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This decision was not made lightly and the Board took into account the feedback from the Member surveys distributed asking what Members wanted in their RSL and also return on investment. Snooker was found to be the lowest return on investment of all the sporting bodies and other clubs within the Watsonia RSL.

Also from my own personal point of view I took into account the fact that snooker players on competition nights were at times quite rude to other Members enjoying the hospitality of the club asking them for silence so as not to disturb player concentration? This self-serving attitude is not a good look for the club. I explained the position to the Snooker Club Secretary and replied to their letter requesting a review of the decision. The insulting comments written on that letter placed on the notice board only strengthens my resolve in the belief that we have some Members of the snooker club who do not deserve to represent this RSL. As President I take full responsibility for decisions made by the Board in relation to the continual growth of the club. I make no apologies for ensuring that the Board is driven to make decisions in the best interest of all Members of the club, not catering to a limited few at exorbitant cost.

BRANCH OBJECTIVES;I remind Members that the objectives for which the Sub-branch is established include:

Provide for the sick, helpless, wounded, aged, disabled, destitute and needy among those who are serving or have served in the Australian Defence Forces, the various British Commonwealth Defence Forces, members of allied Defence Forces and their dependents and;

To provide means of social interaction between persons who are members of the League and in particular members of the Watsonia RSL Sub-branch and their friends and guests. This applies to all types of membership; Service, Affiliate, Social and the general public who wish to use our wonderful facilities. It is a changing world and the old thought of the RSL being for returned service men and women only no longer applies as a stand-alone body.

**President’s Report**

OUR PAST;Members will well remember that in 2010 Watsonia RSL Sub-Branch was in dire circumstance and almost had to fold. Our ex-Honorary Secretary Barry Jones put his hand up and returned to the fold. Up until his resignation due to ill health in 2017 he was a significant help in bringing proper Corporate Governance to the Board. This has resulted in a major turnaround in knowledge of Board Members and the financial position we now find ourselves in.

In 2010 the Board inherited a 3.3M bank debt plus other extraneous debts such as payout for the previous Chef contract; hire purchase issues with the kitchen and unpaid Superannuation and Leave bringing the overall debt to around 4.5M. I am pleased to report that after the final bank loan payment for 2018 our bank debt sits at just over 100K. I would like to express my thanks to our General Manager Matt Guest, current Honorary Treasurer John Inglis and all Board Members for staying the steady course required to bring us to this position.

OUR FUTURE;The Board reviewed the 5-10 year plan in February this year and I am also pleased to report that plans are under way for renovations of the Members Lounge and extensions Upstairs to cater for our Administration and Welfare/Aged Care offices which have to be moved to cater for the relocation of the kitchen to where the current welfare offices sit.

The long term renovations have to be made to comply with Banyule Council planning requirements. Due to our change of memberships fees to $10 in line with other local RSL’s our membership has increased to a total of 5817 at end of 2018 and still growing rapidly. As a result council has strict rules for premises to cater for those sorts of numbers. Therefore the Board has to ensure that any future renovations cater to those rules. This has resulted in the Board making a decision that to cater for the increase in patronage the current snooker tables will need to go to make room for the required floor space. There will be replacements but unfortunately not enough space to cater for championship size tables and the surrounding space required for players.

RECRUITMENT TO THE BOARD;As Members are aware we are an ageing Board and I am still having difficulty finding a younger Veteran to second on to the Board so he or she can understand what we really do for Veterans and then be interested in applying for a position. If any Member knows of a recently discharged younger Veteran in the area please let me know and I will contact them.

Finally I wish to thank the Members of the Board, Management and staff for their assistance during 2018.

Jeff Mawkes

President

**President’s Report cont…**

There are many activities at Watsonia RSL that cater for members other than the sporting bodies such as Wildflower Club, Senior exercise classes, Watsonia Ladies Legacy and Bingo to name but a few. Members will notice when the long term renovations are completed that the Watsonia RSL will be a more inviting and friendly atmosphere for female Members. (A major point made in the membership surveys)

CATERING;In October we took over full control of the catering within Watsonia RSL. Cloud Hospitality Group came to us in a difficult situation after Jamax Catering left with very short notice. I appreciate the time and effort that Cloud Hospitality put into re-establishing our reputation on food and beverage. However net income was not what we thought it would be and as such our General Manager put a business case forward that we believe will be beneficial to us going forward. We retained Glen Geraghty as our Head Chef and he is establishing a new band of staff with a view to enhancing our service. By the time this report is published Glen will have done a complete overhaul of the RSL menus with a large variety of choices to enjoy.

WELFARE;Members will note from our Aged Care and Welfare reports that we have as an organization certainly maintained the ethos in those areas. I was particularly pleased that we again this year sent 300 Christmas gift packs to our Defence Personnel currently on operational duties in Afghanistan. I sincerely thank all those Watsonia RSL Members who assisted with the packing of those gifts. We are always light on for volunteers but the few who put their hand up do a wonderful job.

With the ever growing number of Government regulations controlling organisations I would like Members to note changes under the Privacy Act. We can no longer place the names of our Members on the sick or vale list in the public area such as the main foyer unless we have written or verbal approval of a family member. Such approval must now be recorded in a folder held at reception. If you wish this information to be placed on our lists please give your permission.

Members’ Equity in the Sub-branch Inc. has increased to $2802k from $2446k. This equity is expected to remain flat going forward with the accumulation fund roughly equal to the amortisation of the current EGM entitlements.

PATRIOTIC BUILDING FUND (PBF):

The PBF is the owner of Watsonia RSL’s land, building and other fixed assets, so is therefore also responsible for all external debt relating to those assets. The Sub-branch, the user of the fixed assets, pays a commercial rent to the PBF. This was increased by $120k before GST. This is still well below the peak sustained in our achieved heavy debt reduction of earlier years.

Finance expenses were reduced from $49k in 2016 to $44k in 2018. This was solely due to reduced debt. The PBF recorded a surplus of $462k almost identical as last year, with depreciation higher by $23k. The PBF balance sheet was again improved with bank debt reduced by a further $500k. This reduces our loan to $106k.

Members’ Equity was increased to $9686k a 9.7% increase.

