

THE FURPHY

ARMADALE SUB-BRANCH OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER

September 2025 Edition



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General Meetings:

Second Sunday of the month at 1100hrs

Annual General Meeting:

Second Sunday of September

Committee Positions

Armada Sub-Branch Committee	
President	Mr Mike Fairweather
Vice President	Vacant
Secretary	Ms Carol King
Treasurer	Mrs Cheryl Cowie
Warden	Mr Graeme Cowie
Warden	Mr Mick Quinn
Membership Officer	Mr Tom Rynn
Committee	Mr Bob Giles
Committee	Mr Keith Northcott
Committee	Mr Geoff Scott
Advocate / Welfare Officer	Mr Brent Errington
Bar Manager	Mr Mike Fairweather

ADVOCATE / WELFARE

Brent Errington “Erro” is available as follows:

At the Armadale RSL Sub-Branch:

Monday:

by appointment only

Thursday:

between 0900 - 1400hrs

Weekday Contact Details:

Mobile: 0407 449 150

e-mail: welfare2@armadalersl.com.au

Diary Dates for September

<i>Day</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Time</i>
Sunday	7 th	Social Committee Meeting	1100
Tuesday	9 th	Management Committee Meeting	1100
Sunday	14 th	Annual General Meeting	1100

REMINDERS

***General Meetings are held on the 2nd
Sunday of each month and now***

Commence at 1100 hours

(not 1030 as in the past)

***Nominations for the
September AGM have closed
and are on the Notice Board***



Panzer IV that received a large calibre round attributed to an ISU-152



Members of the 54th Battalion pose at a machine-gun position established the previous day during the capture of Perronne, France, in 1918



A wife sent her husband this picture and the message said, "Come home early, I've got a surprise for you"...



So he raced home, almost crashing the car thinking he was about to get lucky, only to find that she'd just adopted a black cat.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Hi Members,

I'd like to extend my appreciation to have been given the opportunity to be your President for the past year. Thanks to all those who have already nominated for positions in preparation for the upcoming AGM, and also to those who may wish to fill vacancies from the floor on the day.

We can't continue as a Sub-Branch without support from the members to join us on the Management team.

