

**Te Atatu
Memorial
R.S.A.
Incorporated**

GOLDEN JUBILEE

1960

2010



Forward by.....

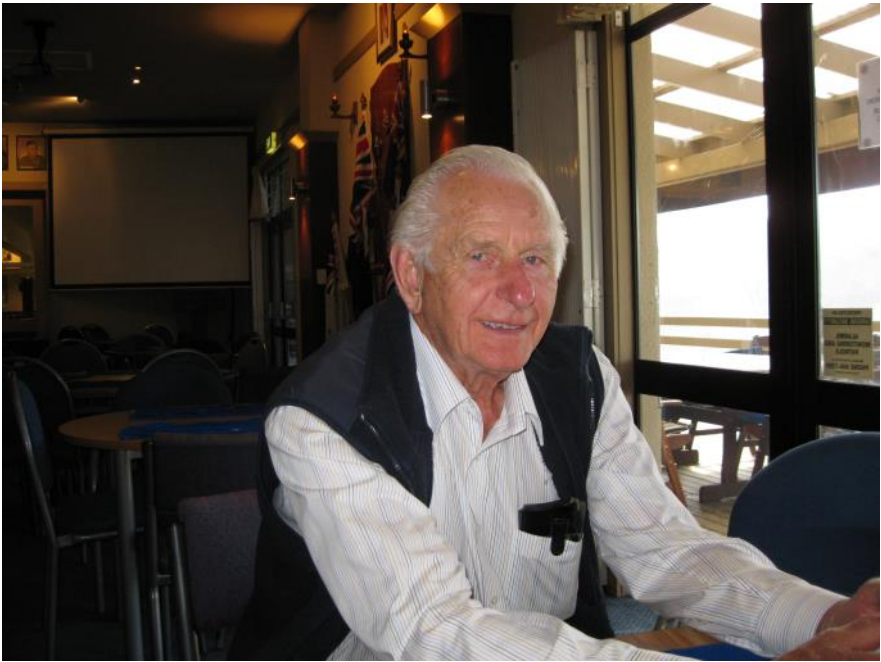
Peter Mason President



It is both a pleasure and honour being president in this 50th Jubilee year. The club would not be where it is today without the vision of our past members. We are very fortunate to have some of those founder members still with us today. We salute you all. We have seen many changes over these 50 years. It is hard to imagine how those founders managed to raise all the money to build our first clubrooms even having change left over. The club has become a major participant in the Te Atatu community and in another 50 years I am sure we will still be active in that role. I salute all our past and present members for achieving all our goals. Without your contribution the club would not be where it is today. Thank you all.

Peter Mason.

**Message from our Patron
David Cox MBE**



I suppose the one thing that continues to impress me is the visual appearance of the Clubrooms as one enters. Over the last 40 plus years, since the original oblong Clubroom was opened, there have been major extensions to that building along with considerable upgrades of the interior. Always, the premises have retained a bright, airy, light, restful and inviting appearance. Those who built the original Clubrooms, with voluntary labour, would be thrilled at what has been achieved since. Unfortunately, most have passed on and I offer those few words on their behalf. As Life Member and Patron of the Te Atatu Memorial R.S.A.

I can not help but feel a great sense of pride and satisfaction each time I enter its doors.

David Cox.



Introduction

Have you ever paused in the entranceway to the Te Atatu RSA club rooms to have a look at the coat stands on each side ? You are not to be blamed if you haven't. Most of the time they are draped in a variety of garments – scarves, coats, jackets, hats and umbrellas.

However once or twice a year these forgotten and abandoned wearables are passed over to the Union Church opshop or the Hospice across the road and there they are for all to see! These together with the carving in the middle of the beam above, are Maori Taonga with direct connection to the Maori Battalion.

Earlier this year (2010) The New Zealand Herald gave extensive coverage to the last big reunion of the WWII Maori Battalion held in Auckland. The article noted that when originally formed 70 years before, there were over 3,500 men. 600 were killed on active service and hundreds more injured.

Today there are scarcely 50 left. None of these are members of the Te Atatu RSA.

We lost ours many years back – that elegant gentleman Henry Hakaria, the be-ringed Mati Henare and Kara Te Ohaere – the carver of the above pieces - all long gone -

Ake Ake Kia Kaha E.



