



Nowra RSL Sub-Branch

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Shoalhaven City Council
Received

18 MAY 2016

File No. 4771E
Referred to: S. McMahon

Mayor Joanna Gash
Shoalhaven City Council
Nowra NSW 2541

Dear Jo,

The Nowra RSL Sub Branch for the past five years has run the very successful Digger Day event which is a major fundraiser for the RSL and Defence Care. In 2015 the Nowra RSL Sub Branch coincided with the ANZAC Centenary staged Digger Day with the aim to attract international guests, namely Victoria Cross recipients from the United Kingdom and New Zealand. In addition, we were able to bring to the Shoalhaven several of Australia's own Victoria Cross recipients thereby truly making this a world class event. This gathering of our VC recipients was the biggest gathering of VC recipients in the southern hemisphere for over forty years and was worthy of its recognition through media broadcasts on national news in Sydney, Melbourne and Canberra and countless radio interviews.

In 2018, which marks the end of the ANZAC Centenary commemorations for the Nation, the Nowra RSL Sub Branch intends to put on an event that will equal or exceed the 2015 Digger Day. I have already had preliminary discussions with numerous VC recipients abroad and also Australia and many have accepted an invitation to return to the Shoalhaven. In addition to make this event a momentous occasion, I have approached several of our Cross of Valour Recipients, which is Australia's highest award for valour as a civilian and ranks next to the Victoria Cross and these recipients are also keen to attend this gala event in the Shoalhaven. I have also included in the invitation list, Michael Pratt GC, who is Australia's only living George Cross recipient. The George Cross was replaced with the Cross of Valour in 1975.

All of these awards, the Victoria Cross, Cross of Valour and George Cross are exceptional awards and held in high esteem in our Honours system for extreme Valour and Gallantry, hence the 2018 Digger Day event and the evening ball will be known as the Valour and Gallantry Ball. An event of this magnitude has never been held before in Australia with so many international VC recipients coming down under, this would be an absolute boost in tourism for the Shoalhaven. *60 Minutes* reporter Ross Coulthart has agreed to be MC for the Ball which will be hosted at the Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre.

As you can envisage, an enormous amount of work is required to bring this event to fruition and some financial backing as well. The Nowra RSL Sub Branch is looking for corporate support in all sectors to put on Digger Day and the Valour and Gallantry Ball. As Digger Day Chairman I would like to formally request a donation of \$10,000.00 from the Shoalhaven City Council. I see this financial assistance as a form of sponsorship, and the Shoalhaven City Council will be included in all media outlets via radio, television and newspapers supporting this event.

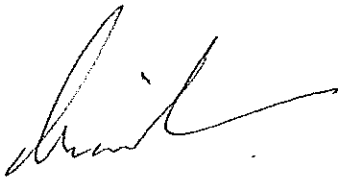
As previously mentioned this is a one off event, which is set down for the 28th July 2018 and has never been attempted before in Australia. Bringing all these individuals, recipients of the Commonwealths highest award for Valour and Gallantry all together in Shoalhaven will be an attraction and a talking point for years to come and a huge boost for Tourism.

Below is the complete list of guests who will be invited to this event in the Shoalhaven.

Keith Payne VC (Vietnam)	Australia	Accepted
Mark Donaldson VC (Afghanistan)	Australia	
Ben Roberts-Smith VC (Afghanistan)	Australia	
Daniel Keighran VC (Afghanistan)	Australia	
Willie Apiata VC (Afghanistan)	New Zealand	Accepted
Rambahadur Limbu VC (Indonesia)	Nepal	Invitation Sent
Bill Speakman VC (Korea)	United Kingdom	Accepted
Johnson Beharry VC (Iraq)	United Kingdom	Accepted
Joshua Leakey VC (Afghanistan)	United Kingdom	Invitation Sent
Allan Sparkes CV	Coffs Harbour Flood Rescue	Accepted
Darrell Tree CV	Rescue Father/Son Electrocuted	
Victor Boscoe CV	Foiled Armed Robbery	
Timothy Britten CV	Bali Bombing Rescue	Accepted
Richard Joyes CV	Bali Bombing Rescue	
Michael Pratt GC	Foiled Bank Robbery	

Should you require any further information regarding this event, please do not hesitate to call me on my mobile 0428 443 361. Alternatively you can email on my work email rick.meehan@exservos.com.au. Appreciate your time and look forward to your reply.

Kind regards



Rick Meehan OAM JP
Honorary Secretary
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