

# WATT'S HAPPENINGS

JOURNAL OF THE UNITED SERVICE CLUB  
NEWCASTLE

SUMMER 2021  
Issue10



Since 1927

Christmas Edition

Bar  
Lounge  
Club Museum  
Snooker & Darts



## 2021-2022 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Vice President: MAJ Simon Macks (Retd)

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Director: Phil Screen

Director: David Thomas

Director: James Wallace

## 2021-2022 PATRONS

BRIG Derek Sharp (Ret) OBE

MAJ Roland MILLBANK (Ret)

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

On behalf of the Board I welcome our new USC members: Steven Rae, Benjamin Ison, Kylie Lewis, Renae Young and David Parkins.

Your club has settled into the current post lockdown world. Patronage has increased to pre-lockdown levels and our function bookings are on the rise. If you are thinking of organising one in December, it would be advisable to do so soon as availability is running out with only a few spaces still left.

Our fully catered balcony/lounge deal is already booked out for the entire Supercars weekend in March 2022. As we get closer to the date we will have more details as to what will be available throughout the rest of the club over that period.

The USC will be open on ANZAC Day, commencing with breakfast after the dawn service. We will have a downstairs can bar as well as the usual refreshments available in the bar.

Visitors continue to be astounded when they discover our unique collection of military souvenirs, photos and books. Even more so when they realise that the collection was started by our founding members, veterans of the Boer War, Boxer Rebellion and World War I.

*Ernie Thirkell*

## SECRETARY'S MEMO

I am pleased to let all of our members know, that your Board has acted on an unexpected and urgently needed opportunity brought to us during November.

We have entered into a licence agreement with our neighbours at 45 Watt St to utilise the USC northern laneway and adjacent corner of the car park. This will cover the period 22nd November 2021 to 31st August 2022. (at the latest)

Site access and intermittent crane area from our property is needed to enable the Watt Street Theatre Conversion works to be completed.

Within the agreement, we have specified that the temporary fencing around the leased area will be removed for the Supercars weekend and ANZAC day. This will allow arrangements for those events to go ahead as usual.

There will be no inconvenience for those currently leasing USC car parks within the designated area.

Alternative arrangements have been made available in the Watt Street Commercial Carpark for these valued USC tenants, at no additional cost to either the tenants or the USC.

*Jason Gladys*

## NOTICES

- \* **USC last day of trading for 2021:**  
-Friday 17 December 2021
- \* **Half Ham Raffle** Drawn  
-Friday 17 December 2021
- \* **USC first day of trading for 2022:**  
- 13 January 2022  
-We look forward to seeing you in the club.

**USC** Like us on facebook [www.facebook.com/uscnewcastle](http://www.facebook.com/uscnewcastle) **USC** website [unitedserviceclub.wildapricot.org/](http://unitedserviceclub.wildapricot.org/)

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**Many Hands Make Light Work**  
If you could give us a hand for even an hour:  
Any Tuesday between 10am & noon or  
For Working Bee Saturday 11 December 2021  
Please contact Gloria—0418 241 133

- \* **V8 Supercars Event March 2022;**  
- USC entry free,  
- Event Pass needed to get to the club.  
- USC open times,  
Friday, Saturday &  
Sunday, 4th, 5th & 6th  
March 9.30am—6pm.

### James (Monty) Corlette

Born and raised in Ashfield, Sydney, James Montagu Christian Corlette was an engineer and soldier who served in both WWI and WWII.



A prominent sportsman, he played Rugby football, participated in rowing and represented the University of Sydney in rifle-shooting.

As the sergeant major of the Sydney University Scouts Rifle Corps, Corlette was commissioned second lieutenant in the Goldfields Infantry Regiment of Western Australia in 1906.

Through his rifle-shooting and Bachelor of Engineering degree with Honours in civil engineering, Corlette worked his way to becoming the commanding royal engineer of the 2nd Australian Division in France and Belgium from July 1917 to August 31 1919.

Corlette was awarded the Distinguished Service order in 1917 and the Croix de Chevalier of Légion d'honneur in 1919. He was five times mentioned in dispatches and in 1919 was appointed C.M.G. (A class of the Most Distinguished Order of St Michael and St George.)

