



*Retired and Former Police
Association of N.S.W. Inc.
(Established 1931)*

**Central Coast Branch
February, 2026.**

Chairman: Geoff Talbot. Secretary: John Marheine Postal address: 37 Northcott Ave,
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GREETINGS TO ALL MEMBERS.

With the world in a state of utter chaos it is clear that man has not learned the lessons of the past and we are now seeing appalling incidents of terrorism on our very doorstep. One can only wonder what terrible events we will see on the next television news bulletin. Here on the Central Coast we are living in a wonderful area which so far has avoided the terrible calamities of the cities though no doubt we wonder when our turn will come. However, while we are living in such great circumstances we must be mindful of our limited time on earth and cherish those who are nearest and dearest. The wonder of life will not last forever and we must make the most of the time we have available.

Vale Marlene Robertson.

It was with much sadness that we heard of the passing of one of our dear friends, Marlene Robertson, the wife of the late former Sergeant Ian Robertson, who left us in 2024. Marlene was an iconic lady who has left an indelible mark on our Branch's history and she will be sadly missed by the ladies of the Ladies Coffee Club as well as all Members of the Central Coast Branch. Ian and Marlene had joined us in their various activities in the past few years and they will be seriously missed by all who knew them.

Our deepest condolences to daughters Lisa and Jeannene and son Grant and to all their extended family. May they rest in peace free of the pain and problems of the current world.

SCHEDULED BRANCH MEETING.

The Branch Meeting was held at the Ourimbah RSL Club, Ourimbah, on Tuesday, 17th February, 2026, commencing at 11 a.m., chaired by Vice Chairman, Russ Whitcher.

A summary of the matters dealt with at the Meeting is set out hereunder.

Attendances:

The following Members, wives and partners were in attendance:

Father Jim Boland, and Carmen, Geoff Bown, Peter Caddy, Ernie and Bev Carmichael, Barry and Marj Clark, Bill Connors, John and Joan Corbett, Peter and Anne Drinan, Bruce and Jan Gibson, Ray Hatcher, Russ Jackson, John and Anne Kent, John Marheine, John and Noelene Nicholas, Ron Richmond, John Roger, Phil Stubbs-Mills, I.J. Toms, Russ Whitcher.

Apologies were recorded.

Deaths.

The names of Members who have passed away since the last Meeting were read out by the Secretary and a minute's silence was observed.

The minutes of the last Meeting, held in December, 2025, were read by the Secretary, John Marheine.

It was moved by John Nicholas, seconded by Peter Drinan, that the minutes of the last Meeting be accepted.

Correspondence.

Correspondence in: Nil.

Correspondence out: Nil.

Treasurer's Report.

The Treasurer's report was read by the Treasurer, Ray Hatcher.

It was moved by Ray Hatcher, seconded by John Nicholas, that the Treasurer's report be accepted.

Our OBE Roll Call.

Gents:

Ted Aitken, Keith Rhodes, Bruce C. Doust, Russ Jackson, John Green, Kevin Turner, John Marheine, Noel Murphy, Edward (Mick) Arnold, Wally Maher, Ernie Carmichael, Donald Harding, Bruce Gibson, Bill Ide, Barry Clark, Neil Ashman, Brian Zimmerli, Lawrence Huntington, William Dent, Ernest Benson, Mervyn Lane, Brian McVicar, Tony Thorrington, Paul Dixon, Jim Bonner, Dick Reid, Keith Hockley, John Nicholas, Carl Ripphausen, Bede Irvine, Father Jim Boland, Bryan Lowe.

Ladies:

A.Staunton, Myrlene Hauser, Adele Dale, Pauline Braithwaite, Maureen Groch, Marj Clark, Wilma Walsh, Bev Carmichael, Jan Gibson, Virginia Connolly.

WELFARE REPORT:

Our Welfare Officer, Barry Clark, informed the Meeting of those Members coming under notice by reason of their health. Barry's report is as follows:

Barry said that Trevor Carroll is not travelling well. He was having treatment for his throat cancer on the day of the Meeting. He is currently being fed by a tube and his prognosis is not good. We wish him well and hope he can overcome the difficulty.

Barry told the Meeting that Peter Caddy had had a heart attack which involved the insertion of a stent, with more stents yet to come. However, Peter was at the Meeting, looking fit and well and we hope he continues to progress back to good health.

Neil Ashman is currently seriously immobilized and does not venture far from his home. Barry said that he had spoken to Neil on the previous evening and wished him well. He said that Neil is very interested in what's going on at the Branch and would certainly welcome calls from Members.

Barry said that Father Jim had recently had a fall and broke a couple of ribs. However, he was at the Meeting riding a mobility scooter and looking very fit, in spite of still having back problems and some breathing difficulties.

Barry said that Bill Ide has been unwell but is on the mend.

We wish all Members who are not feeling so well our hope of speedy recoveries and we look forward to seeing them back again soon.

Social Club.

Russ Whitcher, recalling the success of the pre-Christmas lunch at the Royal Hotel, at Wyong, (which was enjoyed by everyone present), said that renovations at the hotel have now been completed and there is even greater space available for group gatherings.

Peter Caddy told the Meeting that members of the Social Club have yet to visit a couple of likely locations for the mid-year luncheon and, accordingly, no decision has yet been made as to where it will be held. He mentioned a new restaurant, "Archie's", part of a new multi storey building at the corner of Mann and Donnison Streets in the Gosford main shopping area. I.J. Toms said that she had been at a restaurant, actually on the 28th floor in that building, but she said that the logical restaurant which Members would attend, on the ground floor, is in a very nice area, where food is brought to the table after ordering and parking for patrons is free providing you retain a docket from the restaurant.