NB. I advise that the BPF account now includes the accumulated welfare funds of $198k; this is shown as a liability on the balance sheet. Thus, funds available for any works within the club are only $220k at the reporting date.

PATRIOTIC WELFARE FUND:

1. The Patriotic fund was merged into the same bank account as the PBF in December 2017, but we continue to have the fund reported separately. The merging was in line with the RSL and each Sub-branch being a recognised as a charitable entity. This is an accumulated fund which we have been permitted to retain from former years which is used to supplement the General Appeals patriotic funds in our veteran welfare activities. The fund balance is $198k The Patriotic Welfare fund recorded a net deficit of $26k for 2018.

**Treasurer’s Report; year to December 2018**

I am pleased to advise that the club improved on our sound financial position. My special thanks to Matt Guest, the dynamic driver of the business, which provides so much towards our welfare and charitable objectives.

The commercial operations of our club saw gains in revenue of $587k while our expenses rose by $550k. The greatest increase in expenses was our power bill which rose by nearly 40%. A continual vigilant watch over costs will always be part of our strategy; some items are just out of our control. NB. The installation solar energy is in our plans for the future.

The total net profit from our two commercial entities (Sub-branch and Patriotic Building Fund) for 2017 was $860K. This sound result was in line with our expectations. Additionally, the balance sheets show significant increases due to the reduction of the bank loan, improvements upstairs and the deposits to the accumulation fund.

The following is a brief summary for each entity under Watsonia RSL management.

WATSONIA RSL SUB-BRANCH INC.

The rent payable to the building fund was increased to a more commercial level, with cash flow meeting budget plans. The Bundoora campus continues to be a highly unprofitable operation. Operational costs have been reduced and cater for peak patronage. Additionally, the capital cost of maintaining a council owned facility is a further burden.

The balance sheet is in a very healthy state, with all creditors (including ATO, VCGLR, TGS and all other suppliers) paid within trading terms. The one item of note is the interclub loan/debt owed to the club by the building fund which will remain as it flagged for an accumulation use beyond 2022.

In Summary:

Gross revenue increased by 8.6%

Gross margins decreased by 4.0%

Rent increased to commercial levels

Other overheads/expenses increased by 10.6%

A net surplus of $356k was recorded for 2018

**Treasurer’s Report cont…**

1. The General Appeals Patriotic Fund shows a surplus of just $862 at the end of the financial year.

The appeals report shows the funds raised by our fantastic and dedicated volunteers of which 50% is returned to Watsonia for our welfare activities. Welfare expenditure is detailed within the financial statements which shows that our welfare spend is running at $25k more than our income from appeals.

In Summary:

Our audited financial reports are comprehensive to meet statutory regulations. The volume of data can be confusing; as such I will provide a brief summary of the past year and a brief summary of financial plans for the future.

John Inglis

Honorary Treasurer

**Secretary’s Report**

The change to $10 RSL membership fees in line with other local RSL’s has seen a large increase in our own membership numbers. As of October 2018 our membership numbers are 5,796 and growing rapidly.

This increase will affect the way we do our renovations going forward as whatever plans we submit to council will need to satisfy such an increase in patronage.

I am pleased to report that the Banyule Council did give all three local RSL’s relief from the 2017 Banyule Council/RSL Trusts. We thank the Banyule Council for assistance. The trusts are now due for 2018 and Watsonia RSL are required to provide $100K to the trust. This trust was devised by Banyule Council on the basis that they approved electronic gaming machines (EGM’s) in the Banyule electorate. These funds can be accessed by many different local entities such as sporting groups, scout groups, other community organizations and not for profit organizations.

In 2018 we continued our relationship with the Simpson Barracks Army camp sponsoring the ‘Student of Merit’ at each course graduation. The President continues to inform graduates of the ethos of the RSL and it’s significant welfare system to help our Defence Personnel who suffer after their Service to their Country.

Thanks again to our small but hard working volunteers for the time and effort they continue to put in during our Anzac Day and Remembrance Day Appeals and those who serve on the various Committees in our numerous, in house activities and sporting bodies.

I have been the Acting Secretary for the past 22 months due to our Secretary Eddie Fressard being on long term sick leave. Eddie has now indicated that due to his deteriorating health he is unable to return to Secretary duties.

On behalf of the Board and all Members I wish to thank Eddie for his long term dedication and commitment as a Member of the Board and I hope that his health returns to a reasonable standard going forward.

The position of Secretary will be open for candidates at the AGM in March 2019. If there is anyone amongst our membership who has the required skills to take on the role of Secretary, please nominate during the required period. The President would be pleased to speak with anyone interested in the role.