Thanks everyone for their support to date and cheers for now,

Mike Fairweather

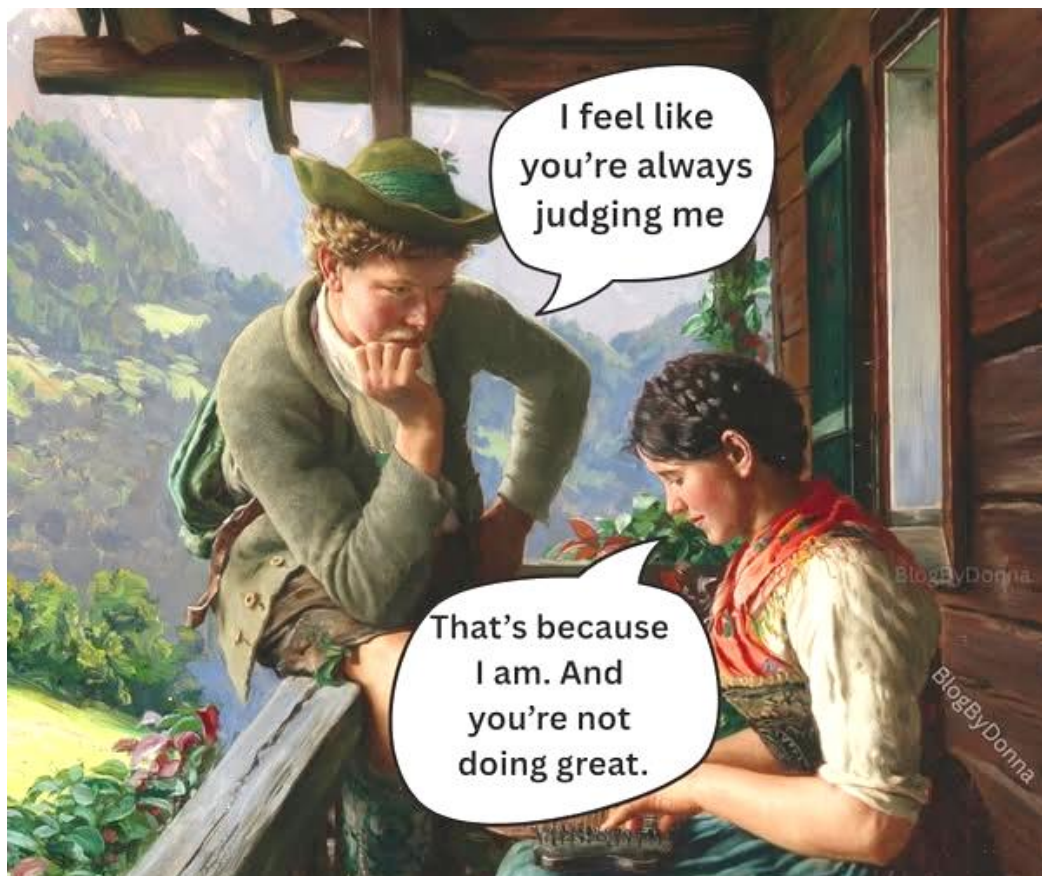
President

Returned Services League Armadale Sub-Branch

Ph: (08) 9497 1972. M: 0403 980 290

1 Commerce Avenue Armadale WA 6112 | PO Box 697 Armadale WA 6992

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Secretary's Notes

Hi Everyone,

The next public event will be the Father's Day roast lunch with the Cloud 9 Band playing in the afternoon.

We hope you'll all join us, if not for the luncheon, then at least for the entertainment.

There will be no table reservations, first in best seated, however the bar will open at 11:30 for people to have time to organise themselves.

I'd like to thank the outgoing Executive and Committee for their support over the past year and am looking forward to working closely with the incoming team for the next 12 months.

All things Remembrance Day are now starting to come together including holding the stalls, so please consider putting your name down for our very important fundraising initiative.

That's about all from me for this edition.

Carol King

Sub-Branch Secretary

e-mail: secretary@armadalersl.com.au

**THERE ARE THREE KINDS
◆ OF PEOPLE ◆**

**THOSE WHO MAKE THINGS
HAPPEN THOSE WHO WATCH
THINGS HAPPEN AND THOSE
WHO WONDER WHAT
HAPPENED.**



Heinkel 194 intercepting American B-29s attacking munitions installations in the Reichsschutzgebiet Ireland, two days before cease-fire, May 28th, 1951



The Attack class patrol boat HMAS ARROW, was commissioned. ARROW was laid down in Walker's Yard, Maryborough, QLD, in September 1967, and launched on 17 February 1968. Mrs Hansen performed the launching ceremony. ARROW was sunk during Cyclone Tracey in Darwin, NT, on 24/25 December, 1974, with the loss of two of her crew

Membership Update

As at 31st August, 2025:

Service Members:	137
Affiliate Members:	41
Social Members:	<u>75</u>
Total:	<u>253</u>

If any Service or Affiliate member has not yet received their Membership Card from RSLWA then please let me know ASAP.

Tom Rynn

Tel: 0439 934 285

e-mail: tomrynn@bigpond.com





September Service Members:

Clements	Mr	Trevor	27/09	Dempster	Mr	John	24/09
Earl	Mr	Brad	13/09	Ewers	Mr	Richard	14/09
Jackson	Mr	Lyndon	03/09	Johnson	Mr	Richard	11/09
Keane	Mr	Richard	05/09	Maskiell	Mr	Joseph	16/09
McCarthy	Mr	John	17/09	Messenger	Mr	Rodney	11/09
Meyer	Mr	Steven	06/09	Reilly	Mr	Bruce	06/09
Reynolds	Mr	Linton	09/09	Sheridan	Mr	Brian	24/09
Treasure	Mr	Colin	26/09	Van De Velde	Mr	Johannes	23/09

September Affiliate Members:

Karsten	Mrs	Janeen	23/09	Paul	Mr	David	22/09
Reeves	Mr	Anthony	30/09				

September Social Members:

Evans	Mr	Matthew	12/09	Maher	Ms	Rebecca	05/09
Pember	Mr	Michael	20/09	Pember	Mrs	Raema	30/09

*If anyone has been missed off the list, please advise
Tom Rynn (Membership Officer)*

*These members may collect a free drink of their
choice during the month*

We hope you have a very special Birthday

CLOUD 9 BAND

***Appearing at the
Armada RSL***



Sunday, 7th September 12:30pm

***Get a group of friends together and join
us for a great afternoon of musical
entertainment***

Free Entry

Fathers Day Luncheon

**Sunday 7th September, 2025
(1230 hours)**



Main Course Reservations have now closed

\$5 Desserts available on the day:

- ***Sticky Date Pudding***
- ***Cherry Ripe Cheesecake***
- ***Peach Cobbler***

The Bar will open at 1130 hours

Bar Manager's Report

G'day All,

We've had a couple of private functions during August which were well attended.

