



CESSNOCK



RSL SUB-BRANCH NEWSLETTER

Contents

Handy Phone Numbers	2
Sub-Branch News	3
RSL NSW News	5
HVDC News	5
Individual Highlights	
Historical Feature	9-11
Jokes Page	7-8
Sponsors Page	6
Sub-Branch Executive	16

HANDY TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Department of Honours and Awards	1800 11 321
ANZAC HOUSE	(02)9264 8188
RSL Defence Care	(02)80880388
Department of Veteran Affairs	1800 555 254
Home Care (Cessnock)	(02)40304706
Cessnock Council Community Services	49907247
DVA Home Care Services	1300 550 450
Royal District Nursing Service	1300 665 444
HACC Community Care Access Point	1300 731 556
Hearing Services Australia	131 797
National Hearing Care Cessnock	(02)9091 8613
Cessnock Police	(02)49910199
Cessnock City Council	(02)49934100
VVCS- Counselling Service	1800 011 046
Cessnock Hospital	4991 0555
Cessnock Taxi Service	4990 1111
EMERGENCY SERVICES	000
RSL Hall	4991 4141

SUB-BRANCH NEWS

DIRECTIVE FROM RSL NSW

Dear Honorary Secretary,

A letter addressed to all RSL NSW members has been received from the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission (ACNC), in response to RSL NSW annual reporting against its [Enforceable Undertaking obligations](#). Please click on [this link](#) to read the letter.

The RSL NSW Board of Directors request that sub-Branch Presidents brief *all* members on the letter and confirm to their respective District Council by 15 March 2021 that this has been completed.

The letter draws attention to sub-Branch obligations as a charity and suggests some reading and other materials to support compliance. The RSL NSW Board is very aware of the onerous compliance requirements of the ACNC and NSW Fundraising Acts and therefore, under the 'umbrella' of the Strategic Plan, intends to ensure all sub-Branch executives receive appropriate support and assistance in discharging their responsibilities.

THE LETTER IS REPRODUCED BELOW

A Message to Members of RSL New South Wales from the Australian Charities and Notfor-Profits Commission To the Board and members of RSL NSW

3

The ACNC has received the first Annual Report from RSL NSW with reporting against its obligations arising from the Enforceable Undertaking the ACNC issued as a consequence of the Bergin Inquiry and its concurrent investigation. I understand a copy of this report is on the RSL NSW website, and I welcome this transparency. The enforceable undertaking is due to conclude in May 2021 subject to all clauses being fulfilled. While the report specifically examines the compliance of RSL NSW state branch, there are many sub-branches, which the ACNC has not reviewed. Each sub-branch is a charity in its own right and therefore must meet the ACNC's governance standards to remain registered as a charity. I am aware that all members of the RSL in NSW are members of the RSL NSW state branch but allocated to a sub-branch. To support the furtherance of good governance and compliance across all sub-branches, the ACNC has resources published under the banner 'Forward Together: RSLs and the ACNC'. I encourage members to look at these materials, which can be accessed at www.acnc.gov.au/rsl. The resources include specific webpages and podcasts tailored for RSLs. Some priority areas for members to consider are:

- Managing conflicts of interest, including between licensed clubs and sub-branches as registered charities
- Ensuring that charitable funds are directed to the sub-branch's charitable purpose
- Lodging each sub-branch's Annual Information Statement with the ACNC within six months of the end of its financial year. Due to the impacts of COVID-19, reporting for 2018-19 was extended to 31 August 2020. In particular, RSL NSW has asked the ACNC to provide information about the spending of charitable funds for members' benefit, such as the payment of their annual subscription (membership) fee or to fund activities. This situation is not straight forward, but in principle the sub-branches and state office need to ensure they are spending funds in line with their charitable purpose. Some important considerations include:

- Being a member of a charity does not entitle someone to obtain a direct financial or nonfinancial benefit from the charity. In fact, members and/or those managing charities obtaining a private benefit from a charity can be a key governance concern. We provide guidance on members of charities obtaining private benefits on our website.
- It is possible that a member of a charity may also be a beneficiary of the charity. In this instance it may be appropriate for a charity to provide support.
- Charities have competing priorities for their funds and need to make effective decisions at the program and individual levels to maximise the support they provide to their beneficiaries from available funds. The ACNC expects charities to make these decisions in line with their charitable purpose, that the decisions are transparent and that the charity documents how the decisions are made. If not, then a charity may not meet the requirements of governance standard five. RSL NSW members can continue to support the good governance of charities by asking questions of those responsible for running the charities to ensure they meet their obligations to maintain charity registration.

