoria.
- **Veteran Services** (formerly GV Veterans Inc.) Through our Sub Committee Portfolio, we offer a wide range of services to ex veterans and serving members of our ADF, especially with assisting members in making claims to DVA and other government departments.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Anzac and Remembrance Day again had large crowds in attendance. We have been fortunate to have such good weather over the past few years on these days. The Gunfire Breakfast was again a great success, with many thanks to the Rotary Club of Shepparton South and Shepparton Lions Club, together with our General Manager Grant and staff, for assisting to make it a success.

We were very unfortunate throughout the year to lose two Life Members, being Les Shard and Kevin Heenan. They were both outstanding contributors to the Sub-Branch and will be sadly missed.

A special thanks to our team at the Goulburn Valley Veterans Centre who do an outstanding job in meeting our veterans and war widows needs. Many thanks to Chair Paul Blackwell, together with his wife Ronnie, who retired during the year. They have been excellent contributors to the centre. We were fortunate to pick up Molly Kennedy as an Advocate a couple of years ago and she has now taken over the role of Chairperson. It was decided during the year that the centre will come under the umbrella of the Sub-Branch, and this will happen within the next month. They will be well advantaged when they move into the new Veterans Centre in March, which is Stage 1 of renovations. Volunteer hours for the centre recorded for the year is 4,240 which is a record.

Again, a special thanks to our Appeals Team leaders, Bruce and Sandy Davis, and their team of sellers. They have nearly reached of their target of raising \$1M since they took over the portfolio 10 years ago. Their commitment to appeals is recognised.

We recorded another outstanding profit for the year, especially in difficult economic times. The current year is going to be a very disruptive year, with the renovations now inside our main building. I am sure we will continue to be profitable during these times. When completed, I believe our facility will be the best licensed Club/Hotel in Regional Victoria.

We have an outstanding group of volunteers in veteran's support, appeals and memorabilia. Without them the Sub-Branch would not exist, and I thank them for their ongoing contribution.

You cannot record a sound financial result without a committed General Manager and staff focused on great customer service. I would like to thank Grant for his outstanding personal commitment, ably supported by his hard-working staff. We continue to get great feedback from members and visitors about our staff. We are the number one hospitality venue to visit in the Goulburn Valley.

The Sub-Branch's Committee two-year term comes to an end at this Annual General Meeting. We have worked closely together exceptionally well (with a few laughs in between). I would like to thank each and every one of you for your contribution.

Bob Wilkie
President

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

It is an honour to serve as the General Manager of the Shepparton RSL and report on the club's activities throughout 2024.

I am pleased to report a combined surplus of \$1,822,214 for the Shepparton RSL Sub-Branch Inc. account and the Patriotic Fund account. Although our total net profit position was less than our 2023 result, several contributing factors played a role in this, with expenses and wages significantly increasing during the year and additional capital spent maintaining our gaming product and delivering the highest quality product for our members and visitors. I am confident that we can continue to deliver strong financial stability during 2025 as we embark on the transformation of our RSL.

The year ahead will be an exciting one, unveiling our state-of-the-art veterans' services facility and administration/staff areas, as part of Stage 1, due for completion March 2025. Stage 2 will follow incorporating our new reception, lounge and gaming room with the goal to be finished in June 2025.

Stage 3 will then commence in August 2025 with the following works planned:

- Bistro spillover
- New lounge, central sports/café/gaming bar
- Seating area café
- Outdoor alfresco dining area
- Indoor/outdoor courtyard with bar facilities
- Introduction of new dedicated smoking areas
- Bistro and function room upgrades
- Memorial wall
- Kids play area & external landscaping upgrades

These upgrades will enable us to continue to support our veterans and their families, along with enhanced facilities for all our members and the Shepparton community.

Our dedication to commemorating and reflecting on significant dates continued during the year with our observance of Anzac Day and Remembrance Day, with crowds growing every year. This is testament to the contributions of the Shepparton RSL Committee, staff and associated organizations throughout the year, and I express my sincere gratitude to them.

I would also like to take this moment to offer my appreciation and recognition to the management team and all our staff. The energy, pride and dedication you show is amazing and is seen daily, delivering excellent service that our members deserve. Your commitment to the club's values and goals has been truly commendable, and it is your hard work and determination that have helped shape us into, what we believe is the best club in regional Victoria. We are so lucky to have you all representing the Shepparton RSL

General Manager's Report cont . . .