These diminishing numbers are typical and indicative of the fate of the many other fighting units, sea land and air, that all made such an awe inspiring contribution both overseas and in the defence of New Zealand. Together with the men and women who took part in subsequent campaigns, such as Malaya Korea and Vietnam, they are the members of the New Zealand Returned Services. These were the people who founded The Te Atatu Returned Services Association and built – bricks, mortar, heart and spirit the club which we all know affectionately as “The RAZA”.

The time that has passed since those beginnings in 1959 is sufficient to have thinned the ranks of our pioneers to the extent that there are scarcely two or three left to tell the tale. Memories have dulled and the “paper trail” if not lost, is now well eroded.

Well, such has been the fate of the Te Atatu Memorial RSA Inc. In fact if we had kept every scrap of paper and recorded every memory we would have needed a building the size of the Community Centre to store it all. What’s more, those earlier years of construction, growth, success, tradition and inspiration have to the largest extent been nurtured in the hands of volunteers, all contributing their individual skills and enthusiasm to a common goal – not much time left to record the history stuff.

This account is neither comprehensive nor detailed history of the Te Atatu R.S.A. and does not seek to make good such historical deficiency. That was never the intention.

It is first and foremost a commemoration of a celebration; **A celebration of the 50th Jubilee of the Te Atatu RSA.** It is a reminder to all the present members of this club about how it all came about. It is hoped thereby to promote a better understanding and appreciation as to what went into the provision of all the comfortable appointments and facilities that we all enjoy today and might otherwise take for granted – not only the bricks and mortar stuff or the dollars and cents; but also the spirit behind it all – the hopes, the dreams, the love, a home where comradeships forged in those now far off days of “blood, sweat and tears” might be preserved!

This is what was in the hearts and hands of these new settlers in this new Auckland suburb of Te Atatu –and in particular the men and women who did return from the decks of the Achilles, the trenches of North Africa, and Europe, Korea, Malaya, the islands of the Pacific, Vietnam, Cyprus the sea all around and the skies above.

The Te Atatu RSA is an association conceived and built by and for the members of the armed services who returned from conflicts overseas and the defence of New Zealand, seeking to rebuild their lives in 'civvy street'- yet at the same time creating a living practical memorial to what they had survived and those they had left behind. That is why being a memorial – people entering the club are required to remove their hats.

It is a moving significance that this Jubilee year of 2010 for the Te Atatu R.S.A is shared with the unveiling of memorials both in Belgium and Te Atatu to Flying Officer **Whelan F Hazard** who left Te Atatu in 1943 and didn't return from a bombing mission over Europe.



Flying Officer Whelan F Hazard

This story however is not a history of their wars. There is no intention or space to list every campaign in which our founders and members served. With few exceptions it is furthermore not intended to identify and list the names of all the members of this club who took some part over the years in its foundation and development. No attempt is made to assess or judge the relative merits of the many individuals who through the years have made contributions, great and small, to what we all continue to respect and enjoy today.

Before taking another step however let us all here and now acknowledge the women of the Te Atatu RSA. All of those who from the beginning provided an endless train of cups of tea and buttered scones and patience; giving life to the words of John Milton : *They also serve who only stand and wait.* They certainly did that and a lot more as well. This year they celebrate their 45th anniversary.



**Here they are - Not too sure about the “lady”
in the middle at the back . (Is it Mrs. Hall?)**

In the Beginning

Well, not really the beginning, for Te Atatu has a much longer history of settlement even before the arrival of the pakeha and Neil Housing. The modern settlement, the main focus of this booklet came with the new housing development in Te Atatu in the mid 20th century and the construction of the North West motorway across the mudflats of the western Waitemata harbour.

The French family, the Hazard family and others were established here well before that, suffering for many years the long way round discomfort and eccentricities of the ABC buses grinding up the Waikumete hill. Who knows, maybe the stress on the bladders of those early pioneers was a significant influence in the development of the concept of a local RSA. Nor should it be overlooked that at this time whilst there were widespread organised sporting interests like Rugby, League, Soccer, Cricket and Tennis etc for the younger ones, there was no general social facility for the slightly less active.

The first formal evidence of the concept is the minute of a meeting held on 31 August 1959 in Te Atatu advertised and called to investigate the possibilities of forming a Branch of Western Suburbs R.S.A. in this area. In addition to named officials and representatives from Henderson, New Lynn, Glen Eden and Waimauku the meeting was attended by *"a number of interested ex-servicemen of Te Atatu"*.