Jim Stephen

Acting Secretary

Totals for 2016

LIFE MEMBER 3

SERVICE 547

AFFILIATE 1241

ASSOCIATE 3

SOCIAL 2222

COMMUNITY 296

FINANCIAL 4312

Totals for 2017

LIFE MEMBER 3

SERVICE 511

AFFILIATE 1236

ASSOCIATE

SOCIAL 2386

COMMUNITY 263

FINANCIAL 4399

**Totals for 2018 (Prior to renewal period)**

**LIFE MEMBER 4**

**SERVICE 537**

**AFFILIATE 1376**

**ASSOCIATE**

**SOCIAL 3749**

**COMMUNITY 130**

**FINANCIAL 5796**

S.H Watson

H.E Clark

H.S Comlett

L. Lewis

G. Armstrong OAM \*

R. Macqueen \*

J. Thompson \*

L. Anderson \*

J. Keirnan \*

F. Collings \*

D. Barnett

A. Davis

R.R Hillard

A. Humphreys

R. Hillard \*

G. Burrows \*

R. Stephen

J. Mawkes

B. Jones OAM

R. Butt

\* Deceased

Joan Moorcroft Affiliate Member

Mary Newsome Affiliate Member

William Youings Social Member

Joanne Kotylak Social Member

Robert Stevenson Social Member

Florence Mannix Social Member

Joyce McCrow Social Member

Doug King Social Member

Antonino Privitelli Social Member

John Thomson Social Member

Jean Watson Social Member

Barbara Barden Social Member

Dieter Staub Social Member

Fred Hitchens Social Member

Nancy Re Social Member

Adriana Rispoli Social Member

Ngaire Holden Social Member

Violet Forber Social Member

Rose Tinker Social Member

Shirley Campbell Social Member

John Ray Life Member

Brian Kane Service Member

William Skeet Service Member

John Jorgensen Service Member

Donald McKay (SNR) Service Member

Ronald Stone Service Member

Albert Pollard Service Member

Thomas Dickson Service Member

William Wylie Service Member

Charles Black Service Member

Steve Mitchell Service Member

Reginald McKay Service Member

Marie McGrath Affiliate Member

Graham Smith Affiliate Member

Peter Symons Affiliate Member

Edna Crane Affiliate Member

Anka Livock Affiliate Member

Ashley Dibben Affiliate Member

Victor Blades Affiliate Member

Pattie Moncrieff Affiliate Member

Mary Tippet Affiliate Member

It is important to note that we need more volunteers to sell at numerous locations and are prepared to sell after hours and including during holiday periods. The request for after hours and public holiday selling was made by one of our better sites - Westfield Plenty Valley and in order to keep our position available we need to fulfil this request in the future.

Thanks to all involved on behalf of the Watsonia RSL Sub-branch.

Peter Stoate

Assistant Appeals Officer

Totals for 2014

ANZAC $102,723.75

POPPY $55,606.80

TOTAL $158,330.55

Totals for 2015

ANZAC $128,603.90

POPPY $58,065.50

TOTAL $186,669.40

Totals for 2016

ANZAC $81,489.60

POPPY $59,693.95

TOTAL $141,183.55

Totals for 2017

ANZAC $78,116.90

POPPY $38,127.35

TOTAL $116,244.25

**Totals for 2018**

**ANZAC $86,473.45**

**POPPY $44,781.45**

**TOTAL $131,254.90**

**Appeals Report**

Watsonia RSL Sub-branch appeals for 2018 raised a total of $131,254.90. This was an improvement and slightly up on 2017. We still need to try to regain an amount comparable to the 2015’s total of $186,669.40.

The 2018 total was achieved by the efforts of our volunteer groups giving up their free time. They were positioned at shopping centres, Railway stations, Bunning’s stores, and outside supermarkets, shops etc.

We are also very grateful to the various schools in the area, shops, businesses and factories etc for their continued support again this year.

The contribution from the 4th/19th Light Horse from Simpson Barracks and the Plenty Girl Guides is also very much appreciated by the Watsonia RSL Sub-branch.

The Watsonia Sub-branch also placed a number of Appeals trays strategically in the venue and managed by the RSL staff. This is also very much appreciated for their involvement

As always, over many years, we could not achieve the success of the Appeals without the continued accomplishments of Gary Higgs our Appeals Co-coordinator and assistant Lindsay Greaves who continuously put in many hours, day by day setting up and preparing trays and collection tins with the support of a number of helpers, including Dave Young. They also transport the trays to shops, schools and factories etc. and after the Appeals, collect the trays and tins and count the monies collected prior to packing everything away again.

We are looking to the future and improving our fundraising efforts, but we cannot do this without the support of our members.

**General Manager’s Report**

Now that we have finalised trading for 2018, we now need to reflect on the past year and also present our next focuses. The Watsonia RSL Board (WRSL) and Management are in the planning stages for the next major renovation; also looking at options for our gaming business post 2022 and finally, trying to find new ways to engage with our Members and local community.

Whilst our trading has been solid, the increase in our costs of doing business has certainly been trying. As always, we are looking for different ways to make our business more cost effective and a number of initiatives were implemented this year to accommodate our new business model.

FOOD

In October the WRSL regained control of our food and catering operation from our external caterers; Cloud Hospitality Group. Thank you to Bob O’Kane, Nick Murray and their team for the great work over past years. We retained Cloud’s Head Chef Glenn Geraghty, and have formulated a new kitchen team. Glenn’s background is primarily five-star restaurants and some standout hotels where he was the Head Chef, the latest being Young and Jacksons and the Old England Hotel. Glenn will be focussing on delivering the quality of food and pricing that Watsonia RSL Members expect.

We were also fortunate that most of the Front of House staff stayed on so we are now in the process of blending the old in with the new. Whilst there isn’t a lot of profitability in a food operation, this transition was necessary to progress in future strategies of the RSL.

We are really fortunate with the way our food operation has progressed and I can guarantee to all our Members that there will be better offerings to come. Well done to all the catering staff on a fantastic effort so far.

ENTERTAINMENT

We are still focussing on all that has worked over the past year. The local bands are still a winner to our loyal followers. Morning Melodies is still running bi-monthly and are attracting more numbers than ever and our feature acts ‘Upstairs’ has something for everyone. Please keep an eye out for new acts as we are always striving to make us the ‘place to be’ in the Northern Suburbs.

BUNDOORA RSL BOWLING CENTRE (BBC)

John Robertsand his Committee again have led the team at our Bowling Club to another successful bowls year. Not unlike the Watsonia campus we are always looking at streamlining the costs. The BBC has introduced a Can Bar service for the Members outside of the operational hours. This has been a great initiative and I thank all the volunteers that have helped. As always barefoot bowls has been a revenue driver and our club run events and the Friday night bistro has been well supported. Thanks to everyone involved.

Dyson Appleyard and his team of volunteers have done an outstanding job on the greens. The ‘A Grade’ standards are still in place for all to enjoy both on the greens and surrounds. Thanks for all your dedicated efforts.

A special mention needs also to be said for all the hard work Kristy Eddington does for both the WRSL and BBC staff and committees; great job and well done.

This year we restructured the Management Team with Steve Reid promoted to Operations Manager, Georgina Connell promoted to Assistant Manager with the portfolio of Gaming, Wagering and Keno, and Shaun Pennant stays on as Assistant Manager with the portfolio of Food and Beverage. We have also retained the services of Maree McAuliffe as our new Functions Manager. With these key roles filled and the rest of our dedicated and focussed management team, we certainly won’t have any issues delivering the quality of service expected from both Members and Non-members.

