

Trooping of the Queen's Colour at RMC

On June 7, at the invitation of RMC Commandant Brigadier Mark Bornholt AM, I represented the ACT State Branch at the Royal Military College of Australia, Duntroon for the annual parade celebration marking the Official Birthday of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

This very impressive Trooping the Queen's Colour is always well attended and supported. It is also known and admired for the precision parade drill by the Corps of Cadets and the accompaniment of the RMC Band.

The Reviewing Officer was the Governor-General, Major General Michael Jeffery, AC CVO MC.

In the ceremony the cadets, led by the Commanding officer of the Corps of Cadets, Lieutenant Colonel Mitch Kent, gave three cheers for Her Majesty the Queen.

Queen's Birthday Honours List

Published in the Queen's Birthday Honours List on Monday 9th June was the notification that our RSL ACT Branch Advocate, Colonel Arthur Craig (Rtd), received the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM).

This is a most deserved award for Arthur, who has given exceptional service as an advocate to our ACT veterans' community for many years

Annual RSL ACT Congress

The 82nd RSL ACT Branch Congress, held on June 13 at the Hellenic Club, Phillip, prompted good and adverse comment.

Note and action was taken on some adverse comments received on parking problems at this venue last year.

So this year State Secretary James Davidson negotiated complimentary parking vouchers for congress delegates and VIP visitors.

My appreciation is also recorded here of the organisation by Branch Deputy President John King for the minibus and driver provided by Morshead Home for Veterans and aged persons through the Tuggeranong Sub-Branch, which took executives and delegates to and from the Memorial Service at the Australian War Memorial before the formal opening of Congress.

As in past years we were again well accommodated and served by the professional Hellenic Club staff.

The refreshments and the meal provided for our Executive, VIPs and delegates in attendance was first-class. Considerable effort is involved in

Guest of honour and distinguished guests at RSL ACT 82nd Branch Congress opening

The Guest of Honour and keynote speaker was Major General Steve Gower AO AO [Mil] (Rtd), Director of the Australian War Memorial, who formally opened our Congress and presented League awards to a number of our deserving Branch Executive and Sub-Branch members for their service to the veteran community.

Also at Congress and in several cases addressing delegates were many distinguished guests including Major-General Bill Crews AO (Retd), National President RSL of Australia; Minister for Veterans' Affairs Alan Griffin; shadow minister for veterans'



RMC cadets Trooping the Queen's Colours at Duntroon on June 7. The Reviewing Officer was the Governor-General, Major General Michael Jeffery AC CVO MC.

organising the congress, which showcases the ACT Branch.

Apart from ANZAC Day, the annual Branch Congress is a most important event in RSL ACT Branch activities.

My sincere thanks to State Secretary James Davidson and the Moore Street State Office Manager David Mills, who provide so much of the required organisation.

It is no small task they undertake on our collective behalf and the lead-up to our Congress is very time-consuming for James and David, while at the same time they are also attending to the day-to-day business and affairs of the ACT Branch.

I offer my appreciation also to the State Executive and a number of pre-nominated delegates, who assisted Mr Davidson, Assistant Secretary Mr Bruce Tunnah OAM JP and Mr David Mills.

Wreath Laying Service at AWM

As the Parade Commander I was

pleased to be joined again by RSL National President Bill Crews AO (Rtd) and a good number of the branch executive and congress delegates at the Australian War Memorial.

From parade form-up at 0830 hours, we marched to the Pool of Remembrance area to be greeted there by the Director of the Australian War Memorial, Major General Steve Gower AO AO (Mil) (Rtd), and senior members of his ceremonial events staff. I recited the *Ode* and, in company with our National President, laid a wreath on behalf of the League at the Tomb of the Unknown Australian Soldier.

In his position above the AWM entry parapet, a bugler of the RMC Band played *Last Post* and *Rouse*, thus completing the more formal aspects of the Memorial Service. Members either laid their individual poppies upon the Tomb of the Unknown Australian Soldier or against chosen names of the fallen in the cloisters. Gungahlin Sub-Branch again supplied the poppies issued to those at the AWM Ceremony.

affairs Bronwyn Bishop; Margaret Reid AO LLB, Honorary Life Member RSL of Australia; Annette Ellis, MHR for Canberra; Professor Ken Donald AO, Chairman of the Repatriation Medical Authority; Ed Killestyn PSM, Acting Secretary, Department of Veterans' Affairs; Gary Collins, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Veterans' Affairs; Brigadier Bill Rolfe AO (Retd), Commissioner, Repatriation Commission; Major-General Paul Stevens AO (Retd), Director of Australian War Graves; Bill Humphreys, State Councillor NSW RSL, representing Don Rowe OAM, NSW State President; Kel

Ryan, Senior Vice President, Queensland RSL; Derek Robson AM, National Secretary of the RSL; and Past Presidents of RSL ACT Branch Ron Metcalfe OAM, Derek Roylance AM and Colleen Thurgar AM.

Also present were many presidents and senior Canberra-based representatives of the Kindred Service Organisations.

The speakers' presentations were most informative and related to veterans' issues and, in part, touched on Branch concerns. Issues addressed will complement separate motions from the other RSL state branches that will

From the President's desk
RSL ACT STATE BRANCH



Gary Brodie OAM

Executive elections unopposed

Normally announced at Congress by State Branch Returning Officer Arthur Craig OAM are the ACT Branch Executive members elected unopposed as follows:

President, LtCol John J Merrick (Rtd)
Deputy President, John King
Vice Presidents, David Millar, Jan Paulga and June Healy OAM
Treasurer, Mickey Michaelis
Assistant Secretary, Bruce Tunnah OAM JP

Non Elective Positions

Appointed State Secretary James Davidson continues in his appointment as does our State Branch Office Manager (Honorary position) David Mills.

Next year's RSL ACT State Congress

The 83rd RSL ACT Branch Congress will be held at the Hellenic Club, Woden on June 12, 2009.

Outgoing Branch President

As many members would be aware, my term as RSL ACT Branch President was completed after Congress this year.

May I offer here my best wishes to the incoming President, LtCol John Merrick (Rtd) and the Branch Executive.

I consider it an honour and a privilege to have worked with and for you all in furthering the objectives of the League and the service and responsibilities we maintain for the veterans in our community.

Gary Brodie OAM
Past President

now be dealt with at the Annual RSL National Congress in Townsville in September this year.

Delegates from Port Moresby

The ACT Branch Executive and Sub-Branch delegates joined me in welcoming two delegates from RSL ACT Port Moresby Sub-Branch, PNG: President Joe Filippi DMS and Treasurer Garth McIlwain CBE. It has been many years since delegates from any dedicated overseas sub-branches have attended a Congress in Canberra.