After the First World War, Corlette was promoted to colonel in 1926, commanding the 1st Infantry Brigade until 1932. During WWII, Corlette served from 1941-1943 with the Volunteer Defence Corps as group commander of the Newcastle area.

During his time in between wars, Corlette constructed Tomago Sandbeds water-supply for Newcastle and completed sewerage works for Cardiff, Belmont, Kurri Kurri, Boolaroo and Wallsend.

As a foundation member of the Northern Engineering Institute of NSW, Corlette contributed technical articles and after it became the Newcastle division, he was a committee member from 1920-69 and president in 1927-1928.

After his service as a commanding royal engineer and colonel, Corlette took an interest in returned soldiers and became the president of the USC from 1927 to 1956. In his 29 years as president, 'Monty' was known for his inspirational presence and loyalty and after stepping back from president, remained a regular member of the club until his death in 1969.

*Contrary to common belief, the Port Stephen suburb of Corlette was not named after him. It was actually named for Captain James Corlette who was first to ship timber and wool out of Port Stephens in 1816.*

### George H Shaw

Mr George H. Shaw, born in Wickham in the mid 1890's served during WW1 in the Australian Army Medical Corps (A.A.M.C.)



He embarked from Sydney aboard HMAT Karoola A63 on 20 May 1916 as a Private in the Hospital Transport Corps.

Following discharge in 1919 Shaw was a patient in Randwick Rehabilitation Hospital. He lived most of his life in Tighe's Hill and was employed in the Divisional Engineer's Office of the Postmaster-Generals' Department.

George Shaw reputedly took a keen interest in returned service men's organisations, serving as Secretary of the United Service Club from 1933 to 1952 as well as being the Secretary of the Newcastle R.S.L for six years.

The following quote is from the USC 25 year history "Near the end of 1952 we lost a sterling member in the person of Mr. G. H. Shaw, who had been honorary Secretary for nineteen years. George Shaw died suddenly at sea on March 20th while on a holiday trip to Western Australia. His kindly, friendly geniality endeared him to us all."

George Shaw was 57 and unmarried when he died on board the liner Kanimbla while on holiday and was buried at sea.

We unearthed only basic details about him from the War Memorial site but our Assistant Editor Ivy-Rose Laidler persevered, finding his will and obituary through online articles and newspapers. After approaching a historical consultant, she found a bit more information on our man of mystery.

His discharge was believed to be due to the development of rheumatism after contracting influenza a month earlier. He is also believed to have been a telephonist prior to joining the army.

### Lest We Forget

It is disappointing that we know so little about this World War 1 veteran who served as Secretary of our Club for almost 20 years. So please, if you have known George Henry Shaw or have any further information about him, would you share it with us?

ADF DAYS OF COMMEMORATION  
(Summer quarter)

24 February 2022 War Animals Day

## GETTING TO KNOW YOU



**Ivy-Rose Laidler**  
—USC's youngest member

Left: Ivy-Rose helping out in the Club kitchen.

I heard about the club at the ripe old age of 12. Living with the notorious Mansell Laidler means a club or pub will never be a place unknown to me.

Since then, on a Thursday or Friday afternoon, my mum would take my sibling and myself, all dressed up in our little dresses, to fetch our father from his favourite place, which I nicknamed the 'Funny Old Club'

The 'Funny Old Club' has become my second home, with Catherine behind the bar giving me a can of coke to drink. Now, at the age of 19, this is the place I come to collect my father on a Thursday or Friday afternoon after a few cheeky drinks.

I joined the United Service Club at the start of 2020, when I turned 18, even holding my 18th birthday here.

There were obvious reasons for joining the USC as my passion for small unique clubs grew: the environment, the people and the drinks of course. I also joined this amazing club for the history.

You'll see me here on a Thursday or Friday afternoon when I can, or at any function that comes up I'll be around somewhere! From volunteering to drinking the night away, I'll be there!

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My favourite function to date, was the 1920's — dressing up in flapper dresses and auctioning off prizes, I was assisting in the silent auction and actual auction while also taking photos of everyone dressed up! It was a fabulous night that will soon become tradition.



