



Retired and Former Police Association of N.S.W. Inc.

(Established 1931)

Central Coast Branch August, 2026.

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

In a world of wonderful technological advances, one might think that everyone would be happy, enjoying benefits of all kinds, all around, and that we could all be carefree and confident of our safety. But nothing could be further from the reality, whether on the world stage or in our own region, even our own backyard. Daily we are seeing reports of terrible violence, even murders committed by teenagers, murders of parents by their children. Those of us of a mature generation can only watch these things with bewilderment and disbelief and perhaps we might wonder "where it all went wrong". Surely the simple message must be to keep those nearest and dearest close to us and care for them as best we can. The one thing common to all of us is that we are only here once.

SCHEDULED BRANCH MEETING.

The Branch Meeting was held at the Ourimbah RSL Club, Ourimbah, on Tuesday, 18th August, 2026, commencing at 11 a.m., chaired by Vice Chairman Russ Whitcher in the absence of Chairman Geoff Talbot, who was engaged with Returned Servicemen in the service for the Battle of Long Tan in the Vietnam war. Geoff was able to attend segments of the Meeting.

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

Attendances:

The following Members, wives and partners were in attendance:

Peter Caddy, Ernie and Bev Carmichael, Bill Connors, John Corbett, Peter and Anne Drinan, Bruce and Jan Gibson, Grant Harridge, Ray Hatcher, Russ Jackson,

John and Anne Kent, Bryan Lowe, Brian McVicar, John Marheine, John and Noelene Nicholas, Jim Regan, Ron Richmond, John Roger, Phil Stubbs-Mills, Geoff Talbot, Russ Witcher.

Apologies were recorded.

The Vice Chairman, Russ, welcomed our guest speaker, Dave Whiteman, Webmaster for the Association, and visitors, Beth Docksey, Secretary of the Murray River Branch of the Association, and Ian Lovell, Secretary and Treasurer of the Retired and Former Police Association.

Vale List.

The names of Members who have passed away since the last Meeting were read out by Peter Caddy, in the absence of the Secretary, John Marheine, and a minute's silence was observed.

The minutes of the last Meeting, held in June, 2026, were read by Peter Caddy

It was moved by John Nicholas, seconded by John Kent, 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 Bill Connors, seconded by John Roger, 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, 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, Marge Clark, Wilma Walsh, Bev Carmichael, Jan Gibson, Virginia Connolly.

WELFARE REPORT:

Our Welfare Officer, Barry Clark, was absent from the Meeting. In his absence other Members reported on their communication with those not doing so well:

Brian McVicar said that he had recently visited Father Jim, he said the Father is not doing too well, is suffering fluid around his lungs and we are hoping for an improvement soon.

Russ Whitcher said that he has recently spoken to Neil Ashman by telephone with a view to arranging a lunch at a location in Neil's area. He said that Neil is not driving and seems reluctant to attend any group meetings but would like to talk to Members on the phone if they would care to ring him.

We wish all Members good health and a speedy recovery from any ailments which they are suffering.

Social Club.

Peter Caddy informed the Meeting that, as indicated previously, a mixed lunch would be held at The Lakes Hotel, at The Entrance, on Wednesday, 26th August, 2026, commencing at 11.30 a.m. Russ had prepared a book for Members to indicate their intention of attending the lunch but asked that, if unable to attend after intending to go, please notify the Social Club for the purpose of changing catering arrangements.

Russ and Peter reminded Members that the Royal Hotel at Wyong has proven to be a most suitable venue for the pre-Christmas luncheon and it is scheduled that, this year, the luncheon will be held on Wednesday, 25th November, 2026, commencing at 11.30 a.m.

General Business.

Vice Chairman Russ again acknowledged the attendance of our visitors, Beth Docksey, APM.OAM, the Secretary of the Murray River Branch of the RFPA, and Ian Lovell, APM, the Secretary of the Association. Ian had carried out research on Members of mature age and presented the first badges, entitled "90 Years & Not Out", to Russ Jackson and John Marheine for having achieved – indeed surpassed - their 90th birthdays. Presentation of other badges will be made to Members as they reach that age.

