

Presidents Report to The Thames and Districts RSA AGM

On Sunday 20th January 2019

Good afternoon to all and thank you for attending this AGM. The year 2017/2018 has been a very up and down year for us, with illness, members leaving the district, and a very heavy workload.

At last years AGM we were asked to look at the possibilities of relocating from TWMC to The Thames Bowling Club. I commenced discussions with the Bowling Club shortly after our AGM, but sadly to report that despite several meetings and many phone calls, just prior to ANZAC Day 2018, we received a message that basically put us right back to the beginning. During my discussions with them, I came to realise that we might very well be getting into an out of the frying pan into the fire situation and I reported back to the RSA committee as much. The negotiations, whilst we tried to keep them under wraps, this is Thames, and soon all and sundry were aware. The Executive at TWMC had changed, and so had the attitude, and after meeting with Graeme Parsons, the new President, it became very much apparent that the future with TWMC was much brighter, and has proven to be so. So, we are still here, and I think for all its faults and issues it is probably the best place for us.

Financially our year was very solid as can be seen in the accounts, but there is only some hard work by various committee members and also the assistance of some members, particularly Kirsten and Misty. They are always there to help on ANZAC Day, and whenever we hold a market stall.

Our VP and welfare officer, Bob Williams, has had a very very hard year, with Billie's illness, and then his own accident, but despite this he has hung in as welfare officer and done a tremendous job. Thanks you sincerely Bob, and our wishes to Billie for a speedy and full recovery from this AGM.

We lost our first President, and latterly secretary, Mark Binning, who relocated to Ohakune where he and Fran took over management of Hobbit Motels and camping ground. Jim McDonald has stepped into the breach and acted as secretary when Mark left, we don't know how we would cope without you Jim.

Our relationship with 37Sqn continues to strengthen, as do their numbers under the new commanding Officer Pilot Officer Glenice. She has adapted well, and has attracted many new members, and we as an RSA must come up with ways that we can help make 37 Squadron continue to prosper. In April of last year, we took a mini bus load of cadets and adults to visit the rebuilding of the Mosquito at Ardmore, and to see a bare frame in production at Drury. We shouted them lunch, and all had a great day. This was specifically a thank you for ANZAC day. They are always in need of adult assistance, and if anyone feels that they may be able to assist on an ad hoc basis talk with Glenice. These young people are our future and we must look after them.

Poppy Day was another area of success, with our total collection exceeding \$7500, and our Trust Fund is in excellent shape. What we do need however, is for more people to take advantage of this fund that is there to help all ex-services, both regular and territorial, and their families. To this end we need to attract the more recently served personnel and have them involved in the RSA movement.

We have not done all we set out to do for the year due to all the circumstances that kept evolving, but the one thing that was achieved was the strengthening of our financial position, and this was most important.

It was my intention to stand down as President this to make way for new blood, as I am a firm believer in a term of 3 years being the most one should serve, and allow new ideas to be introduced. Unfortunately Bob Williams has asked to stand down as Vice

President, and it was intended that he take over as President, but his circumstances prohibit him from doing this. Therefore we need to rebuild, and I have been asked if I would continue for another year. I have given this considerable thought, and whilst it is my wish to stand down, to do so now may be very well detrimental, so I will, if elected, stay for a final year.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the committee members for their efforts, but I feel I have to make mention of Brian Connors, who with his lovely wife Diane, gave us the opportunities to become involved in Steampunk which resulted in considerable financial gain for this club.

I would once again like to thank you for your attendance, and we will continue to strive to make this club better in the future.

David Sinton

President