Fund Raising 1959

Next, a letter dated 19th October 1959 from Western Suburbs Returned Services Association addressed to:-

“The Pro Tem Chairman. Te Atatu Returned ex-Servicemens Meeting.....The question of your forming a Branch of this Association was placed before the half yearly meeting of this Association held at Henderson on the 9th October 1959. I have to advise you that it will be in order for you to go ahead for this purpose.... Rules to govern your Branch will be necessary,.....”

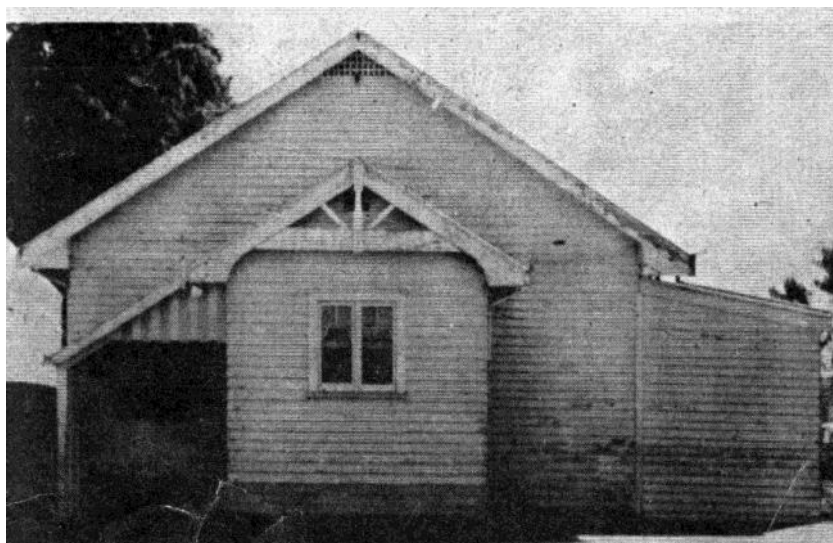
There you go then! It looks as though it then took the next eight months to get organised and to make up the rules and do all the other things that the Western Association required – nearly as long as it took the same jokers to build the first dedicated club rooms 9 years later. For the next item is a request for a news item to be placed in the Waitakere Gazette :

“Returned Servicemen in Te Atatu

A sub-branch of the R.S.A. has been formed in Te Atatu. Fortnightly social evenings will commence for members in the Tennis Pavilion, Te Atatu Rd., starting on Monday 4th July 1960 at 7.30p.m and hereafter every 1st and 3rd Monday of the month.

To make this a success the Committee desires the support of every Returned Serviceman in the Te Atatu area, so roll up and join up.”

The old Tennis Pavilion was at the back of the old Community Hall on the site of the Peninsula Medical Centre on Te Atatu Rd- now vacated.—Picture below-



Membership

The initial roll of returned men stood at 37 members. To our knowledge at the time of writing only three survivors remain from that list of originals – John Stubbing; Alastair Narbey; and Tom Hetherington. There may be others.

Two names stand out in this original 'band of brothers' that together represent, first the origin of the New Zealand R.S.A. movement and second the energy and enthusiasm that was put into its preservation. Both were veterans of the First World War.

Jack Grant otherwise known as Sgt J G Grant VC. Awarded the Victoria Cross for his outstanding conduct at Bancourt France September 1918. Look for his portrait and citation by the Honours Board. Read about him on the internet. - Yes, a - Foundation member of the Te Atatu RSA.

Arthur Thomas Foundation Treasurer – See his photo in the Life members gallery. Arthur was regarded as the Father of the Te Atatu RSA. Arthur Thomas is mentioned in Te Atatu history back as far as 1909. Zolene Houston recalls that within days of moving to Te Atatu Arthur was at her front door and would not leave until he had an assurance of Tom's joining up. Arthur was the tireless fund raiser whose inspiring enthusiasm was an important feature of those early days. That was in addition to entertaining the Houston family with a vivid demonstration of his boxing skills of earlier years.



Arthur Thomas



Jack Grant VC

One further name stands out from the ranks of our early members that more than merits mention. That is **David Cox MBE** , maxima cum laude (with great praise), our current Patron. Looks equally good with spade or mike in hand. Dave enjoys an outstanding record of achievement from when he joined the Te Atatu RSA to his becoming our Patron including a long spell as National President of the NZRSA..

