



Presidents Report - 2008-2009

Another year has come and gone, Pete Smith after some 19 years of involvement with the Association has decided he needs to slow down a little and decided to hand over the reins to a more than able replacement in Norm Williams. I would take this opportunity to thank Pete (and Murray) for the time and effort they have generously donated to the SAA. Pete's not completely out of the picture he remains actively involved in the "historical" and sometimes "hysterical" side of the Association.

There have also been some changes at Branch level and for all those charged with the "responsibility" at branch level, I thank you for your continued effort.

This year has been a relatively quiet year, it did however see more and more of our membership embark on that "Eternal Patrol". For those who have lost their loved ones you have mine, and I'm sure all the Members of the Association's, sincere condolences.

This year did see some significant publicity for submarines in general, the announcement of 12 new submarines to be built by ASC to replace the Collins. The expedition to find AE1 and the continued "promotion" of AE2 and the not insignificant part she and her crew played in the Gallipoli campaign.

Membership

We continue to gain new Members and this is a good sign for the future of the association. However, the number not renewing each year is a cause for concern. Our current membership is almost 900.

HMAS Platypus

She is still there, no change although looking the worse for the neglect. There is a significant amount of work and money required before "Plats" can be used however there is a "buzz" that there may be an announcement in the May Budget regarding funding for the rehabilitation of the site. This being the case we may still find a site for the "Generals" anchor.

AE2

As previously stated, the campaign continues. I had the privilege recently, to attend the unveiling of the first of several "memorials" to the AE2, her crew and the remarkable achievements made in the early days of the Gallipoli Campaign.

The site could not have been better, located; on "G1" adjacent to the wharf and the Heritage Museum it overlooks the most picturesque harbour in the world. The "stone" depicts the story and I would encourage anyone who has an opportunity to visit G1 to stop for a moment and "absorb" the history of the AE2.

Incorporation

We have not managed to have the SAA incorporated. Not that significant effort has not be provided to the task but more to do with the structure of the States and their relationship with the Commonwealth. There is however no simple solution, legal opinion obtained on the matter has recommended that the option available to the SAA to gain legal recognition and protection is to become a Company by limited guarantee. Some outstanding items are “on-hold” as they require the issue of Incorporation to be resolved.

Kindred Associations

Our affiliation with the Naval Association Australia has been formalised, advice that our application was approved in April has been received. Our relationship with the RSL remains strong and it is hoped that we can expand our relationships with other organisations in the future.

Health and Welfare

Thanks to the “Advocates” for the support they provide our Members, the demand on their services increase as our membership ages. This is one of the major Objectives of the Association and it is hoped that this important role is maintained into the future.

Finally, to Max, JR, Norm and the National Committee, in fact to **ALL** those involved in the SAA, my sincere thanks for the assistance and advice provided over the past 12 months.

BZ

Dave (Sandy) Sandquest