Gary Johns Commissioner

Sub-Branch Meetings

Sub-Branch meetings have recommenced from the 2nd February 2021 at the normal time. With the Social Distancing, COVID Safe plan and the 4 Square metre rule in place, the capacity of the hall is restricted to 23 people which does not impact on the number of members who normally attend Sub-Branch meetings.

28 January 2021

(Circular 2/21)

Dear Honorary Secretary

I appreciate that our members and local communities are anxious to understand how ANZAC Day commemorations will take place this year, and when sub-Branches should commence planning.

Due to COVID-19 and using Christmas 2020 as an example we know that the best-made plans can change very quickly, and at this point, it would be premature for me to give you a formal direction about how to approach planning commemorations and informing your community.

I am working with the NSW Government, NSW Police, and NSW Health to determine a COVID-safe approach to state-wide commemorations and I expect that I will soon be able to provide sound advice on how sub-Branches should proceed.

I can assure you that I am doing everything possible to ensure that I provide timely advice to sub-Branches with sufficient notice to plan commemorations.

Please share this information with members at your next sub-Branch meeting.

Jeff O'Brien

GM Member Services & State Secretary

THE CESSNOCK SUB-BRANCH OPEN DAY 2021

The Sub-Branch annual Open Day will be held on the Weekend of 17th/18th April. There will be an extensive Military memorabilia Display, Welfare and Pension Advocates on site, a community BBQ and more.



RSL NSW NEWS

The Annual Congress and AGM for 2020 was held as a virtual congress on the 7th December 2020. Only 1 delegate from each sub-branch was able to attend. A full report and video of the virtual congress can be seen on the RSL NSW website.

THE PRICE OF LIBERTY IS ETERNAL VIGILANCE.

RSL National News

No news from RSL
National this issue

Hunter Valley District Council

No District Council news in this issue,

OUR SUB-BRANCH SPONSORS

The Businesses/Individuals on these pages are the sponsor supporters of our Sub-Branch. Their continued support is very important to the continued successful operation of our Sub-Branch. Please support them as they support us.



Bryce Gibson

Selling Principal
0422 227 668

Since starting in Real estate at the tender age of 16, Bryce has dedicated his whole real estate career to helping his many clients and customers achieve their real estate dreams.

Bryce is the Selling Principal of LJ Hooker Cessnock and leads an experienced, skilled and dedicated team to ensure your level of service is second to none.

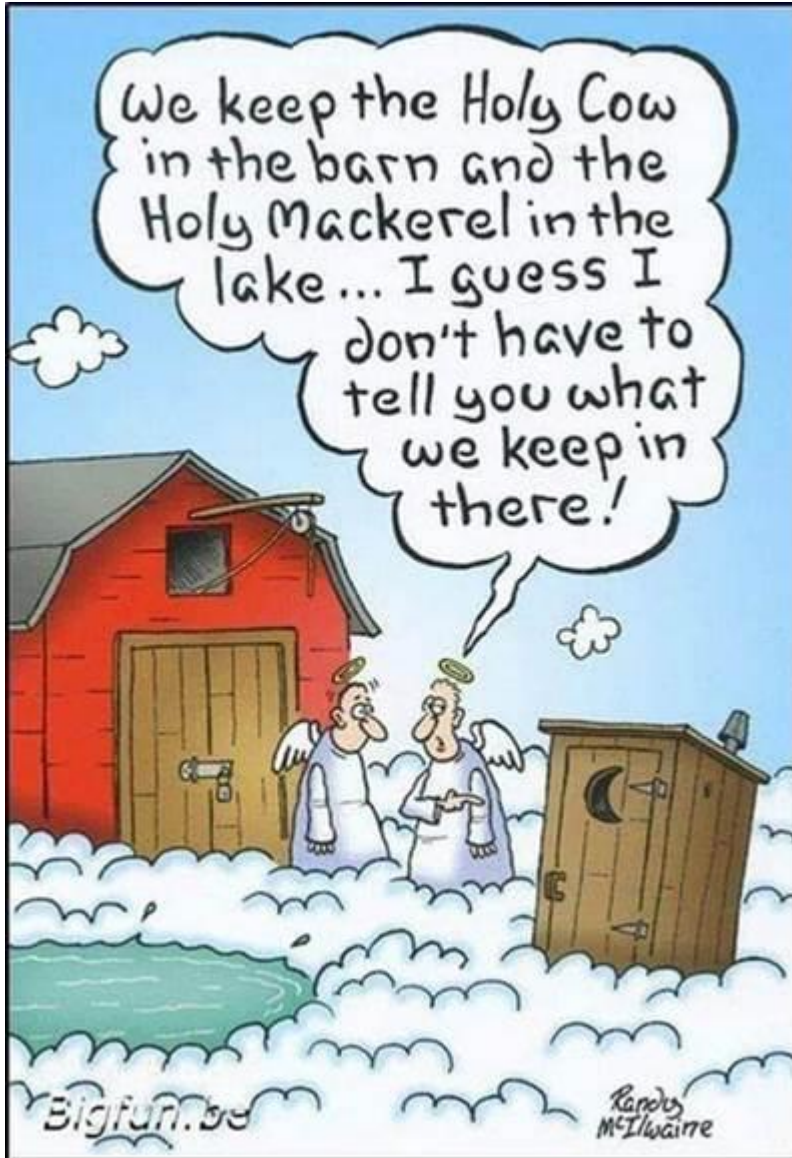
Bryce has many qualifications including being a Licensed Real Estate Agent, a Licensed Stock & Station Agent, a Licensed Business Agent, a Licensed Strata Managing Agent and Licensed Auctioneer, Certified Practising Valuer.