From that start in 1960 membership grew steadily. By 1972 it had reached 198. (This included 22 “Honorary members”). 1965 saw the formal creation of our Women’s section.

By the mid 80’s membership was around the 400 mark. The 1991 yearbook records 316 Returned and Service members and 140 Associate members.

In 1997 there were 262 Returned and Service members and 251 Associates. At this time more detailed statistics were revealing an alarming and sad picture both local and national. The number of Returned and Service members was declining. The law under which our association existed required associate membership to be always a minority. Therefore theoretically at least, whenever a reduction in the number of servicemen occurred, associate membership had to be reduced proportionately. The waiting list for new associate memberships was getting alarmingly long.

This critical impact upon the survival of associations was widespread throughout the country. Other social, economic and political factors influenced this ‘sea-change’ in addition to a decline in traditional sources of new member recruitment and sad but inevitable attrition of existing membership. The existing membership recognised the need to encourage growth in numbers yet at the same time to maintain and preserve the RSA identity and culture. In 1998 the Te Atatu members carried through constitutional amendments that afforded the club “Memorial” status. This freed the club from tight controls over membership status and numbers. In 1998 membership reached the 600 mark—in 2002 it was close to 900.

This action and the increased popularity following the millennium renovations had a dramatic effect with membership now standing at a total of 1191. This includes 248 service members (The definition of ‘service’ has in recent times been changed to recognise a wider range of qualifying service) **yet only 146 returned members**. The numbers of our returned members continue to decline.

It is this factor more than any other that demonstrates how important it is for the RSA culture itself not to be diminished in any way.

TE ATATU RSA SNAPSHOTS



"Old soldiers never die"



The Quarterdeck



Relaxing in the Tom Houston Sports Bar



Santa comes to the RAZA Kids' Party



"Any old iron" - Veterans' Party



President Pete hands cheques to The Arthritis Foundation, Barnardos, and Salvation Army (absent) Proceeds of Christmas Fund raising



The Lounge



Future Swimming star Jackie Young sponsored by TAT RSA



Winners of Jack Howarth '8'Ball' Trophy



←. Youth council rep Phil Curtis with Brook Pickering member of The Roosters under 8's Rugby League Team sponsored by our club.

Not a Somali Coast Pirate →
It's Dora Hookham AARRR
(WWII Returned Servicewoman)



We owe that to the spirit in which this club has been built up over these last 50 years, the blokes that did the hard yakka of original fund raising and the concrete they poured – the dream they cherished as they did it all, and the sacred memory of those that did not get back.

We Will Remember Them. We will continue to remember them with pride and gratitude.

Clubrooms and Activities

The growth in membership was the obvious main influence upon space; not only the numbers but also the demand for greater variety in choice of activities. Early meetings in the relatively cramped old tennis pavilion overflowed into the old Community Centre facing on to the main road. Here in those early days table tennis was fiercely contested. Everybody played table tennis then. Next was indoor bowls – only one mat! Space was at a premium. It's interesting to note that neither activity is played by today's members.

Confidence and enthusiasm was such that by early 1969 the Waitemata County Council had approved a request for a site for a dedicated club building on land designated for a new Community Centre.

Before the end of that year the first section of our club building had been completed and officially opened. A liquor licence was granted in 1972 thus ending the antiquated locker system that had sufficed till then.





The 1969 Building Boom

The 80's saw further building and the emergence of the separate Bowling Club. This came about largely because of the need to maximise membership of bowlers against contrary restraints upon associate membership of the RSA itself and restrictions imposed by liquor licensing law.

The Millennium

A major refurbishment commenced in 1999 included the absorption into the R.S.A of the area of the building that had to then been occupied by the Bowlers. The addition of our dining Room followed a couple of years later.

In 2001 another significant step was taken when the members voted unanimously to put the day to day management of the club into professional hands. The immediate impact of this move was a significant restructuring of the Bar operation. More dynamic management became necessary through increased and more stringent requirements of both central government and local body in gaming machine management and control, liquor licensing, general hygiene, health and safety and catering management. General administration of the club had to change up a few notches.

Club Sports and Pastimes

Table tennis has now disappeared. Bowling mats are still laid out on Senior Citizen days. Over the years cricket has been played as a Te Atatu RSA team. We've had teams in the Annual Round the Bays Run. Golf runs 'hot' at the moment.