Russ Jackson requested that his appreciation of the presentation be recorded.







The photo above shows the badge, “90 years & not out”. Photos on previous pages show Ian Lovell presenting the badges, firstly to Russ Jackson and secondly to John Marheine. Both recipients were grateful for the recognition of their ages.

Bill Connors advised the Meeting of the death of Allan Clarridge who had been a highly respected public servant at Gosford Police Station and later finished up as an executive at Hornsby. Bill informed the Meeting that the funeral was scheduled to be held at the Greenaway Memorial Gardens on Friday, 28th August, 2026.

Bill also informed the Meeting of the passing of Karen Ryan, who retired from the Police Force only 3 years ago after completing 37 years service, also having finished her service at Hornsby. She passed away only in the previous week.

John Kent told the Meeting of the passing of a Police Officer known to him, Ken Earl at 77 years of age. John also mentioned another Police Officer, Alan Stubbs, with whom he went to school before both became Police Cadets and, when sworn in, both performed 12 months service at Liverpool Police Station before Alan Stubbs was transferred into the Highway Patrol. John said that, at the time of the Meeting Alan Stubbs, now 81 years of age, was having a pacemaker inserted in his heart.

Peter Drinan told Members of his son Michael, 55 years of age, who has had heart surgery but who has recently had a battery, with a 5 year life, installed in the pacemaker in his heart, this being part of a new procedure, but the new procedure ensures that his pacemaker can be monitored 7 days a week.

The raffle was won by Grant Harridge, No. 16, but Grant donated the money back to the Branch account.

GUEST SPEAKER.

Our Vice Chairman, Russ Witcher, introduced the guest speaker, Dave Whiteman, who is the Webmaster for the Retired and Former Police Association and is also the Chairman of the Northern Beaches Branch of the Association. Dave provided an outstanding presentation of the features of Artificial Intelligence and the extent of its use in dealing with various matters, of all descriptions, highlighting the manner in which AI can be treated as your "personal assistant". Dave said that you can have a conversation with AI, you can ask it questions but you do need to check the answers because AI is not infallible but its benefits are invaluable.

Before Dave commenced the presentation on Artificial Intelligence, he provided a very detailed description of the manner in which the RFPA web site can be accessed, showing the steps to be taken on the television screen specially arranged for his visit. Members should not have any difficulty in reaching our Branch web site following the display provided by Dave.

At the completion of his presentation Peter Caddy presented Dave with a gift on behalf of the Branch.



The photo above shows Dave explaining the various features of Artificial Intelligence to a much enthralled audience.



And here we have a photo of the top table fully engaged in the direction of the Meeting. On the left is Vice Chairman Russ Whitcher in full control of matters. On the right is Treasurer Ray Hatcher who has just delivered his always totally responsible report on the Branch's finances. And in the middle Peter Caddy is seen in his usual directional mode.

Our Most Welcome Visitor.

Reference is made earlier to the attendance of our visitor from down south, Beth Docksey, and it is always great to see her. On this occasion Beth has made a written contribution to the day's activities and it is the editor's view that this should be recorded in the Newsletter. This is the way Beth saw the day:

"On 18th August Beth Docksey from the Murray River RFPA Branch travelled to the Central Coast to attend the Central Coast RFPA Meeting at the Ourimbah RSL Club where she caught up with a lot of the Members and former workmates of hers. She got a surprise to see State Secretary Ian Lovell there and he was doing presentations of the "90 Not Out" badges to Members Russ Jackson and John Marheine. This was the first presentation of these badges that was seen by all of us to these amazing Members who are aiming for the next award to be their letters from the King.

We then had a very interesting presentation by RFPA Webmaster Dave Whiteman who first briefed the Meeting about the RFPA Website, retiredpolice.com.au, and all of the information available on it, on Members Hub, their Branch events, ways to update your details and the Business Partners and discounts available, etc.

Then Dave got into his main presentation on AI and how he uses it and how we can use it. Amazing, so many options and ways to do things on the internet quickly. Lunch and coffees afterwards and it was over all a great day that lasted for about 5 hours with lots of socialisation and fun.”