General Business:

John Nicholas told the Meeting of difficulties he has been experiencing with the Police Bank concerning the Bank's failure to send out notifications about accounts. He said the Bank claims it has been having difficulties in sending out details of accounts. John said that when he receives emails concerning his accounts he deletes the emails once he has read them so that no banking information is left in his computer.

John said that his son, Peter, together with some other Highway Patrol officers, went to Queensland with similar groups from Queensland, Victoria and South Australia, to engage in presentations with a view to obtaining consistency in the policing of trucks and truck drivers in those States. John said that Peter was invited to South Australia and has been made an honorary Constable in that State. He said it is expected that the Highway Patrol group will be invited back in about 12 months to observe the progress of the system. John said that this is all very good from a Police point of view, to see consistency in inter-State trucking regulations.

Bruce Gibson informed the Meeting that he is relinquishing the position of the Branch's Liaison Officer.

I.J. Toms told the Meeting that it is now 60 years since she became a Police Officer. She said that she remained in the Police Force for 44 years and is now involved in Police Legacy. I.J. raised the question of possible donations from the Branch to Police Legacy and there was some discussion on whether Members would agree and the method by which this might be carried out. In his role as Vice Chairman, Russ Whitcher said that the matter would be left in abeyance until the next Meeting to determine the manner in which any donation might be handled.

Peter Caddy said that, whatever method of collection is used, money has to be accountable. He said that, in a car club of which he is a member, a charity is nominated at the end of a financial year and a donation is then made to that charity and this was considered a satisfactory arrangement in his club.

Secretary John Marheine said that the Branch's income is derived from the contributions made by Members attending each Meeting, \$3.00 each Member, and we have an average attendance of 30 Members at each Meeting. Then the Branch is also given about \$600.00 by the Association each year. He said that, in years gone by, the cost of a wreath at the funeral of a Member who had passed away was \$30.00. However, this cost has now increased to about \$80.00 to \$100.00, thereby causing a drain on the Branch's funds. He said that, since we have introduced the system of giving the cloth banners, which can be draped over the coffin and then handed to the deceased's family, the Branch's funds have increased notably.

John said that, years ago, when he was Chairman of the North Coast Branch, it was the practice to have quite a spread for Members who attended Meetings, financed by the Branch's income. He said that one of the older former Chairmen expressed the view that the Branch's income was being depleted by this practice and it was his view that priority should be directed to increasing the Branch's bank balance. John said that it was his view that the money should be spent on current Members and he still maintains this view today. He believes that, while a reasonable balance must be maintained in the Branch's bank account, expenditure should go to the benefit of Members attending Meetings.

The raffle was won by Father Jim, with No. 19.

The Meeting closed at 12.10 p.m.

Sausage Sizzle.

And they were back to their best at the start of the New Year. On a beautiful day, Tuesday, 20th January, 2026, they gathered at the Valley Tavern where Head Chef, Brian McVicar, supervised his very capable team, John Roger and Geoff Bown, now outfitted with aprons supplied by Bill connors, in the production of yet another outstanding meal. Why would you want to go anywhere else on sizzle day. But, for those who did not come, well, that's your problem, (and it meant more food available for those who did). At a time when so many people in the world can't get a feed, it's nice to know we're so fortunate. Oh yes, and apart from the food there was some companionship and conversation.

The Ladies Coffee Club.

It's great to see the girls back together, doing what they do best: sitting quietly in the Club lounge waiting for the men to complete their Meeting, their various discussions and their overtures directed to the solving of all problems, great and small. Of course, if they haven't solved them by now the prospects of success might be dwindling. But we know the ladies will always be there to solve our personal dilemmas, no matter how infinitesimal, and that they will be by our side in supporting every one of our endeavours.

It was with great sadness that we have had to say farewell to Marlene Robertson, one of our most revered members of the Ladies Coffee Club, who passed away recently. Marlene was a wonderful, friendly lady, the widow of former Sergeant Ian Robertson, who left us several years ago. Our thoughts and prayers are with their family

THE WEB SITE.

Members are advised that they should check the Central Coast web site from time to time to see what messages may be displayed. The connection may be made as follows:

www.retiredpolice.com.au

Then click on "Branches" seen in the top right hand corner. Then click on "Central Coast" and scroll down. Apart from messages advising of up coming events, the latest Newsletters can also be seen on the site.

THE CALENDAR.

17th March, 2026. Sausage sizzle at the Valley Tavern, Niagara Park

21st April, 2026. General Meeting at the Ourimbah RSL Club, Ourimbah.
At this Meeting we will have a guest speaker, David Drew,
who will tell us about the Member Discounts and Benefits Scheme.

19th May, 2026. Sausage sizzle at the Valley Tavern, Niagara Park.

16th June, 2026. Annual General Meeting, at the Ourimbah RSL Club, Ourimbah.

21st July, 2026. Sausage sizzle at the Valley Tavern, Niagara Park.

18th August, 2026. General Meeting at the Ourimbah RSL Club, Ourimbah.

And what does the future hold.

The question of the future is certainly a vexed one. The television news every morning carries stories and pictures of devastating invasions or tremendous natural phenomena, all of which are shattering communities in all features of the compass. We can only wonder what could be done to abate it but there seems to be no answer – while authoritarian figures keep attacking their neighbours with bigger and better weapons – with no concern for casualties of any sort. We can only wonder how many species have been decimated by man's actions. Here on the Central Coast we can only enjoy the gifts we have been given: the sheer beauty of the region, the extent to which it has been developed and the friendship of the communities which inhabit it. Make the most of it. Nothing lasts forever. Keep those closest to us in our thoughts constantly.

With best wishes to everyone.

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