

The Submarine Association Australia Welfare Successor Foundation.

In the beginning – **The Submarine Old Comrades Association (SOCA).**

Little is known, and less is documented, about the funding of this organisation beyond the fact that it was a somewhat informal gathering based upon and loosely affiliated with the SOCA in the United Kingdom. Its membership consisted overwhelmingly of ex-Royal Navy (RN) submariners who settled in Australia after WW2. Most had served in RN submarines based in Australia. Their objectives were to provide mutual support and to maintain the comradeship which had been forged during the War. Their monthly meetings took place in Royal Navy House (“Johnnies”) in Grosvenor Street, Sydney. When the new submarine base *HMAS PLATYPUS* was commissioned in 1967 at Neutral Bay, their meetings shifted to those premises.

The Submarines Association Australia Welfare Fund (SAAWF).

In those early days very strong links existed between the RN’s Submarine Service and the Royal Australian Navy’s (RAN) Submarine Arm. The 1st Australian Submarine Squadron’s (AUSSUBRON1) *Oberon* Class Submarines were built in Scotland, and all of the original four submarine crews did their training in the UK.

Over time, the balance of membership shifted towards an increasing majority of serving and retired RAN personnel, vis a vis ex-RN. Sometime in the 1980s, the SOCA lapsed and the SAA was formed, with its ‘Aims and Objectives’ to include:

- To keep alive the unique "esprit de corps" of the Submarine Service;
- To establish and maintain a charitable trust, being a welfare foundation;
- To assist one another as occasion may require and to encourage social activities;
- To liaise with kindred organisations, both nationally and internationally; and,
- To educate members about their entitlements and provide access to Department of Veterans' Affairs advocates

The widow of an ex-RN submariner, Mrs Elsie Harris died on November 1990. In her will, she bequeathed Ten Thousand Dollars to ex-CPO Coxswain Gordon Selby, at that time the Honorary Secretary of the SAA, for use as he saw fit for the benefit of the Association.

It was a result of Gordon Selby’s initiative that the SAAWF was established with this money as its start-up capital.

It was decided to administer the fund through a ‘Declaration of Trust’, also known as a ‘Deed of Trust’, or simply ‘Trust Deed’.

A ‘Deed of Trust’ is a legally-binding document recording the financial arrangements between joint property owners, and/or anyone else with a financial interest in the property. The Trust Deed is administered legally by ASIC (Australian Securities and Investments Commission).

The Australian Securities and Investments Commission is an independent commission of the Australian Government tasked as the national corporate regulator. ASIC's role is to regulate company and financial services and enforce laws to protect Australian consumers, investors and creditors.

With the guidance of ex-Submarine Squadron Commander Tim Duchesne, Rockliffs Solicitors settled the Trust Deed on 5th July 1991, and this was subsequently amended on 16th July 1991 to incorporate administrative inclusion into the SAA Constitution.

In accordance with the second paragraph of the SAA-Constituted 'Aims and Objectives', the SAAWF was inaugurated by Trust Deed with three Trustees, CAPT Tim Duchesne RAN (Rtd), LCDR Tim Everard RAN (Rtd), and WOSM Dave Bryant (Rtd).

It was this extraordinary gift and the foresight of the then SAA Executive which saw a charitable Trust established that would be available to members of the Submarines Association Australia and their families in times of financial need, where such help and support could not generally be accessed by other means, such as Commonwealth or state agencies.

In 2012, Commodore Bob Trotter RAN (Rtd), was instrumental in securing for the Foundation the sum of One hundred Thousand Dollars resulting from the Corps of Commissioners fund wind-up.

The Submarine Association Australia Welfare Successor Foundation (SAAWSF)

With the increase in funds as a result of the Corps of Commissionaires legacy, the Trust Deed was re-written by Rockliffs' consultant Mr Peter Gell *MTax* to include additions and changes required by the Australian Taxation Office in order to satisfy tax free and charitable status. The Foundation is now a registered charity, and as such donations to the foundation are tax deductible. The current Trust Deed has the word "Successor" added in order to differentiate these changes from the former Trust Deed.

The Fund operates under a Trust Detention ('Trust Deed') which is managed by Honorary Trustees, who are themselves members of the SAA. The Trustees are currently Zlادislaw "Sid" Czabotar, David Bryant, and Kevin Hayton, who replaced our long-serving and exemplary founding member Tim Duchesne RAN. The Fund is not managed by the Association, but is accountable to the Members of the Association via the President and National Committee in accordance with the SAA Constitution.

The Foundation's Finances are audited and a Financial Report and accompanying Bank Statements are presented in detail to the National Executive, and summarised to the membership at the AGM annually at each SUBCON.

In addition, the SAAWSF is a registered Charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC), which is a national regulatory framework for the not-for-profit sector, and is reported on every twelve months by Trustee Dave Bryant. Members can view submissions via the ACNC Website.

SAA Branches, Corporate bodies and Individuals over the last twenty-three years have been very generous in their support of the Foundation. Over this period, over One Hundred and Sixty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$165,000.) has been earned from donations and interest on the Term Deposit. This is an astounding amount of donations, which has come from not just the generosity of Branch SUBCON profits, but in the main from ex-submariners who feel that they can contribute to a fund which is solely 'Not-for-profit' and can help those Comrades and families who may have fallen on tough times.

Since it's inauguration, the SAAWSF has supported some thirty plus SAA Members in need and/or their families with grants totalling over Eighty Seven Thousand Dollars (\$87,000.) Individual amounts have varied depending on the severity of the need, and have ranged from as little as \$165 to \$14,000. The majority of grants have been in the \$1,000 to \$5,000 range.

The SAA majority membership is getting older, and an increased call on the fund to help those in dire need or in an emergency in the future may be foreseen. Donations to the Foundation are always very welcome, especially as a will beneficiary, and the Foundation is worth remembering after such a function as the Annual SUBCON get-together.

To those members who have contributed funds, in some cases large amounts, and in other cases members who contribute annually, I THANK YOU!

The Foundation is very much mindful of the fact that much emotion is attached to our submariner comrades who fall on hard times through debt, natural disasters or for medical reasons may call on the SAAWSF for assistance. However the SAAWSF is explicit in the fact that financial assistance can only be assessed based upon the following Trust Deed requirement :

Eligible Persons shall mean any Life Member, any Ordinary or Associate Member of the Association which has paid the joining fee and the annual subscription of the Association and has been a member of the Association for a minimum of twelve (12) months and has paid the current annual subscription to the Association and any person dependent upon them financially;

The requirements of the Submarines Association Australia Welfare Successor Foundation (SAASF) Trust Deed are separate from the Submarines Association Australia (SAA) National Constitution for the obvious specific reason mentioned above.

It is emphasised that the SAAWSF Trust Deed is a legal document, and cannot be changed, circumvented or ignored without a criminal penalty imposed upon the Trustees.

Dave Bryant.
Trustee and Acting Treasurer, SAAWSF.

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