To President Bob Wilkie and the entire committee, you continually support all management and staff, and you do this by keeping all our members' best interests in all your decisions. Your commitment to me, and your loyalty to the Shepparton RSL is exemplary and inspiring.

To all our volunteers who give countless hours of their time - thank you! Without your contributions, we could not do the great work that we do in supporting our veterans, their families and the wider community each year.

We look forward to an exciting 2025, delivering on our planned projects. This will confirm Shepparton RSL Sub-Branch's standing as the premier entertainment venue, not only in the Goulburn Valley but regional Victoria.

Finally, to our members – as members of the Shepparton RSL, you are part of the community and are always welcome. We appreciate your patronage and support, and we look forward to our 10,000 plus members enjoying what 2025 will bring.

Grant Tarrant
General Manager



The new entrance to the Sub-Branch will feature a special Memorial Wall

SECRETARY'S REPORT

This year has certainly been a busy year for the Secretary's position. There has been a constant need of more reporting to the Government and other authorities about the running and administration of the Sub-Branch however, I have been assisted and guided in this position by our President, Mr Bob Wilkie, our General Manager, Grant Tarrant and his great staff, (a special mention to Peter Bustin and Reception staff). Not forgetting my co-colleagues on the Sub-Branch Committee and Veterans Centre.

It's been another stellar year for the club and its finances. Lead by our General Manager, Grant, and his strong team, the club has managed another great year of profit, even against the trend of the cost of living. This gives the club valuable financial backing as we move into completion of Stage 1 and beyond with our renovations.

The committee members have kept very busy with their portfolios and additional meetings and tasks throughout the year. The success of the Greater Shepparton Veteran Group, under the baton of Dan Gleeson, continued to grow throughout 2024, and we all look forward to increased numbers in 2025.

This is an **election year** at our Sub-Branch. We will always be looking at injecting new blood and hopefully younger members into our committee in an attempt to make the RSL more relevant in the changing times ahead.

Monthly Committee Meetings

Position:	Name:	Portfolios	Attendance:
President:	Robert Wilkie	Finance/Region 9	14/14
Snr Vice President:	Brian McInnery	Finance	3/14 *
Jnr Vice President:	Bruce Davis	Appeals	12/14
Secretary:	Ted Ball	Secretary/Finance GV Vets Centre	14/14
Treasurer:	Darryl Butcher	Treasurer/Finance	11/14
Committee:	Sandy Davis	Health, Wellbeing & Vet Support	10/14
	Stan Whitford	OH & S/Finance	8/14
	Daniel Gleeson	Greater Shepparton Veteran Group	11/14
	Mark Stephens	Memorabilia & Asst Commemorative	11/14

*Granted sick leave

Note: The attendance figures include normal and special committee meetings **however exclude** House and Finance, General Meetings or any other Sub-Committee or external meetings and special functions in relation with RSL related matters.

Volunteer Hours

The Volunteer Register computerised system introduced in 2017 is providing a good and useful information as to the activities of the Sub - Branch. As time progresses, this information becomes more useful.

The 2024 year saw the commitment of volunteers as the following shows:

	<u>Hours</u>
1. Administration & Management	830
2. Appeals	2443
3. Heritage & Commemorations	1023
4. NSSA	36
5. Health, Wellbeing & Veteran Support	238
6. GV Veteran Services	4240
7. Greater Shepparton Veterans Group	11
Total	8821

The Committee deeply appreciates the efforts of all volunteers and their commitment to the cause.

Membership

Membership:	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>
Membership Classification		
Life:	7	6
Service:	492	496
Affiliate:	395	408
Social:	9756	10403
Community:	48	44
TOTAL :	10,698	11,357

Email, addresses and phone numbers of members:

*We advise members of the importance of keeping your contact details up to date.
Please ensure reception is advised of any changes.*

The Sub-Branch will never divulge addresses or phone numbers of any members to any outside sources.

Ted Ball
Honorary Secretary

TREASURER'S REPORT

I am pleased to advise the Shepparton RSL Sub-Branch Inc. reported an audited profit of \$1.453m for the year ended 31/12/2024.

In addition, the Patriotic Fund reported a profit of \$.369m. The Patriotic Fund receives rent from the Sub-Branch to cover depreciation, finance costs, amortisation and commemorative expenses. This resulted in an aggregated profit of \$1.822m for year.

This is an excellent result given the difficult trading conditions that prevailed throughout 2024.