SOMETHING TO LIGHTEN YOUR DAY

Bars are re-opening,
but crowds are smaller
than expected.





HISTORICAL FEATURE

(Downloaded from Wikipedia and the Australian War Memorial)

Rawdon Hume "Ron" Middleton, VC (22 July 1916 – 29 November 1942) was a bomber pilot in the [Royal Australian Air Force](#) and a posthumous recipient of the [Victoria Cross](#), the highest award for gallantry in the face of the enemy that can be awarded to British and [Commonwealth](#) forces.



Contents

Early life^{[[edit](#)]}



Middleton (far right) and classmates from No. 7 [Empire Air Training Scheme](#) course at No. 5 Elementary Flying Training School [Narromine](#) posing in front of a [Tiger Moth](#) in 1940.^[1]

Middleton was born on 22 July 1916 in Waverley, [Sydney](#) at Nurse Nettleton's Private Hospital.^[2] His younger brother, Osman (a Middleton family name), was born in 1918. His parents had married in 1914.^[3] His mother was Faith Lillian (born Millar) and his father Francis Rawdon Middleton, known as Frank, who had been raised at [Burrowa](#).^[4] Rawdon Middleton's maternal grandmother, Jessie Huon Middleton, née Hume, was the niece of the colonial explorer, [Hamilton Hume](#). Rawdon Middleton spent the main part of his early years in the Central Western districts of [New South Wales](#) where his father was employed managing farming properties.

His father, known as Frank, was working at Muswellbrook in 1914.^[5] At some time after his marriage Frank was managing "Warrah" station on the Liverpool Plains of NSW, where in 1920 he was on the Warrah Cricket Association committee.^[6] Ron Middleton was a young child on 'Warrah', a very large pastoral property owned by the Australian Agricultural Company and had its own school. FR Middleton left 'Warrah' when Ron was aged 7&1/2 years.^[7] The family then moved to 'Kelvin Grove', a smaller farming property near Wallerawang in the Lithgow area.^[8] In 1927 Frank Middleton took up the position of station manager on 'Alloway' at Gilgandra for its new owner Mr Geoffrey Mosse of Darling Point, Sydney.

Ron lived on 'Alloway' from the age of 9. He and his brother initially attended the one-teacher Buramilong school on a nearby property and then attended Gilgandra school for his Intermediate Certificate 1930–1932. The optional Leaving Certificate was not provided at the Gilgandra school at that time, so when Ron reached that stage of his schooling he boarded in 1933–34 in Dubbo, 40 miles away, to complete his final two years of high school. At Dubbo High School a memorial trust in his name has been operating for many years. He was an athletic young man who competed regularly as a teenager in Gilgandra tennis competitions, played for the Gilgandra district's Berida cricket team and excelled in cricket and rugby football at school.^[9] He represented Dubbo High for tennis in the Astley Cup. The family left 'Alloway' in September 1934.^[10] They moved to "Sunnyside", Kentucky, near Uralla (Tamworth area) where Frank was again the station manager.^[11]

The family moved once more to Leewang station near Parkes where Frank was again the station manager. Ron Middleton joined his father here, working as a [jackaroo](#). He was working on that property at the time of his enlistment.