Gaming 2022 is also on the Board’s radar. With a little over three years to run on the TGS (Tabcorp Gaming Solutions) contract we are now looking at all options for the operation of Gaming at the RSL post 2022. A lease model with TGS was the option that the RSL opted into back in 2012. Whilst this option might have been right at the time, it has been proven in the Gaming network that there are certainly other models that might better suit the RSL, including the ownership model. At the end of next year, the Board will be well informed to make a decision on the future for the RSL.

The core object of the RSL is looking after Veterans and their families. This is always front of mind and that’s why we have dedicated departments to deliver these services. Thanks to our Aged Care, Pensions, Welfare and Appeals departments for always being there for our veteran community.

It’s an exciting time for the Watsonia RSL both for the ever-loyal Members but also for the excellent staff, for without both the Watsonia RSL wouldn’t be what it is today. Please come down and enjoy what we have to offer.

Finally, to the Watsonia RSL Executive and Board, thank you for your mentoring support over the past year.

Matt Guest

General Manager

**SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD FROM RSL VIC**

Barbara Bond 2015

Fiona Mara 2016

Mark Minahan 2018

**STAFF MEMBER OF THE YEAR**

Fiona Mara 2017

Louise Walton 2017

Mark Minahan 2018

**General Manager’s Report cont…**

Our Members’ Service department has worked overtime to produce the service standards you deserve; from Reception to our Courtesy Bus drivers there is always a smiling face from door to door. Our staff are tireless to deliver the results that the business requires as well as looking after all Members. Thanks again for all your hard work.

The Watsonia RSL team are made up of a group of special people. Some are inspirational to all. This year I would like to acknowledge Mark Minahan as one of these people. Mark was awarded the Special Achievement Award from RSL VIC for service to the RSL, as well as winning our Staff Member of the Year. Great job Mark and well done!

WATSONIA RSL’S FUTURE PLANNING

With our current membership bordering on 6000 Members, we will need to get it right to cater for everyone’s current needs and expectations in the future. This has taken the WRSL Board to a very proactive space when strategic planning for the future.

For the first time the WRSL Board sent out an electronic survey to Members asking for feedback on what their needs are currently and what are the future needs of the Watsonia RSL Members. This survey has given the Board great incite and will lead the direction of our future developments.

We have now trialled two survey requests; a dedicated coffee lounge/casual dining area and a consolidated sports bar offering. If successful these two areas will be a priority focus point in the next planning stage. Also, our ‘Upstairs’ function space was refurbished, please have a look the next time you are in the club; it’s come up a treat.

Whilst this next year will be one of consolidation of finances, the Watsonia RSL Board is always looking at options to reduce ‘big ticket’ cost items such as electricity. As I have previously mentioned in past reports our air-conditioning units draw the biggest power and are now thirty years old. This is one item on a long list of aging equipment that will need to be replaced over the next couple of years when funds become available.

My final thanks go to the Sub-branch Committee for their ongoing support. People don’t realise how fortunate we are until they talk to other clubs, then they appreciate what we get. We do not take this for granted.

Thanks to the President Jeff Mawkes for the Bunning’s offers as this boosts a sometimes depleted bank balance. Thanks to Peter Stoate for his supervision.

Garry Plummer

President / Secretary

**Angling Club Report**

This is my last duty as President after eight terms. Our year, I feel, has been my best yet and I leave the club in a healthy position. This year saw better catches than normal and more importantly a lot of involvement from anglers. Without Members participating, nothing would happen. I owe a great deal to our Committee for their involvement.

Once again we travelled the Country from one side to the other. The venues we stayed at were usually excellent and most importantly, well priced. Nearly all Members weighed in fish.

The dormitory accommodation proved more popular than the usual cabin accommodation and usually cheaper. Phillip Pierce and Barry McMillan provided us with good meals which we all contributed to and again saved us money. Brian Moran and Barbara Bond hosted our general and annual meetings, many thanks to you both. Pat Donnelly and Eric Cunningham took charge of our raffle ticket selling and thanks to the RSL Sub-branch this money was well utilised.

As you are aware it costs a lot of money to travel around Victoria enjoying our passion. I would also like to thank Ted Ellis for his work as our Treasurer and Matt Pezzotti, Keith Gillatt for Committee work.

Places visited were Lake Eildon, Port Albert, Bullen Merri, Mallacoota, Loch Sport, Cowes and Nagambie.

The loss of three of our Members this year hit us all quite hard. Sticko and Len Bonson were Foundation Members of our club. Jack Jorganson also passed away. The sudden medical problem with Terry Williams was the wakeup call we needed. On approaching the Sub-branch regarding a First Aid course and a defibulator lesson, they agreed. I sincerely thank them for this and it will be forthcoming when arranged. It is good to see so many Members willing to participate. This unit will be taken on our trips.

On Tuesday we won the white flag in Division 5 and Open section 1 were defeated in the premiership game. It wasn’t our most successful year however we did have success both on and off the greens.

I sincerely thank Joshua Corless who did a great job as Chairman of Selectors and his team consisting of Jesse Spicer, Brian Hoey and Glen Harvey. The midweek selectors were Wayne Fogarty (Chairman), Mary Dineen, John McIntyre and Terri Murphy.

FUND RAISING;A very important part of club management is fundraising, and this year we continue to be successful in this area. We have introduced new sponsors this season and show gratitude to those sponsors who remain loyal in supporting us. We ran another ‘Special Effort Raffle’, a Comedy Night, and continue with weekly Friday Night Meat raffles, a Saturday raffle and a Sponsorship Drive. The coterie group (42 members) known as ‘Hornet Lotto’ has continued for the second year and the generosity of this group has generated additional funds for the club which we utilised in upgrading the club house.

Barefoot Bowling continues to grow. We had over 800 barefoot bowlers utilise our facilities in 2018. Special thanks to the RSL bar staff, and Peter Thomas and his team for their organisation and support.

MEMBER ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS;Congratulations must go to players who have done well in individual events. The Club’s singles champions this season were Joshua Corless and Makayla Gibson. Congratulations again to Josh Corless and Mikayla Gibson for representing the State along with Mario Cipolla.

Congratulations also to Adrian Marchioli and Nathan Murray who won the silver medal as Australian Pairs Champions; that is an enormous effort! And finally, Congratulations to Peter Thomas who was named Volunteer of the Year for the Yarra Bowling Region.

