

August  
2025

Sam Welham

# MELTON RSL

Latest news and bulletin updates



## Letter from the Secretary

### A new Secretary

Since stepping into the role of Secretary at our recent OGM, I have been truly honoured to join the dedicated team here at the Melton RSL. In my first week, I have already witnessed the warmth, commitment, and pride that our members have for this Sub-Branch.

I am committed to upholding the proud traditions, values, and customs that make the Melton RSL such an important part of our community. Our history is worth protecting, and our members' service and sacrifice deserve to be remembered with the respect they have earned.

I look forward to working closely with President Reginald Cooke JP, the executive committee, and all members as we continue to grow, support our veterans, and welcome the wider community into our home. Together, we will honour the past, serve the present, and build a strong future for the Melton RSL.

Looking ahead, preparations for our Remembrance Day service will soon be underway. This is one of the most significant occasions in our calendar, and I encourage all members to take part in planning, volunteering, and attendance. It is through these shared moments of reflection that we ensure the sacrifices of the past are never forgotten.

- Sam Welham, Secretary



Melton RSL President Reginald Cooke JP (L) gifting St Johns Ambulance Melton through Mr. Peter Dalton (R) a pressure washer in appreciation for their support on ANZAC Day 2025

## Updates from our OGM

### The Latest Updates

Our most recent Ordinary General Meeting, held on 10 August 2025 at the Melton Country Club, was a productive and engaging session with strong member attendance. Proceedings began with the recital of the Ode and Pledge of Allegiance, setting a respectful tone for the meeting.

Communication was another focal point, with an emphasis on improving member engagement. The newsletter remains available via the website, Facebook, and email on an opt-in basis, and work is underway to ensure printed copies are accessible at the Melton Country Club.

Members also discussed opportunities for guest speakers at the Monthly Veterans BBQ and plans for community displays, including a scale modelling exhibition at the local library.

Several exciting announcements were made, including the appointment of our new Secretary, and confirmation of venues for Poppy Appeal fundraising in November. Preparations for Vietnam Veterans Day are well underway, and early planning has begun for this year's Remembrance Day service. Members are encouraged to volunteer as poppy sellers and take part in upcoming commemorations.

The meeting closed with a sense of purpose and pride in our shared mission to honour service and support our community.

### Model Hobby Group

Service Members Only

13 September 2025

Join fellow veterans for a creative, social model-making session. All skill levels welcome. Materials provided.

Monthly (Second Saturday)

### Model Hobby Group

Service Members Only

30 August 2025

Reading is easier, too, in the new Reading view. You can collapse parts of the document and focus on the text you want.

Monthly (Last Saturday)

### Remembrance Day

Open to Public

11 November 2025

Join us to honour service and sacrifice with a respectful ceremony, uniting our community in remembrance.

Yearly (11 November 2025)

## 2025 President & Veterans Ball

The latest updates to get you through the day

On 7 June 2025, the Melton RSL Sub-Branch proudly hosted its Annual President & Veterans Ball, marking the 40th Anniversary of this much-loved tradition at the Melton Country Club. The evening brought together veterans, families, dignitaries, and community supporters for a truly memorable celebration. Guests were greeted with a warm welcome and the unmistakable sense of camaraderie that defines our RSL family.

The venue was beautifully prepared, setting the stage for an evening that blended formality with festivity. Attendees enjoyed a superb meal, heartfelt speeches, and exceptional live entertainment that kept the dance floor busy until late.

The Ball was also an important opportunity to recognise the service and sacrifice of our veterans while strengthening bonds between all who attended.

The success of the night was made possible by the combined efforts of many, and we warmly thank former Secretary, Lisa Davidson for her valued role in helping bring the event together.

We also extend our gratitude to the people and businesses who supported the Ball, including those who generously donated prizes such as fine wines and other gifts, adding to the excitement.

A special thank you goes to the Royal Australian Navy Band for their outstanding performance, and to the dignitaries, veterans, families, and community members who attended. It was a truly collaborative effort that showcased the best of the Melton RSL spirit and pride.



## Wellbeing Advocacy

### Melton RSLs In-House Advocate

We are pleased to share that Bronwyn Flack, a DVA-trained Wellbeing Advocate, is now available to support veterans, serving members, and their families. Bronwyn offers confidential guidance, connects veterans with services, and helps navigate DVA processes with care and understanding.