Congratulations must go to President, Bob Wilkie and General Manager, Grant Tarrant, for their diligent & astute management and leadership for the year. The result places us in a strong financial position to complete the extensive renovations planned for 2025/26, with cash reserves in excess of \$3m available for the task ahead.

I wish to also acknowledge and thank Administration Manager, Peter Bustin, for his commitment to the maintenance of financial records for the club. He has offered me strong support in the application of my duties as Treasurer.

Darryl Butcher
Treasurer

HEALTH, WELLBEING & VETERAN SUPPORT

(Formerly Welfare)

Health, Wellbeing & Veteran Support has been going at a steady pace throughout 2024 with a total of \$63,756.43 being provided for support.

This includes:

1.	<i>Gardening</i>	\$27,684.30
2.	<i>Haircuts</i>	\$ 9,328.50
3.	<i>Vale expenses</i>	\$10,477.15
4.	<i>Repairs and maintenance</i>	\$ 2,724.52
5.	<i>Financial assistance</i>	\$ 6,000.00
6.	<i>Veterans day trips</i>	\$ 7,019.59
7.	<i>Postage</i>	\$ 522.37

Volunteer hours for campaigns such as Anzac and Remembrance Days is in excess of 2,000 hours, and this does not include mine or Bruce's hours.

A big thank you to all our wonderful volunteers and committee members. You all make our job in Health, Wellbeing & Veteran Support a lot easier. We look forward to your ongoing support through 2025.

Just in closing, I would remind all veterans that if you need financial assistance, RSL Victoria now requires us to provide Financial Statements (assets, bank account details etc), before anyone can be considered for assistance.

Sandra Davis JP

APPEALS REPORT

Our appeals total for 2024 was as follows:

ANZAC APPEAL	\$ 64,480
POPPY APPEAL	\$ 54,214
TOTAL	\$118,694

Our volunteers work very hard during the 4 weeks of our annual campaigns, donating many hours of their time to ensure the success of our appeals. A special thanks must also go to the many local businesses who allow us to "set up shop" at their stores during the campaigns.

A further \$20,000 was donated to this year's campaign by Maria and Peter Copulos and family with 100% of the funds to be used for local veteran support.

All monies raised is used to help veterans and families in time of need and will be accessed through the Health, Wellbeing & Veteran Support Committee.

Bruce Davis
Appeals Officer

MEMORABILIA REPORT

The memorabilia team commenced the year off with the arrival of 12 x 303 rifles from RSL Victoria. We have designed a Rising Sun badge to be constructed with the weapons, similar to the one at the Bendigo RSL, but smaller. This is subject to approval as it would be part of the new renovations.

The team played a major part of the 100-year celebrations of the Tallygaroopna Soldiers Memorial Hall. We planned the Memorial Service where I had the honour of being guest speaker. I also wrote the forward for the Tallygaroopna Soldiers Memorial Hall book which was released on that weekend, and we researched the names of all the soldiers on the Memorial Wall with the information being included in the book.

Overall, the Memorabilia team has had a quiet, but successful year. We continue to do the cataloguing, boxing, and moving memorabilia items outside into the memorabilia's shipping container in the car park. This takes up a lot of the team's time on the Thursdays when we come in. There are hundreds of small items, such as buttons and badges, which need to be catalogued.

We are in the planning stage on deciding which memorabilia items we are going to display when the renovations are complete.

We are waiting for approval to move into our new memorabilia area. We believe it would take approximately 2 days to move from our present location to the new location. The team will require some assistance for this move.

The window display is ready to be changed over again. This will occur prior to Anzac Day. The team continues to receive favourable feedback in reference to our displays.

Alan, Arnold and I now have our Working with Children Card, so are now able to visit schools or have school groups visit the club to view our memorabilia.

Alan, Arnold and I are always available to assist with any memorabilia inquiries.

Mark Stephens OAM
RSL Memorabilia Coordinator



GV VETERANS CENTRE

In 2025 we will see the merger of the GV Veterans Centre back into the Sub-Branch as a Sub-Committee known as the Shepparton RSL Veteran Centre.

2024 proved to be a challenging year for the centre with the departure of Chairman Paul Blackwell and his wife Ronnie after 5 years of dedicated service. We wish them well. Other changes with advocates have also occurred through the period.