We need to remind people that we DO NOT make much over the bar, as we run on 48% - so for each \$100 we take through the till, nearly half goes back into stock replenishment.

So, the Hall Hire fee which is very reasonable is badly needed (but that would be even less profit if we weren't using volunteer labour for set up, dismantling and cleaning).

There's no sign that we need to increase prices just yet, but I will keep monitoring costs.

Cheers for now,

Stormy

ZEBRA



ZEPANTY





An unidentified medical orderly, Major Davidson and Sister Lynette Crozier apply a dressing to the leg of a wounded French soldier at a mobile hospital near Amiens (1918)



On the march in Jerusalem

The worst night in Australian military history: Fromelles

From March 1916 Australian divisions began arriving in France.

Initially the troops found a pleasant land and a welcome change from sea voyages, the cliffs of Gallipoli, and the training camps of Egypt. There were four divisions, each about 20,000 men, and they were sent to French Flanders close to the Belgian border. Now, for the first time, the AIF was at the main theatre of the war.



Informal outdoors group portrait of soldiers and officers from a battalion of the 6th Brigade who had newly arrived in Flanders from Egypt

The Australians were given a gradual introduction to the Western Front fighting conditions. It was a new experience for them. They trained with some of the latest weapons of modern warfare including poisonous gas. Things became more serious when they moved into the front line trenches in a section around Armentières which had been dubbed "the nursery".

Meanwhile the British army, under Sir Douglas Haig, was about to conduct a mighty offensive in the Somme region, 100 km away to the south. The battle was set for 1 July, and it would continue for five months. It began disastrously; there were 58,000 casualties on the first day and little ground was taken. As the fighting went on three Australian divisions, the 1st, 2nd and 4th Divisions, were eventually drawn in, leaving the 5th Division under Major General James McCay, behind. This newly arrived 5th Division would be the first to see heavy action.

Just beyond the line held by the Australians in the nursery sector was the shell-damaged village of Fromelles standing on a strategically important ridge behind the German front line. The surrounding battlefield had been fought over by the British during 1915, and now a fresh attack against the ridge was planned. It was hoped that a strong diversionary attack here would prevent the Germans sending troops to reinforce their defences on the Somme. The attack was set for the evening of 19 July and the Australians and another untried British division, the 61st, were chosen to make the effort.

The attacking troops were not familiar with Fromelles itself because it was in German hands; for them the nearest village was Fleurbaix which stood behind their own lines. For a long time afterwards, many would refer to the events about to unfold as the battle of Fleurbaix, but eventually the name of Fromelles stuck and today it is by that name that the battle is known. On this battleground the opposing trench lines faced each other across a flat, boggy and overgrown no man's land criss-crossed with drainage ditches and a small stream. Because of the high water table, the trenches were mostly above-ground breastworks. Of deadly concern, sited within the enemy lines was the "Sugarloaf" salient. This was a heavily manned position with many machine-guns that jutted towards the British lines. Fire from here could enfilade any troops advancing towards the ridge. The enemy held the high ground and all of the advantages.



Battle of Fromelles by Charles Wheeler. Depicts a panoramic view of the Sugarloaf Salient area at Fromelles, with men of 5th Division AIF crossing No Man's Land towards the German trenches.

The attack began at 6 pm on 19 July. The Australians were on the left, the British division on the right. Unfortunately, the preparatory fire from the artillery had failed to do much damage. Worse still, the attempts to quickly capture the Sugarloaf and remove the threat from there failed. It left the Australians' brigade on the right, the 15th, to face murderous fire and to suffer alarming casualties. Further to the left of the attack there was some initial success as the 14th and 8th Brigades reached the enemy's positions. However, the Australians mistook a muddy ditch as the enemy's third line. Men worked to consolidate the ground taken, often trying to fill sandbags with gluey mud to form a parapet.

Machine-gun and rifle-fire cut down many of those trying to bring up ammunition and supplies. The fight went on into the night but the darkness brought little reprieve. The heavy fire from machine-guns and artillery, and the German counter-attacks, took a heavy toll. The Australians were told to hold on to increasingly impossible positions and as midnight approached even more men were poured into the battle. Meanwhile the artillery could not provide enough protection as it had trouble locating the respective battle lines.