## FUNCTIONS

### Booking a function?



Above: Ez, Trivesy, Frosty, Sammos & Tealey have one party for 3 of their birthdays booked for February 2022.

Right: Megan & Kellie had the option of Darts, Snooker or chess but opted for a drink & chat.



Together with Roland Millbank, Kellie Griffin, a long time club member researched & compiled the booklet, '100 years of ANZAC' dedicated to our own ANZACS, some of who were still in good health in 2015 and happy to share their memories with her.



Lynch's Hub is our preferred catering partner for USC functions.

Support your club by holding your next function or event with us.

Request menu or grazing platter options from the bar manager or direct from Lynch's Hub on (02) 4925 2926



## MEET THE BOARD

Your nine elected representatives have a wide range of backgrounds, experiences and skills. Together, they have achieved progress in areas such as rejuvenation and restoration of the premises and instituting museum standards in our historical collection. They continue in their commitment to board transparency.

### Ernie Thirkell President

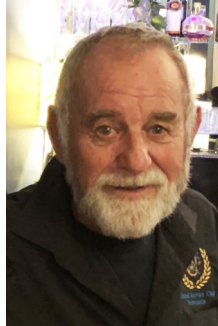
Life has taken me from one extreme to the other--ocean to the bush and back, so it was probably predictable that I would finish up squarely between - in the suburbs.

I was born and grew up on Stockton, ran away at 14 to join the circus (the police brought me home), then ran away at 17 to join the Navy. This time my Dad was so happy about it that he signed my enlistment papers!

I saw the world serving on a lot of ships during my 13-year stint in the Navy, mostly above the waves but I did have a short trip on a submarine. My two deployments to Vietnam were on D38 HMAS Perth.

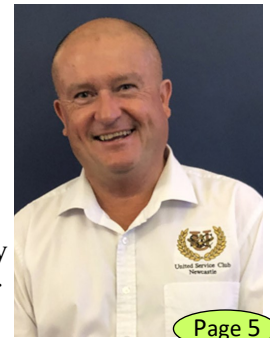
After the Navy I was a coal miner, had a fish & Chip shop then, a Cashmere Goat farm. Back on the water living on a sailing catamaran for 10 years was a dream come true. After sailing back into Newcastle I became heavily involved in the Newcastle Cruising Yacht Club. Dick Lees made another dream come true when I crewed for him aboard Freyja in the Sydney Hobart race.

I am proud to have served on the USC board as a Director and for this term as Club President.



### David Thomas Board Property Member

David grew up in the Maitland and Forster area then spent 30 years in the NSW Attorney Generals Department, eventually holding the position of Chamber Magistrate in Newcastle Court.



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For the past 15 years David has been involved in the taxi industry, operating his own car. He's now semi-retired, working 3 days per week.

It was a convoluted path so typical of Newcastle that led David to join the USC. His brother, while working as a tradie on a high-rise across the road from the USC, discovered and began patronising our club. This naturally led to finding a connection between his bother (David) and one of the club members, regular patron Mansell Laidler, David's boss in 1976 at the Newcastle Courthouse.

David, who has lots of ex servicemen friends, found the club to be a natural fit. Living locally, he joined and was soon volunteering for working bees and giving a hand generally.

A long administrative career in law, government etc has made David an extremely effective and valuable USC Director, currently holding the position of Board's Property Member. Part of his portfolio is as the go-between for the Historical Committee, presenting their monthly reports to the Board etc.

### The Newcastle Museum Thank you for your support

Restoration and preservation of our valuable artefacts has included careful cleaning of our flags, at least one of which has been hanging in situ for 59 years. Step 2 was freezing for two weeks courtesy of the museum, in order to destroy any possible insect eggs. The flags, currently archived to museum standards, will be rehung in the near future.  
*David Thomas*

Below: Mick & Jenny , Tracey & Chris



Below:  
Grant, James, Ben & Bob.



Right: USC's newest members,  
David & Renae.



**WATT'S NOT TO ENJOY !**



Above: The Jordans



Right: A 'Whoops' moment

Left: Kathryn & Ken



Below: They keep coming back (we'll get their names next time!)