We now have the services of Molly Kennedy as Chairperson of the centre, along with Robyn, Craig and new trainee advocate Kasey Senior. Moving forward, all advocates will also be trained in Wellbeing (formerly Welfare), and at present we have two Level 1 Compensation Advocates and trained Wellbeing Officers. We hope to further build on this advocacy team during 2025. We also have four persons in reception/office support roles ready for the move to the new building in March 2025. To Marcia, Tom, Bill and Sue, thank you for your stellar efforts.

With the Royal Commission into Veteran Suicide now complete, we can expect many changes in veteran services in the coming years. We had a very productive year and since the Royal Commission, we have also seen an increase of veterans visiting our centre. This has led to a backlog in our advocates interview times, while increasing our volunteer hours.

We certainly hope with our new offices ready in March of 2025, we will be better able to support veterans and their families into the future.

I would also like to thank the RSL Sub-Branch Committee, General Manager Grant and his team for their support during 2024.

Molly Kennedy
Officer In Charge



Stage 1 - Shepparton RSL Administration and Veterans Centre

GREATER SHEPPARTON VETERANS GROUP

2024 has seen the Greater Shepparton Veterans Group continue to go from strength to strength.

Monthly veteran attendance numbers have increased every month which is a testament to the unequivocal support from Grant Tarrant, his wonderful staff and the RSL committee. Although attracting younger veterans is still challenging, we are clearly headed in the right direction with new faces popping up at each event held. This is a credit to all involved.

Throughout the course of the year, veterans have had the opportunity to attend two golf days held at the Mooroopna Golf Club. Whilst the standard of golf from some veterans wasn't great, (Mr Secretary), the days were a total success, and a great time was had by all in attendance. The beauty of the golf days was that veterans were encouraged to bring a carer / partner along which enabled some veterans to get out of the house where at times it's not possible due to various reasons.

Some other highlights were the Pacing for Pink Race Day which is aimed at raising funds for cancer research. This race meeting was held at the Shepparton Harness Racing Club in which we had over fifty veterans in attendance. Once again, a great time was had by all.

Corporate hospitality of the highest order was on show when twelve lucky veterans won a "golden ticket" to attend an AFL game at Marvel Stadium. Once again this gave some veterans an opportunity to venture down to the big smoke and enjoy a day out that they may never have experienced were it not for this group. Whilst the game wasn't of the highest standard, this couldn't be said for the amazing food, drinks and the company. Veterans of all ages attended this event, and all were wrapped at how great the day was.

The above is just a small snapshot of what the Greater Shepparton Veterans Group has been able to deliver throughout the course of 2024. We have been blown away with the positive feedback and support from veterans of all ages.

Of note, all costs associated with prizes and veteran days out, have been met by the Shepparton RSL, thus elevating any burden on veterans and their families.

In closing, the Greater Shepparton Veterans Group would like to once again acknowledge the ongoing support of Grant Tarrant, the Shepparton RSL committee and all the RSL staff who help make these events so successful. You all should be proud of how far we have come as a group in such a short period of time. I know I am.

We are very much looking forward to 2025 with many events to be held in the hope we can encourage all veterans to come together within an environment where they all feel safe and valued.

Dan Gleeson
Committee

VALES

It is with reverence and respect that we advise the passing of the following Service members in the 2024 calendar year:

Keith Birks
Lionel Thomas
Charles Butler
Joan Clarke
Mervyne McDonald
John Sherwill
Donald Treloar
Edmund Goral

Darryl Macarty
Lawrie Baglin
Jim Dowsey
Donald Ducksbury
Ronald Fennell
Les Shard (LM)
Murray Slee
Cyril Bedford

John O'Callaghan
Lindsay Wilson
Thomas Charters
David Watson
Neil Young
Kevin Heenan (LM)

LIFE MEMBERS

In 2024, Brian McInnery, long time member and Senior Vice President of the Sub-Branch committee, was awarded Life Membership for his many years of service.

The following members are recipients of Life Membership of both the League and the Shepparton Sub-Branch.

*N Noy
R McKay
L Cranage
N Haymes
W Ford
N Doncon
W Welch
W Ritchie
E Burness
P Doyle
M Munro*

*A Edwards
F Blake
K Sackley
S Phillips
J Christoe
W Hudson
W Hickey OAM
G Myers
R Wright Jnr
S Perry
R Cruse OBE*

*B Arthur
J Thewlis
K Heenan
P McPhee OAM JP
J Clarke
L Shard
P Martin RFD ED
R Wilkie
P Blackwell
B McInnery*