CONCLUDING REMARKS;In conclusion, I thank Matt Guest and his staff for their assistance and support that they have provided to us throughout the bowls season. Especially the bar staff at Bundoora who keep the place going and are always helpful and friendly.

**Bundoora RSL Bowling Division’s Report**

This is my fifth year as President of the Bundoora RSL Bowling Centre and we continue to grow as a club and further build our bowling community. Both grass greens (2 & 3) are acknowledged as excellent playing surfaces and have been maintained in excellent condition. The club grounds and surrounds look immaculate and are a credit to the Greenkeeper and his small but enthusiastic Friday morning crew of reliable Members. One of our Members (Helmut Rainer) constructed a metal ramp (60 hours of work) to access the rubbish skip and he also set up bases for three donated steel benches. A job well done!

Our grass greens are considered among the best in the area and we have been rewarded by Bowls Victoria allocating again the Over 60s State trials, Regional trials and Pennant finals including a Division 1 Grand Final. Thank you to Dyson Appleyard our Greenkeeper and his team of hard workers.

A free sausage sizzle back at the club each Saturday has helped significantly in retaining ours and other club Members to our facilities. Thank you to our non-playing Members who often volunteer to run the Saturday BBQ so food is available as soon as the games end. Opposition clubs often comment on our generosity.

Our club rooms are looking great and we have now established a Hall of Fame, a new notice board, a selection board and painted throughout all the toilet areas. Thank you to those involved.

The bowling division have been running a ‘Can Bar’ on the days that the RSL does not trade. This has proven a huge success. We thank the RSL Board for this opportunity and also the following volunteers who underwent an RSA course to serve the alcohol and volunteer their time; Don McKenzie, Terri Murphy, Mario Cipolla, Bob Lovell, Keith Lugg, Wayne Fogarty and myself.

PENNANT SIDES 2017-2018 SEASON;There were four sides playing mid-week pennant (Tuesdays) and six sides fielded on a Saturday. We played finals in Division 1 (Saturday pennant) and were defeated in the section grand final.

**Darts Report**

SUMMER SEASON

Watsonia RSL had five sides competing in the 2018 summer season. Reds ‘A’ Grade finished fifth with five wins. They did very well considering ‘A’ Grade was very strong this season.

Purples ‘B’ Grade finished fourth with eight wins. They played against Greensborough Blue Hogs in the semi-finals and won 6-1. They then played against Epping Thunder in the preliminary final but got beaten 6-4 in a close match.

Blues ‘C’ Grade finished their first season in first place with twelve wins. They played against Glenroy Gimmies in the semi-finals but lost 6-4. They then played against Greensborough Red in the preliminary final and lost to them 6-4. Congratulations to the whole team for playing so well in their first season.

Whites ‘C’ Grade finished fifth on the ladder with seven wins and missed out on the finals by one match. Mustangs ‘C’ Grade finished seventh with two wins in their first season playing for Watsonia. Well done and welcome to our club.

WINTER SEASON

Reds ‘A’ Grade finished fifth with six wins. This was an improvement on last season.

Purples ‘B’ Grade finished fifth with seven wins.

Blues ‘C’ Grade finished this season in first place with twelve wins. They played against Greensborough Red in the Semi Finals and won 6-4 to go straight into the Grand Final. They then played against Greensborough Red in the Grand Final and won 6-4. Congratulations to the whole team for playing so well and making it to ‘B’ Grade next season.

Whites ‘C’ Grade finished fourth with nine wins. They lost 6-4 against Coburg Blues in the semi-finals. They were unlucky as this was a very close match.

Mustangs ‘C’ Grade finished seventh with three wins.

**Bundoora RSL Bowling Division’s Report cont…**

A special mention to Kristy Eddington for her ongoing loyalty and continued support to our sports club.

I acknowledge the advice and support that Jeff Mawkes, President of the Watsonia RSL continues to provide to me in my role as President of the Bowling Division.

Special thanks also to all the volunteers from the Bowling Centre that provide their time and support, we could not function without you. To my 2018/2019 Bowling Committee (Peter Thomas, Don McKenzie, Glenn Harvey, Jody Nevill, Jan Harvey and Karen Sheehan) I thank you most sincerely for your valued time and efforts.

In the future we still hope to obtain lights at our club. Lighting would have a significant impact on patronage, club membership and our future as a strong and vibrant bowling centre. This season the Banyule LGA have come along and completed soil tests and assigned $20,000 for further feasibility studies. We are feeling more confident than ever that the lights will become a reality. The Bowling Centre, the Watsonia RSL and the local LGA (Banyule) continue to work together to reach this goal.

Thanks to Tony Schiavello who has continued on as our Club Coach.

Again I thank Peter Thomas, my Vice President who does an enormous amount of work around the club and gives countless hours of his time every week to our Bowling Centre. I also acknowledge the amount of time committed to our success by Don McKenzie as our Treasurer and Financial Advisor.

I thank my Committee and the club’s leadership team for their ongoing support and personal efforts in working towards developing and managing this great bowling club at Bundoora. It’s a privilege to be President of this great club. Looking forward to bigger and better for the upcoming 2018/2019 season.

John Roberts

President

**Darts Report cont…**

GENERAL INFORMATION

From the start of this year Darts has been played from the function room upstairs. This has meant that we have had to use portable frames to play on. Thanks goes to Tom Rosenthal and John Kelders for fixing the wooden frames to make them easier for everybody to put together every week.

Watsonia RSL Sub-branch has again hosted the finals both in the summer and winter seasons upstairs in the function room which has proven to be very successful. We also hosted the summer and winter season doubles competition. These were very successful with over thirty players each night. About 50% of the players were from Watsonia and were present in the finals on both nights.

The Diamond Valley Services Clubs Darts Association again held the annual presentation night at the Watsonia RSL Sub-branch where approximately 120 dart members and their partners / friends attended. The caterers once again did a fantastic job.

On behalf of the Watsonia RSL Darts club, I thank Matt and his staff for their help throughout the year.