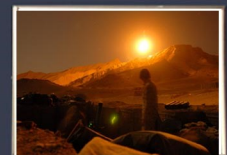


Below: Jason

Above: : Margaret & Dick, Lynne & Phil

**THE FIVE SILVER FRAMES**

Photos from our own member's albums of their military career & overseas deployments appear on quarterly rotation in the Bar. Currently on display are Sean Martin's. Featured to date: Brett Hodgett, Keith Brennan, Peter Green and Ernie Thirkell.



Above: Jason & Byron

## HISTORICAL COMMITTEE

Janet Aisbett, Sue Britton, Gloria Thirkell

A number of Australian Defence Force (ADF) Days of Remembrance occurred surrounding and during Covid lockdown. We did what we could to pay due respect.

### Vietnam Veterans Day



Above: USC Patron, Life Member & Past Secretary Roland Millbank presenting artwork received by Club President Ernie Thirkell & Secretary Jason Gladys on behalf of the Club.

Our collection has very few Vietnam War artefacts . This framed numbered print immediately found a home in the lounge, tying in with the information posters currently on display there. In the bar at the time were 5 Vietnam era Navy photos belonging to Ernie, and the two framed rubber plantation prints by our member, artist Michael Eggleston

### Battle of Beersheba Day



Above: Greg Box (right) once again allowed us use of this print.

We marked the day with this print & 'They Rode into Legend' loaned again by Asst. Sec. Andrew Hill & our permanent 'Cav Corner' display.

### It's 100 years of Air Force.

Right: Members of 3SQN RAAF Williamtown,

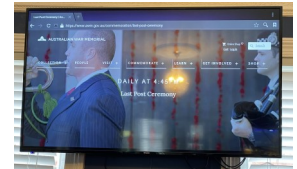
Sam Fisher, Jacob Newson & Brandon Thompson with USC President Ernie Thirkell.



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### Remembrance Day - our USC tradition

- \* 20 Stairwell frames of ADF losses in conflicts since 1900.
- \* AWM Roll of Honour (4pt).
- \* Personalised 'poppy cards' on Remembrance Boards.
- \* Eulogy of the Unknown Soldier. (live stream from AWM AT 4:45pm).



Above: The Last Post Service set up ready for the AWM live stream to start..



Above: The bar stilled waiting for the Live Stream from the AWM

An IT problem stalled the image while allowing us to hear the service! It didn't stop us from paying our respects. The tradition will continue next year.

## RAMSLAND LAIDLER Solicitors

Contact Mark Ramsland, Mansell Laidler, James Wallace, and the team at Ramsland Laidler Solicitors for all your legal needs.

### Specialising in:

- Criminal & Motor Traffic Law
- Family Law
- Wills & Estates
- Dust Disease & General Practice

### Chambers on Watt

Suite 1, Ground Floor, 57 Watt Street Newcastle NSW 2300  
Ph: 4929 7979 Fax: 4915 0047 Email: [admin@ramslan.com.au](mailto:admin@ramslan.com.au)



**Andrew Knight** is a Partner at local Hunter law firm **Sparke Helmore** and is also a member of the USC.

He specialises in property law and estate planning and can help you with wills, trusts, powers of attorney and guardianships as well as assist you in preparing a comprehensive estate plan.

You can contact him on **andrew.knight@sparke.com.au** or call him on **(02) 4924 7606**



[www.sparke.com.au](http://www.sparke.com.au)



**BOOK NOW**

**Christmas party or group gathering.**

**Self catering or our finger food platters**

**At USC Newcastle,**

**COVID**

**hasn't made us bitter, only better !**

## In Newcastle for the weekend of 4, 5 + 6 March 2022? Experience the **V8 SUPERCARS EVENT**

Free Entry to USC. Event Pass via Supercars needed to get to the Club.

Live race coverage on Large screen televisions located on both levels.

*Balcony Hire—includes a private area in upstairs lounge, drinks & food package*



Upstairs—Balcony, Lounge, Bar  
Selection of beer on tap plus wine & spirits.

Downstairs—Can Bar. Trackside Porch  
USC 'Food alley' at rear of Club and more

### CONTACT US

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Secretary Manager,  
Jason Gladys

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Bar Manager:  
Catherine Fidock-Jones

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