And here is the best part. As Beth has said, a table full of “Johns”. Around the table left to right: Bev Carmichael, Anne Kent, John Kent, John (Ernie) Carmichael, Beth, John and Noelene Nicholas. Oh what a team – and then we had to go home. But it was a great day.

The Sausage Sizzle.

What a wonderful day Tuesday, 21st July, 2026, turned out to be, where a happy group chose to sit or stand on the back deck of the Valley Tavern, at Niagara Park, to enjoy the beautiful sunshine. And what a way to spend the time waiting for Head Chef, Brian McVicar, and his dedicated battery of assistants to prepare the exquisite lunch that we have all come to await so patiently. What a way to spend a day and, as said so many times before, if you missed it – serves you right Will you never learn!! Of course, we do understand some absences are unavoidable – for medical or other reasons. Hope to see you next time.

A feature of this month's sizzle was the introduction made by our Member, Jim Regan, of Ian Adair, a retired school teacher, who now conducts Adairs Bus Company of West Gosford. Ian told the group of the activities of his business, that is, the transporting of children suffering various medical difficulties, either to or from school or to medical appointments. He asked that any Member who could make the time and might be able to drive small buses, perhaps one or two days a week, or even more frequently would be most welcome. The operation of Ian's business is certainly well worthy of merit. Anyone who could make the time might like to contact Ian directly on telephone No. (02) 4340 4030. The business office is located at 4 Luke Close, West Gosford, 2250. The email address is: info@adairsbus.com.au. The web site is: www.adairsbus.com.au.

The following photos were taken during Ian's visit:

In the first photo: Left to right: Jim Regan, Ian Adair and Vice Chairman Russ Whitcher. The following two photos show Jim Regan addressing the group in his introduction of Ian Adair.





The Ladies Coffee Club.

Things are warming up and it's clear that Spring is almost upon us and this is the time of year when everything comes to life: flowers start blooming, eggs are hatching all around us and even those among us who may have hibernated for the Winter come out of their burrows, principally because they can move around again without the intense joint pain. And here is where we must admire those wonderful girls who have looked after us for so long, and stood by us, making sure we have taken our medicines and kept in mind which bins should be put out on which days. We can only admire them for the care they provide while still remaining as groomed and as well dressed as ever. How boring life would be without them. And we must continue to admire their efforts, bearing in mind that age affects them too – even if we don't notice it. We must always appreciate their efforts and acknowledge their special talents.

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. And there have been changes in the way the site is accessed. The connection may be made as follows:

www.retiredpolice.com.au

Then click on "Member Hub" seen in the centre of the screen. Then click on "Branches" and then on "NSW North". But move your mouse a little further left and you will see the words "Central Coast". Click on that heading and the Central Coast web site will be reached. Apart from messages advising of up-coming events, the latest Newsletters can also be seen on the site.

THE CALENDAR.

26th August, 2026. Mixed lunch at The Lakes Hotel, The Entrance.

15th September, 2026. Sausage sizzle at the Valley Tavern, Niagara Park.

20th October, 2026. General Meeting at the Ourimbah RSL Club, Ourimbah.

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

25th November, 2026. Christmas lunch, at the Royal Hotel, Wyong.

15th December, 2026. General Meeting at the Ourimbah RSL Club, Ourimbah.

19th January, 2027. Sausage sizzle at the Valley Tavern, Niagara Park.

And what does the future hold.

Isn't it wonderful to be in Australia. An isolated landform, surrounded by water, where none of the inhabitants want to take over their neighbours' territory. We can only feel sad for the devastation being suffered in other far off lands. And here on the Central Coast, we may freely divide our attention between the ocean and the lakes, in many cases just on the other side of the road. We must be grateful for what we have, what we have achieved, either individually or in group formation, and acknowledge the outstanding features of the planet. Many things are changing. We are told this is the result of climate change and whether this is due to the use of fossil fuels or some other feature of the universe, we will probably never know in our life time. But we must consider those who come after us and, whilst we are here, we must direct our attention and energy to their health and security. As individuals our powers to help are limited, if not non-existent. So, care for those who are near to us and just hope that some feature of the future will change the course of world events for the better.

With best wishes to everyone.

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