This year a new committee was elected with Lenore Mills taking on the Presidency Job, Phil Peirce as Vice President, Tom Rosenthal as Secretary and John Kelders as Treasurer.

Finally we would like to thank Peter Stoate for all his hard work as President of the Dart Club for about 12 years.

Lenore Mills

President

**Golf Report; Golden Oldie’s**

The year was another excellent success with an average playing field of 16.4 over 48 weeks of play.

The club picked up five new players over the year. Sadly, we lost two members with the passing of Brian Kane and Bob Knight. RIP.

Our Club Champion for the year was Bernie ‘Bender’ McPherson, the Knock-Out Champion was Ron ‘Crumbles’ Crombie, Aggregate and Medallist of Medallists winner was Ernie ‘Countback’ Wills, and our Putting Champion was Greg ‘Shorty’ McCall. We congratulate all winners on their achievements.

We thank the RSL Committee, Club Management and staff, especially for the Friday night raffles which makes running the club much easier.

If any Member of the RSL wishes to join us for golf on a Thursday morning at Bundoora park, 7:00am hit off, then please contact Ernie Wills through the club.

Greg McCall

Secretary / Treasurer

I can’t comment on the annual golf trip to Numurkah in November as once again I wasn’t able to attend but reading Wayne’s emails, a good time was had by all with Wayne personally leaving the pokies numerous amounts of dollars short after his visit. Can’t wait for next year’s trip.

For the players who represented the club in the Inter RSL competition this year did an outstanding job winning by a country mile and once again the trophy sits proudly on the cabinet in the Members lounge. Congratulations to all team members who participated, at the time of writing this report its not certain whether the Inter RSL competition will be on this year. Russell and Eric are attending a meeting this week to confirm and all will be notified at the AGM 2019.

I cannot let the names of our BBQ chefs, the McGregor boys go unmentioned. Once again another top job and to wish Ronnie all the best in 2019 as he is facing some personal challenges himself.

There is normally a mention for people we have to thank for support throughout the year but as we are now self-sufficient for our own fund raising, the people to thank are all golf club members who have already been thanked. I would like to thank all the bar staff for their service on game days and throughout the year, the Chef and his staff for the break up day, the meal and their service was a difficult job completed with excellent results.

Many congratulations to all trophy winners. Once again it was a season of excellent and competitive golf with some new names added to the list.

In closing, on behalf of myself and your Committee I would like to take this opportunity to wish members and their families a very merry and safe Christmas and a very happy and prosperous 2019, and I look forward to playing golf with you in 2019.

Bill McClean

President

**Golf Report; Sunday Social**

In writing this report I only think it’s fitting that we remember the two members who passed away this year, to Brian Kane and Bobby Knight gone but not forgotten boys, lest we forget. I would also like to mention Don Casey and Alan Hobbs who have both been through some personal difficult times this year and thank Bernie McPherson for his ongoing updates on how the boys are travelling, and hope that we see them back playing, or paying a visit to the 19th soon.

I cannot believe that another year has passed so quickly, unfortunately I missed quite a few games this year due to work commitments, including the Inter RSL competition, but I wasn’t needed as the boys produced some excellent scores and once again took the trophy back where it belongs, congratulations to all involved. Congratulations to all Members for their conduct and behaviour on the numerous courses we played throughout this season, it reflects well on the golf club and Watsonia RSL.

I would like to thank the Committee for all their hard work, the two stalwarts, Wayne and Kenny who do the lions share and keep this club functioning and running like a well-oiled machine. Many thanks for a job well done again.

The raffle ticket sellers who did a magnificent job which reflected on the money that was raised, another special mention is to our new Patron Dennis Langham, thank you for all your hard work and your monetary donations to the club. Kenny has used this money wisely and we have maintained the occasional free treat for the members at the 19th.

I would also like to thank our outgoing Patron Jimmy Stephens for his support and advice over the last seven years. To Eric our handicapper and Captain Russell, another tiresome job performed and completed extremely well, keep up the excellent work chaps, and to Russell I am glad that I wasn’t the one making the decision for game day ruling and I commend you for standing by your decisions throughout the year.

We had a full band perform at the Greensborough, Watsonia and City Marches. Unlike last year we were able to march in the City on our own. We even got some decent coverage on the ABC. We once again missed on marching with the SAS Association and sadly it looks like this will continue in the future. We were very impressed coming back to a packed RSL and playing for the Members, a highlight of our day!

The band also won the best Pipe Band in the City Anzac Day March voted by RSL Victoria. James Ruffle and I accepted this award at the RSL’s Bands reception event.

We conducted our AGM at the end of July. Our piping member numbers have dropped slightly due to several factors. On a plus side we had three former learners graduate and join the ranks and play at their first official band play out.

This year saw some changes to the administration of the band. Due to David Boyle’s health issues he had to step down as President and Pipe Major. Drummer James Ruffle took up the challenge of President as well as continuing as Quartermaster. Ian Gray took the challenge of becoming Pipe Major, a position he has held before and as well as becoming Vice-President. Laura Gray, Rod Murphy & Ross Connelly have joined the Committee for the first time as Committee Members. John Gillespie and I have taken another term as Treasurer and Secretary respectively and member Mason Hill has continued as a Committee Member. Adam Hamilton stays as Drum Sergeant and Len Northmore as Drum Major.

The band thanks the continued financial support from the Watsonia RSL and the Repatriation Hospital that continues to make a practice hall available to us. The Band looks forward to working with both the Repat and the Watsonia RSL in the coming year.

The 2018/2019 competition season is now upon us and we are working hard to make it a successful season! On behalf of the band, we offer our best wishes for a happy and healthy 2019.

James Brisolin

**Pipes and Drums Report**

The band has had a steady year. We played competition at Bendigo, Ballarat, Geelong and Ringwood. We performed extremely well in Bendigo. We came equal third overall, which was very bittersweet as we ended up not placing because the Piping Association has a count back system in place in the event of a tie. Geelong saw us come in fourth place missing out on third position by two points. Ringwood was our final comp for the year. Our Drum Corp came equal first and our Pipers came in third. Overall the band almost came third by a mere one point! It was a very successful competition year.