Darts, snooker and '8'Ball remain the most popular inhouse sporting activities in the club. Any and all club members have open access to join in and have a go at these facilities. They are free to enjoy a game and play at their own comfortable levels of skill.

'Specialist' sections carry the interest higher. It is from these, that competitions are organised and teams selected to compete in local leagues against other clubs. These sections also care for the equipment.

'8' Ball teams travel away to play against other clubs all over Auckland, and even further afield such as Northland and Bay of Plenty.

Snooker is played to high levels of skill to the extent that Te Atatu players have enjoyed considerable success in national competitions. Similar success is enjoyed at darts. Teams travelling to take part in these competitions are supported by the Club to help with travel and accommodation expenses.

Any club member may join in the 'inhouse' competitions held for a wide range of trophies that are played for within the club throughout the year. These trophies have been donated by distinguished members of the club or their families over the years.

For the less active cards come out occasionally for a round of 500 or Euchre. For the less competitive minded the dining room is home to an extensive library that has been built up over the years from books donated by members. Whilst substantially of a military nature the library also includes other topics. Access is available to all members.

Of course others may choose to just sit back relax and enjoy the company of their friends, surveying the passing scene of life in the lounge or the Tom Houston Sports bar. Both are serviced by a quality bar facility.

The restaurant offers an extensive menu. Children accompanied and controlled by parents are welcome in the lounge and dining room.

A wide sheltered verandah is for the enjoyment of all and a comfortable vantage point to watch evening bowling competitions.

'Wall to wall' Television on the big screen in the comfort of the lounge is on for the top line popular sporting events.

Friday night dances with quality bands are still hanging in there albeit occasionally punctuated by the odd Karaoke competition.

Mid week "Triv" quizzes attract support from 'The more cerebral'.

Welfare

The motto of the N.Z.R.S.A. is "People helping people". The Te Atatu Memorial RSA has maintained a very active profile in helping to meet the welfare needs of its members. Full regard is taken in meeting traditional RSA obligations for the needs of its elderly returned members.

Money collected on Poppy Days continues to be used exclusively for welfare connected with returned service people. Public support is very generous in this regard.

Te Atatu RSA and the Community

The culture of the Te Atatu Memorial RSA is outward looking. Pride is justifiably taken in the club's active commitment to the national motto of "People Helping People" and its active status in the local community. The club has an ongoing record of financial support to a wide range of worthy local causes, which has worked substantially to enhance the external image of the club. Early history records our financial support for youth to attend Outward Bound Courses and Charm courses.

Support of youth activities continues to a major extent. We sponsor exchange visits with Australian RSL youth groups. Participants are selected from children and grandchildren of members. Youth sports groups, army cadets, local school and kindergarten projects in the area enjoy financial support from the Te Atatu RSA. We sponsor and fund scholarships at Rutherford College. We regularly support the local Food Bank, and organisations such as the Arthritis Foundation, Barnardos and the Salvation Army. Some \$15,000 has been donated to these causes in the first nine months of this current financial year.

Donations are made from Gaming machine proceeds, profits from other club activities and straight out fund raising such as the Christmas Raffles. The Women's section is also very active in this area. Our members are collectively very generous in their support of all these enterprises.

The Te Atatu Memorial RSA Today and the future

At the official re-opening of the Club following the 2000 renovations, an informed observation was made by the National President of the RNZRSA to the effect that in order to survive, Clubs like ours needed to continue to grow, and needed programmes designed to continue to hold the interest of its members.

Over the following period, the Club attracted a very high and continuing level of approval for its presentation management and general ambience.

Applications for new memberships continue. It may be deduced from this that the club in its continuing presentation remains attractive to a very wide cross section of people with a wide variety of interests.

The membership profile of the club, and the services and attractions that members demand have changed over the years of its history. Personal drinking habits, and liquor licensing laws—especially late closing and "Host responsibilities", the provision of dining facilities required, together with other furniture and comforts, the introduction of the "Pokies", Drink/Driving Enforcement are all powerful influences.

Wider variety in entertainment options, the increased choices and opportunities arising from modern television sports broadcasts have all contributed. The Club has to date kept up with all these influences.