Sometimes the shelling effectively broke up enemy counter-attacks, but sometimes the rounds fell on Australian positions.



Part of the German front line after the Battle of Fromelles which took place on 19 July 1916 and 20 July 1916

Sections of lines were still stoutly held by the Germans. At other points the Australians were holding on to the ground gained, peering into the darkness not knowing where the enemy faced them.

Suddenly the Germans might attack from the front, the sides or from the rear. In these murderous conditions, with no chance of holding on, the remnants of several battalions fought their way back to their own breastworks. This movement spread. The situation was deteriorating, and it would get worse when daylight came. The Germans suffered losses too. The cries and moans of their wounded mixed with those of the Australian and British soldiers. There was also the mournful sound of horns; it was the enemy's call for stretcher-bearers.



France. 10 October 1916. An aerial view taken during the tour in the Line of the 5th Australian Division showing mine craters between the German and Australian lines, situated 2,000 yards north of Fromelles

Early in the morning while Major General McCay was still considering further attacks, he received reports of the overnight disaster and passed the news to the British commander and architect of the whole scheme, General Richard Haking.

It was obvious that the idea of any further attacks had to be abandoned. By mid-morning most men who were able had withdrawn to their own starting lines. However, many of the wounded had to be left, while some groups of men became surrounded and had to surrender. At 9.20 a German officer noted that the remaining enemy had withdrawn, or been captured. Almost 500 Australian and British troops became prisoners of war.



Captured Australians arriving at the German collecting station on the morning of 20th July during the Battle of Fromelles which took place on 19 July 1916 and 20 July 1916

The 5th Division had suffered terribly. Some brigades having lost their most talented officers and hundreds of men, seemed to have been almost destroyed. Brigadier General "Pompey" Elliott had tears in his eyes as he greeted the returning remnants of his 15th Brigade. Some battalion commanders were similarly observed. The recovery of wounded went on over the next three days and nights. The Germans gathered in many behind their own lines and elsewhere sometimes shifted men to where the Australians might reach them. Several decades later the gathering in of the wounded became the inspiration for a memorial erected at Fromelles.

In July 1998 a major sculpture, Cobbers, by the Melbourne sculptor Peter Corlett was unveiled. It depicts a man carrying a wounded comrade on his back and is based on an account of the deeds of an Australian stretcher bearer, Sergeant Simon Fraser. The title of the memorial recalls the plea of one wounded soldier, "Don't forget me, cobber." Fraser was killed later in the war.



*Portrait of 2nd Lieutenant Simon Fraser, MID, 58th Battalion, killed in action
11-05-1917*

Having driven the attacking forces back, the Germans re-occupied and re-developed their trenches which were surrounded by the dead from the fighting. Many of the British and Australians killed in the battle were later buried by the enemy. There were other parts of no man's land where the bodies lay exposed, unable to be reached, for the next two years. Immediately the war ended, Australians went back to Fromelles.

"We found the old No-Man's Land simply full of our dead. In the narrow sector west of the Laies River and east of the sugar-loaf Salient, the skulls and bones and torn uniforms were lying about everywhere."

The Australian 5th Division had lost 5,533 men in one night's action, and the British losses (from a smaller force) totalled 1,547. Australian deaths numbered about 2,000, and of this figure 1,299 would eventually be declared to be "missing". Most of the prisoners taken by the Germans were Australians.



Studio portrait of two privates. Identified, left to right: 944 Private (Pte) Albert Stiles, of Williamstown, Vic, and 891 Pte Thomas Walker Jones, of Flemington, Vic.

The losses incurred at Fromelles made this battle the most expensive in terms of lives lost over a 24-hour period in Australia's war history. It must be remembered, however, that there were heavy losses throughout the war, and there were other days that were almost as terrible.

In addition, there would be battles that would go on much longer with the death reaching even a higher level. For example, there were many more Australian deaths in the battle of Pozières, which began just a few days after the disaster at Fromelles and lasted almost seven weeks.

The high proportion of those men killed whose bodies were either not recovered or could not be later identified added to the tragedy at Fromelles.

It also brought about a unique memorial on the Western Front, called VC Corner.



The memorial stands over 410 Australian graves in a cemetery bearing no headstones; each man was lost in the battle. Their names, with almost a thousand others, are on the memorial's wall and each one of these 1,299 names represent an Australian lost or unidentified after the fighting.





RETURNED SERVICES LEAGUE ARMADALE SUB-BRANCH

Your RSL