He enlisted in the [Royal Australian Air Force](#) on 14 October 1940, and trained as a pilot in the [Empire Air Training Scheme](#). He undertook initial flying training at No. 5 Elementary Flying Training School (5 EFTS) [Narromine](#), and advanced training in Canada. In February 1942 he joined [No. 149 Squadron](#) of the [Royal Air Force](#), flying as second pilot on [Short Stirling](#) bombers. By July of that year he was appointed as an aircraft captain, and flew his first raid as a pilot-in-command against [Düsseldorf](#).^[12]

Victoria Cross action^[edit]

On 28 November 1942, Middleton was captain of [Stirling](#) BF372^[13] detailed to bomb the [Fiat](#) aircraft works at [Turin](#). It was his twenty-ninth combat sortie, one short of the thirty required for completion of a 'tour' and mandatory rotation off combat operations.

Middleton and his crew arrived above Turin after a difficult flight over the [Alps](#), due to the low combat ceiling of the "bombed-up" and "fueled-up" Stirling (due to its short stubby wings, designed to keep all up weight down, but of little use at high altitudes). Over the target area Middleton had to make three low-level passes in order to positively identify the target; on the third, the aircraft was hit by heavy [anti-aircraft](#) fire which wounded both pilots and the wireless operator. Middleton suffered numerous grievous wounds, including [shrapnel](#) wounds to the arms, legs and body, having his right eye torn from its socket and his jaw shattered.



Middleton's grave in Beck Row, Suffolk.

He passed out briefly, and his second pilot, Flight Sergeant L.A. Hyder, who was also seriously wounded, managed to regain control of the plunging plane at 800 feet and drop the bombs, before receiving first aid from the other crew. Middleton regained consciousness in time to help recover control of his stricken bomber. Middleton was in great pain, was barely able to see, was losing blood from wounds all over his body, and could breathe only with difficulty. He must have known that his own chances of survival were slim, but he nonetheless determined to fly his crippled aircraft home, and return his crew to safety. During the return flight he frequently said over the intercom "I'll make the English Coast. I'll get you home".^[14] After four hours of agony and having been further damaged

by [flak](#) over France, Middleton reached the coast of England with five minutes of fuel reserves. At this point he turned the aircraft parallel to the coast and ordered his crew to bail out. Five of his crew did so and landed safely, but his front gunner and flight engineer remained with him to try to talk him into a forced landing on the coast, something he must have known would have risked extensive civilian casualties. He steered the aircraft out over the sea, off [Dymchurch](#), and ordered the last two crew to bail out. They then too bailed out, but did not survive the night in the [English Channel](#). Middleton stayed with the aircraft, which crashed into the Channel. His body was washed ashore on 1 February 1943.

The last line of his Victoria Cross citation reads: "His devotion to duty in the face of overwhelming odds is unsurpassed in the annals of the Royal Air Force".^[15]

Middleton was posthumously promoted to [pilot officer](#), and is buried at Beck Row, [Mildenhall], [Suffolk](#). His Victoria Cross and uniform are displayed at the [Australian War Memorial](#) in [Canberra](#).

Pilot Officers George Royde (navigator) and Norman Skinner (wireless operator) were awarded the [Distinguished Flying Cross](#), while Flight Sergeant Leslie Hyder (2nd pilot), Flight Sergeant Douglas Cameron (mid-upper gunner) and Sergeant H.W. Gough (rear gunner) each received the [Distinguished Flying Medal](#).^[16] Coincidentally, Cameron (as a [flying officer](#)) would be a member of Squadron Leader [Ian Willoughby Bazalgette](#)'s crew when the Canadian would be awarded a posthumous Victoria Cross in 1944.^[17]

Legacy^[edit]

Middleton has been honoured by the naming of the "Middleton VC Club" at 1 RAAF Recruit Training Unit, [RAAF Base Wagga](#).

He was on one of 1995 Australia Remembers 45c stamps.

The dining hall located at [RAF Mildenhall](#) in Suffolk is named after Middleton.

In Parkes NSW, there is a street named after Middleton and a School that is on Medlyn St is named Middleton Public School.

In Gilgandra NSW, the road that leads to the local Aerodrome there is named in Middletons's honour; Middleton Memorial Drive



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Welfare:

Pensions:

12

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