A major set back for the band was not having our Pipe Major David Boyle compete with us at some of our competition due the health reason but we were able to count on our Pipe Sergeant Tristan King to step in as Pipe Major. Unfortunately for David and the band he has been unable to play with us at all this year and had to step down as President and Pipe Major. David is still assisting us at practices and play outs and we wish him all the best.

Apart from the competition season, the band had its regular play outs. But due to some bad weather and unfortunately timed events we were unable to perform at the Craigieburn Torch Light Parade and the Watsonia Family Fun Day. St Patrick’s Day at Eaglemont Cellars went off with a bang, same with the Kilmore Celtic festival in June, even scoring us some free beers from the McNamara’s Irish Pub. We played with the Legends of Brass in August, a long awaited team up! We played back-to-back performances at Diamond Creek CFA Torchlight Parade and the Kyneton Daffodil Parade in September. The Kyneton RSL graciously provided us with some food and after we play for their Members they were so impressed they took care of our drinks tab as well.

ANZAC DAY; Prior to Anzac Day we played at the Epping and Werribee Marches and a few solo School performances.

Anzac Day was again a huge day for us with multiple Members starting the day early playing at Dawn Services. We were very well represented this year.

**Aged Care Report**

Our RSL Veteran Aged Care program assists and provides care for our ageing Veterans, and their families. The ongoing work of the Veteran Aged Care Co-ordinator is to ensure an understanding of the relevant needs of our Veterans, that these needs can, and will be provided for, and always to fully recognize their invaluable war time service contribution.

My aged care service covers an area from Watsonia to Epping and Ivanhoe to Whittlesea, and includes all the Sub-branches and aged care facilities in the Northern Region.

My referrals come from medical centres, local councils, social workers, hospitals, friends and families. Aged care issues are many, ranging from requests to remain in the home with services such as personal care and domestic assistance, financial advice regarding entitlements, transport to appointments and involvement in social activities.

The requests for assistance continue to increase. All are related to ensuring the care needs of those in the community, and aged care facilities, are provided for and maintained.

The requests for aged care placement is variable. The number of affordable aged care beds available is also variable. My work averages at least one call a day requesting permanent aged care placement or respite. One of the most frequent requests is for my assistance in choosing an appropriate aged care facility. The wide spectrum of choice when going into aged care ranges from dementia treatment, staff that provide the care, is the care delivered in a sustainable way and often the determining factor is the cost of accommodation at facilities. Aged care placement can be a difficult transition. We have continued to provide ongoing support since the beginning of this Veterans Aged Care program.

Our RSL Veteran Aged Care program (now in the tenth year) with an Aged Care Co-ordinator, will endeavour to maintain support for all our Veterans and their families.

Sharon Armstrong

Veteran Aged Care Co-ordinator

**Snooker Report**

It's saddens me to report that the Watsonia RSL Committee have informed the Snooker Club that they wish to remove the snooker tables from the club in the next 12 to 18 months. We naturally do not support this move and have started a petition to that effect. The petition will be circulated among club Members and hung on the snooker bulletin wall for your signatures. Please note that only current Members can sign.

CLUB RESULTS

The snooker club fielded two A Grade and two B Grade teams in the winter competition. Results were good with both Grades winning the grand final. We also fielded two ‘A’ Grade and one B Grade in the summer competition, and again both grades made the grand final achieving runner up status.

A notable point to make was that Josh Gorski approached the DVSA committee before the last season started and asked that his handicap limit be unrestricted. The upper handicap limit stood at minus 40 though throughout the season Josh's went out to minus 65, a great effort from a real sportsman.

Regarding our average voluntary work hours; they average out at 30 hrs per season/60 hours per year or about two hours per night of competition.

It goes without saying that we still appreciate the committees support for the last year and would like to see that support continue.

David Richards

Secretary / Treasurer

11th November - Watsonia RSL, Centenary of Armistice Service

A good turnout for a long weekend, however this may have been the reason for the lack of Police traffic control. The Army seemed to have overstretched their recourses and we were without a Catafalque Party. Once again, all the participating schools excelled with their readings, in particular the guest address from Amelia Dunn and Tiarnan Plant of Loyola College. The content of the service again was refreshed and well received.

Most parts of the services seem to have been tidied up and all ran relatively smoothly, still room for improvement.

Tony Turtle

Ceremonial Officer

**Ceremonial Report**

2nd April - Cherry Street, Springthorpe Estate

A dry and pleasant morning, the attendance was around 50-60 people. The minutes silence glitch has been rectified successfully, and the service went smoothly. Matt Stamp recorded the Service and will make the video available. The new ‘reading lights’ worked well.

 25th April - Dawn Service

 A relatively mild morning, the threat of showers did not happen and an estimated 3000 people were in attendance. The Service seemed to flow smoothly. The new projector made a big difference to the visual displays. David Boyle on the pipes in the right position had the desired effect and Victoria Police were in attendance for traffic control. 39 ACU provided the Flag Marshalls.

25th April - Watsonia RSL 10.00am Service

The relatively mild morning continued and threat of showers stayed away, allowing for a large turnout. The new large marquee worked well, and shuffling two choirs was not the nightmare it could have been, although Loyola choir would have been better off using the microphone as their own back ground music overpowered their voices. All other parts of the service went to plan. Victoria Police were in attendance for traffic control and again the 39 ACU provided the Flag Marshalls.

4th November - Cherry Street, Springthorpe Estate

A fine morning with a smaller turnout than usual. The service contained some new content that was well read and received.

**Pensions Report**

FINALISED FILES

SCRA Payout (2) Veteran Deceased (2) Miscellaneous (2) MRCA (3)

Miscellaneous files are those where there has been some assistance given without the need for pension officer involvement long term.

CURRENT FILES

Active (3) Jeff Mawkes (2) Peter Healy (1)

Active files are those currently under investigation by DVA

Dormant (56)

Dormant files are those that have been investigated but may at some time be re-activated for further claim or increase for accepted disabilities.

Member Peter Healy has shown an interest in becoming a qualified pension advocate. I am currently mentoring Peter prior to him completing a course under the new Advocacy Training and Development Program (ATDP) This will take approximately 12 months and I welcome Peter aboard for this very important RSL assistance function.