Membership of the Te Atatu Memorial RSA is a privilege. It is also a responsibility. The enjoyment of the privileges and facilities that it offers demands the responsibility of all members and their guests to respect the standards and rules that are in place for this very purpose.

ANZAC Day, Tradition, Culture, and Respect

In the early days the Te Atatu ex servicemen joined together with other Western Branches to parade at the Waikumete Cemetery to commemorate ANZAC Day.

With the opening of the new community Centre in Te Atatu a local parade was organised – complete with band, cadets and other support groups marching off from further down Te Atatu Road for a service held at the Community Centre itself.

The ever increasing popularity of this event is graphically illustrated by the people lining the street for the march and crowding into the Community centre for the service. The participation by groups from the active armed services, the Police, Fire Brigade, Scouts, Guides, Cubs and Brownies is very warming. The march has shortened over the years in deference to condemnation of the years and frailer step. Yet numbers taking part in the march do not seem to diminish.

This event with the function that follows in the RSA clubrooms remains a significant reminder of what it is all about.

The New Zealand Flag continues to be raised and lowered at the Club every day, together with the live recital of the Ode at 6pm. At this time all people in the Club stand, and lights are dimmed in respect of those who shall not grow old.

The memorabilia around the club room walls surrounding us is a constant reminder as to where we are and where we came from.

DBG

Acknowledgements for their memories :	Zolene Houston,
	Alastair Narbey
	Dave Cox.

ANZAC DAYS IN TE ATATU



OFFICERS OF THE ASSOCIATION

PRESIDENT

1958-59 J. ROWE
60 D. BRADFORD
61-62 J. WILKINSON
63 W. BRIDEN
64-66 E. PROBERT
QSM
67-69 I. D. COX MBE
70-72 E. HOWARTH
73 J. HARVEY
74 E. PROBERT
QSM
75-79 E. HOWARTH
80-86 T. A. HOUSTON
86-87 E. HOWARTH
87-88 T. A. HOUSTON
88-91 E. W. SMITH
91-98 C. T. BEER
98-06 I. M. GIBSON
MNZM
2006- P. MASON

SECRETARY

1958-59 C.G.MATTHEWS
59-60 W.R.NICHOLLS
61-70 A.NARBAY
71-72 C.KRUSE
73-75 N.SUMNER
76-77 A.STEVENS
78-80 K.MATTHEWS
(Sec / Treasurer)
80 R.G.OAKDEN
80-88 A.NARBAY
88-93 R.P.MANUEL
93-02 R.C.WOOD
*2002-04 P.L.PAGE
*04-08 K.CHAMBERLAIN
*08-09 P.McKECHNIE
*10- S. ENGER

TREASURER

1959-63 A.THOMAS
64 R.HOLBROOK
65 J.McDONALD
66-68 W.JARMAN
69-70 G.COCKSHOT
71-72 C.SANDS
73 M.JAMIESON
74 N.HISLOP
75-77 M.JAMIESON
78 K.MATTHEWS
80 N.HISLOP
80-84 M.JAMIESON
85-90
C.C.MacDONALD
90-91 M.BAUGHEN
91-97 C.R.ADAMS
97-05 D.B.GILLAM
QSM JP
2005-07 M.D.HORTON
07-08 R.W.TIPLADY
08 E.GRIMMER
MNZM
08- R.C.WOOD

***Secretary / Manager**

Te Atatu RSA Honours

Gold Star	I D Cox M.B.E A R Narbey T A Houston E Howarth C C MacDonald E E S Probert QSM	Gold Badge	E E S Probert QSM E Howarth T A Houston A R Narbey C C MacDonald M A Jamieson
"M" Badge	I D Cox M.B.E E Howarth T A Houston A R Narbey M A Jamieson E E S Probert QSM A L Mullins C T Beer		
Life Members	Arthur Thomas Mick Savage Wally Jarman Ernie Probert Bill Ford Steve Stevens Len French Paul Martin Denny Shields Ray Bariow Les Mullins Maurie Jamieson	Jack Drabble Alastair Narbey David Cox Jack Howarth Tom Houston Ernie Smith Neville Hislop Bill Vincent Shorty Adams Ces Beer Ian Gibson Bill Wright Dave Kennedy	
Honorary Life Members	Thelma Howarth Pat Probert David Gillam QSM	Roly Smith Kevin Lyons Bob Wood	Ian Henry John Newberry Lorna Adams

