

Minutes of the **Annual General Meeting** of the Rats of Tobruk WA Remembrance Association Inc., held on **Sunday, 19th October, 2025** at RAAFA Estate, Bullcreek.

Meeting opened at 13:40 by Anne LeFevre, Chairperson

Present: Anne LeFevre, Veronica & Robert Stratton, Glenda Wellman, Heather Davis, Margot Martin, David & Leona Ure, Ron & Lyn Mitchell, Brian Jenkins, Kim Sarti, Ross Woods, Deb Dickman, Jeanette Mateja, Kevin & Denise Scott, Sue Edwards, Michelle Muir, Lauren Dawson, Jenny Le-Fevre, Pam Neesham, Jacqui Le-Fevre, Julie Le-Fevre, Pauline Basso, Mel & Dianne Smales, Steve Wilson, Daryl Binning, Colin Watts, Steve Wenban (Guest Speaker).

Apologies: Rick France, Jodie Charlton, Linda Veness, Harold Copock, Jenny Kohlen, Peter & James Wellman.

Anne LeFevre welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Steven Wenban, our Guest Speaker.

Steve is not a RAT or a descendant but an avid amateur Military Historian. He is a Merchant Ships Master.

Steve gave a brilliant talk on the Siege of Tobruk, including where the war was militarily in the lead up to the Siege. His talk was well researched, very comprehensive, came with a power point with great photos and he also focused on some personal stories of RATS which really touched our hearts, as well as his own.

Steve quoted Erwin Rommel which really epitomized our men – *“If I had to take Hell, I would use the Aussies to take it and the New Zealanders to hold it”*.

Steve spoke for quite some time, but everyone was rivetted as he was so interesting. Steve took questions from the floor.

The meeting broke for fellowship, afternoon tea and our usual raffle. Thank you to everyone who donated prizes or bought raffle tickets. The funds from the raffle go towards hiring the Village Hall at RAAFA.

Resumed the Annual General Meeting.

Minutes of previous 2024 AGM: *Veronica moved those minutes be accepted.*

Seconded by: Ron Mitchell

Business Arising: Nil

President's Report: Anne LeFevre

Welcome everyone to our AGM on this blustery day, so extra thanks to you all for coming.

We have been working well as a social forum with coffee mornings and an annual lunch which this year is organized for Friday 7th November at Anzac House.

We have been very fortunate to have had excellent guest speakers at our meetings this year, and I thank them all for their interesting and thought-provoking words.

We have at last reached agreement on a logo for ROTWARA so we can now move forward and have badges made for members.

Another step forward is having a Website and Facebook page up and running, for which we extend our thanks to Glenda. We have placed a link on the website to the Honour Roll of the Rats of Tobruk, produced by Owen Carlton.

Thanks also to Margo Martin for instigating the search for the monuments and other mentions of Rats of Tobruk in the Cities, Shires and Towns in Western Australia. A database of our findings will be placed on the website. Ancillary to this is the quest to start talks with schools so that we may eventually interact with students to pass on the information on Rats of Tobruk and the Siege. Narrogin High School has indicated an interest in hearing from us for Anzac Day commemorations.

So, to the year ahead. Our mission is to spread the word about the Rats and the Siege. I have been thinking about the difference in our present society, 80 years on from the end of the Siege, and wondering what our Rats would make of the changes. I have identified two groups with whom the Rats would take umbrage. Firstly, those whom I call “snowflakes” who take offence at the slightest misstep, to the degree that the humour and the larrikinism, which underpinned the Rats’ mateship and determination and therefore their strength, would now be classified as illegal - our Rats would now be hauled before the Human Rights Commission.

The second group I have named “ratbags” – these are the useless idiots who burn the Australian flag with apparent impunity. I would have thought that this action would be classed as treasonous, but apparently not so. It is not just members of the public behaving as ratbags – it is obvious in our Parliament, our universities and other so-called elite institutions.

What can we do to spread the word? We need people who are able to write about the Rats and the Siege so we can keep them in the public eye by publishing in newspapers, journals, and social media. If we don’t make their presence felt, they **will** be forgotten. We need to have the Siege of Tobruk remembered just as well as Anzac Day is remembered. The difference between the two military events is acute – The Siege was the longest in British military history and an extraordinary achievement in turning the tide of World War II. The Anzac story is about a military disaster. Why is Tobruk not given the recognition it so richly deserves?

My last comment is to thank the outgoing Committee for their sterling work this year and to wish the incoming Committee all the best for the coming year. **And** to remind everyone that we will need a new President at the next AGM!

Treasurer’s Report was presented by Glenda Wellman
01.07.2024 to 30.06.2025

The Financial Report was distributed to all in attendance and will be attached to these Minutes.

c/f 2023/2024	\$ 937.86
Income	\$ 1944.11
Expenditure	\$ 1065.52
24/25 Net Profit	\$ 878.52

As at 30.06.2025:

Cash at Bank	\$1,751.45
Petty Cash	\$ 65.00
Total	\$1,816.45

We have 67 financial members but still have 14 members who are yet to pay their subs. Thanks to everyone who sold tickets for us through the Bendigo Community Bank at Halls Head. We raised \$1,250.

Glenda moved that her report be accepted.

Seconded by: Heather Davis

Election of Office Bearers:

Nominations received:

Chairperson: Anne Le Fevre

Deputy Chair:

Secretary: Lyn Mitchell

Treasurer: Ron Mitchell

Committee Members: Rick France
Margot Martin
Heather Davis
Bronwyn Dew
Glenda Wellman
Ross Woods

As no further nominations were received from the floor, all nominations received were accepted and Anne declared all Committee Members duly elected.

No Other Business:

Memorabilia – Patricia whose father was South African and fought at Tobruk, brought in some very interesting memorabilia for attendees to look at.

The AGM closed at 15:40