The majority of active files are now Contemporary Veterans from the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts starting to come forward with requests for assistance.

Members who are considering applying for a Disability Allowance commonly called Service Pension as opposed to the Age Service Pension should contact the pension office before submitting a claim. This is to ensure that not only are the claim forms correctly filled out, and thus reduce any delay in them being processed, but also to ensure that no errors have been included that may at some future date, negate further claims.

I would like to thank Matt Guest and the Administration staff for their support throughout the year.

Jeff Mawkes

Pension / Welfare Officer

**Legacy Report**

Another year of interesting speakers and outings with the Watsonia Legacy ladies.

We welcomed our new Treasurer Yvonne Freeman with Lillian Smith, Pam McDonald, Veronica Kelsey, Joan Colbeck and Kay Carey being on the Committee.

We had Sharon Armstrong talking about Welfare that is available and Rotary came with a very interesting talk about how Rotary began. Fun of the month in April was that we had an Easter Hat Parade.

Robert Winther from the Heidelberg Repatriation hospital came about the Welfare that the hospital offers, and different functions that are held in the grounds of the hospital. We then had an interesting table of goodies from Penny Farthing gifts, small, inexpensive gifts were offered that we could buy. We had a Dentist come and give us a very interesting talk about dental work.

Our birthday was well attended, thanks to Chef Glen for a wonderful luncheon. Thanks Glen for all of your help, and for the Christmas luncheon in December. Also thanks to the staff section of the Watsonia RSL for helping us out.

Legacy House in the City invited us to a luncheon in April, where a bus was hired and we all had a welcome drink, lunch and then a very interesting talk from a guest speaker. We say thanks to our Legatee Daryl Pinner for organizing the event.

One of our outings was to the Gerber Flower and Alpaca outing; fantastic flowers.

We thank President Jeff Mawkes, Matt Guest and all the staff for their help and guidance that was given to us this year.

Lillian Smith

President

**Welfare and Charitable Report**

As always our Members have been wonderful in giving their time to help in the area of welfare. The Austin Hospital visits are undertaken monthly and we give each person we visit a care package containing a note pad and pen, face washer, toothbrush and toothpaste, a comb, a couple of lollies and a thank you for your service sticker. These care packs are very well received and we have received several thank you notes from the patients. I am helped with these visits by Mick and Margaret Dimech, Noel Leverett, Jan Randell, Gary Spark, Janet McSweeney and Betty Skals; we enjoy these visits as much as the patients.

Over the year we have visited about 80 people either in their homes or in hospital. We have also provided transport for many Members to doctors and hospital appointments as well as helped with shopping.

Our volunteers helped pack and send off 300 Christmas Care packages to Defence Personal in Afghanistan. Thank you for your help, I’m sure they will be appreciated.

The home maintenance program has been well used this year and we are very lucky to have some very helpful tradies providing assistance to Veterans and their Widows with keeping up gardening etc.

The total amount expended on welfare for the year on Veterans and Widows of Veterans was $90,557.00.

The Strength and Mobility classes remain very well attended. These classes are run by Pace Health Management. The Wildflower Day Club is also well attended and the friendships made have been invaluable.

It is good to see so many of our volunteers putting their hours into the Better Impact / My Volunteer system as this helps us to comply with the direction of the ACNC to remain a not for profit entity.

The total volunteer hours to the end of 2018 is 9321 with 84 volunteers logging their hours. This is an amazing effort.

Tricia Mawkes

Welfare Officer

**Social Club Report**

This year we have had some wonderful excursions and the feedback has been very positive. The idea of the Social Club is to have excursions that interest many people so that people with different interests can be included and make new friends along the way.

The excursions this year have been;

* **Bruno’s Sculpture Garden** including Stephenson’s falls and lunch at The Black Spur Inn.
* **The QTrain** which was a train travelling from Drysdale to Queenscliff and back while enjoying a beautiful meal.
* **Shannon’s Southern Classic** races at Broadford. And last but not least,
* **The Kilmore Races** on Kilmore Cup Day.

It has been great to see everyone interacting and making friends with people whom they may have passed by in the RSL but now have much more of a connection with.

Tricia Mawkes

**Wildflower Day Club Report**

It is with great pleasure that I report to you Wildflower Day Club is amazing. We have over 80 members, with an average of 50 Members attending weekly. They are all happy and enthusiastic doing the exercises each Wednesday morning.

DVA recently visited us and were very surprised at the atmosphere amongst the Members. So many smiles and laughter.  Some of the Members go home after the exercises but most spend the rest of the day enjoying each other’s company. A few of the Members enjoy board games whilst the noisy ones play table top games. I have never seen so many people enjoying such simple pleasures.

We have four day trips each year which are subsidised by our Day Club. We have a trade table which contributes to fund raising for our day trips, along with the occasional raffle. Free tea, coffee and biscuits are available all day to quench the thirst from all the chatting and laughter.

 We begin our day at approximately 10am, time for tea or coffee, then 10.45am exercises. Call and book the free RSL community bus on Tuesday night if you live in the area, if you wish to arrange pick up Wednesday morning from your home. Then the bus with the lovely driver Phil will take you home on the 2pm bus.

In October we celebrated our 17th birthday with a wonderful day, which was very well attended with great entertainment and lovely menu enjoyed by all. This was followed in December by our Christmas party a day filled with wonderful entertainment, presents and lots of fun. With much appreciation and a big thank you to Watsonia Sub-branch for aiding this successful day.

Also an a big thank you and a medal to our lovely volunteers, Bernadette Inglis, Glad Robertson, Lillian Casey, Gay Bassiere, Glen Fishlock, Maureen Meers, Wanda, Puka, and Alicia for a job well done in the organisation, expertise and assisting in the success of these days. Thank you to our pop up volunteers who are there when needed with a beautiful smile and to help anyway they can, our crafty ones for the help with the Trade table, also thank you all to our Members for taking part in our Day Club. Our Trade tables would not be the same without our gift donors, buyers and the ladies that man the table monthly.

Without our volunteers, Members, friends, and the RSL our Day Club would not be as successful as it is today.

Information in the foyer. Hoping to see you there.

Margaret Jorgensen

Day Club Co-Ordinator