



# THE HISTORY OF MAROUBRA RSL SUB-BRANCH – OUR STORY

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## Overview

This document provides a history of the Maroubra RSL Sub-Branch as derived from existing documentation, photos, member input and other records that are available. This history spans the life of the RSL Sub-Branch from 1933 to the present and is intended to act as a record of the RSL Sub-Branch's history for those who are interested.

## Formation of the Maroubra RSL Sub-Branch

The foundation of the RSL in this district was laid at a meeting of returned servicemen of WW1 at the home of Mr & Mrs J. L. (Bob) Manning in Middle St, South Kensington (now Kingsford) in 1919.

The meeting decided to call the organisation the 'Returned Soldiers & Sailors of South Kensington and District'. The following officers were elected President Captain Howard, Honorary Secretary L Manning, Committee Messrs M Baxter, W Tier, B Russell, B Field, and H Midhunt. Following an increase in membership, it was decided to hold the meeting in the Enid Hall at Rainbow Street.

Subsequently the Ladies Auxiliary was formed, members included Mrs Manning, Mrs Pardy, Mrs Bates, Mrs Collier, Mrs Shipway. The Women's Auxiliary held its meetings at the old theatre on the top floor of Dudley Building at Maroubra Junction, which was made available free-of-charge by Mr H Dudley.

The Sub-Branch subsequently became known as Maroubra-Kensington RSL Sub-Branch.

Sometime from the 1940s, a separate sub-branch was formed at Kensington and the original sub-branch was subsequently called Maroubra RSL Sub-Branch. Subsequently the Maroubra RSL Sub-Branch moved to Kamanda Hall in Maroubra Junction. Mr Tom Howard was elected as the Sub-Branch's first President and Mr Bert Field as treasurer.

In 1930 with the help of State members of Parliament, Mr T Mutch and E Tressider the vacant block of land on the corner of Haigh Street and Anzac Parade was purchased by the Sub-Branch for the purpose of erecting thereon a memorial hall. The value of the land was approximately 500 pounds.

The Sub-Branch borrowed 1350 pound from the Commercial Banking Company of Sydney. The Randwick Council donated stone for the foundations and PC Barnes donated the cost of cartage of the stone.

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To raise money for the building, the land was drawn up in square foot lots. The lots were auctioned and brought prices from 10 shillings to 10 pound. Printed deeds were issued to the purchasers of the lots.

The original memorial hall was built with sandstone foundations and brick walls. The dance floor was one of the most modern of the time as it was set in rubber to allow for resilience when dancing.

The Anzac Parade entrance to the club was secured by large Lattice gates, named the Menin Gates.

It was a great occasion on November the 15th 1930 when the Governor Sir Phillip Game officially opened the Building. The final cost of the building was 1350 pound.

There were many trials and tribulations during this period. On one occasion an office bearer would receive subscription at the local hotel and would scribble a receipt on the back of a cigarette packet. The money was not accounted for and to top it off he pawned the typewriter.

In 1940 the back of the hall was extended at the cost of 1500 pounds. Because of increased membership it was necessary to add another story which in turn necessitated the demolition of the original hall. The present club premises was opened in 1953 by the President of the Sub-Branch at that time, Mr Arthur Ryan.

Due to trading results, the Maroubra RSL Club found it necessary in the year 2009 to amalgamate with South Sydney Junior Rugby Football Club. Under the terms of the amalgamation, Souths were given the option of right-of-purchase of the club and next door flat. Following trading for three years under the management of South Sydney Junior Football club the option was activated and the buildings sold.