In partnership with the Melton Country Club, we have completed renovations to our Advocacy Office, creating a comfortable, private space for members to seek assistance.

The office is open Mondays and Wednesdays, 10:30 am - 12:30 pm.

Watch this space—we anticipate a Compensation Advocate joining our team soon, expanding our ability to assist with claims and entitlements.

If you or someone you know could benefit from support, please visit during office hours. Your service matters, and so does your wellbeing.

## Call for Volunteers

### Appeals

The Melton RSL is seeking volunteers to assist with our annual Remembrance Day Appeal, selling poppies and merchandise at Woodgrove Shopping Centre, Coburns Central Shopping Centre, and Bunnings Melton during Remembrance Week.

Your time directly supports veterans and their families, funding welfare services and commemorations. Whether you can spare a few hours or a full day, every contribution counts.

This is a rewarding way to connect with the community, share our message, and keep the spirit of remembrance alive.

If you can help, please contact Danni O'Brien at [appeals@meltonrsl.org.au](mailto:appeals@meltonrsl.org.au) for details and to register your availability.



**Contact Us**

The Melton RSL Sub-Branch is here to support veterans, serving members, their families, and our wider community. You can find information about our events, news, and services by visiting our website at [www.meltonrsl.org.au](http://www.meltonrsl.org.au).

For general enquiries, email [secretary@meltonrsl.org.au](mailto:secretary@meltonrsl.org.au), and for matters relating to advocacy or wellbeing, please contact [advocacy@meltonrsl.org.au](mailto:advocacy@meltonrsl.org.au). Our postal and visiting address is Melton Country Club, 30 Reserve Road, Melton VIC 3337, where our Sub-Branch office operates in partnership with the venue.

We are always happy to hear from members and community friends, whether it's to ask a question, share an idea, or offer support. Staying connected is an important part of our RSL spirit.

We also welcome you to join us at our Veterans BBQ, held on the last Saturday of each month at the VVAA House at The Willows. It's a relaxed and friendly environment for veterans and their families to connect, share stories, and enjoy a good meal together.

If you require urgent assistance, always call 000 in an emergency. For 24/7 support, Open Arms - Veterans & Families Counselling can be reached on 1800 011 046. No matter the reason, whether you need support, wish to attend an event, or simply want to say hello, the Melton RSL Sub-Branch is here to assist. Your service is valued, and your wellbeing is our priority.

We look forward to welcoming you at the Melton RSL soon, whether for an event, a chat, or simply to share in the spirit of camaraderie.

**Vietnam Veterans Day VVAA**

On 18 August, we honour all those who served in the Vietnam War and remember the sacrifices made by so many. This date marks the anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan in 1966, where Australian soldiers displayed extraordinary courage under fire.

The Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia (VVAA) will host a special commemoration service to reflect on this important chapter of our history and pay tribute to all who served, their families, and those who did not return. For more information, please contact Ian Lawrey OAM. All are welcome to attend in remembrance and gratitude.



Photo Credit: Air Force Association <sup>TM</sup> (Australia)

**DVA News****The VETS Bill 2024**

In February 2025, the Australian Parliament passed the Veterans' Entitlements, Treatment and Support (Simplification and Harmonisation) Act 2024, known as the VETS Act. This is a major reform designed to make veterans' benefits easier to understand and access.

Currently, claims can be handled under three separate laws: the Veterans' Entitlements Act (VEA), the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act (MRCA), and the Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation (Defence-related Claims) Act (DRCA). This has often caused confusion and delays.

From 1 July 2026, all new claims will be processed under a single law - the MRCA. This should mean simpler rules, faster decisions, and a more consistent process.

Veterans already receiving payments or benefits under the older laws will keep them. This protection, called "grandfathering," ensures no one loses what they have.

The changes are part of the Government's response to the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide. The Act also creates the Defence and Veterans' Service Commission to oversee mental health, suicide prevention, and wellbeing services.

Veteran groups, including the RSL, have welcomed the VETS Act, saying it will remove unnecessary complexity, improve access to support, and give veterans a fairer, more straightforward system.

