

EXAMPLE STORY

Youth Leadership
Bridging the Gap of ANZAC
Ramsgate RSL



HIGHLY COMMENDED 2018

Outline your unique story/project/program

Being an RSL Club, ANZAC Day is an extremely important period for Ramsgate RSL and our country as it is a time where we honour the service and sacrifice of past and present servicemen and women who have, and continue to defend, our country. Unfortunately as time passes, it is clear the gap is widening with younger generations understanding the meaning of the day.

As a community initiative to help reinforce the importance of ANZAC Day, Ramsgate RSL purchased a variety of Aussie snack goods which were packaged by all staff members at Ramsgate RSL. Each package included a hand written note of thanks from local school students and club staff, with the packages mailed to our defence force in time for ANZAC Day. Ramsgate RSL saw this an opportunity to help bridge the gap whilst also being able to thank those currently serving in the armed forces.

A total of 100 care packages were sent for ANZAC Day.

Why was this story/project/program addressed as a priority?

The initiative was developed by a staff member who recognised the lack of understanding about ANZAC Day in our youth and younger generations. Local school students were given the opportunity to take part in the initiative, to help highlight the importance of ANZAC Day, by writing a note of thanks to be sent with each package.

Another reason for this initiative was to say thanks to our current defence force for what they continue to do in defending our country. Australian servicemen and women are deployed in Australia and around the world, often away from home and family, which would become particularly hard around significant dates such as Anzac Day and Christmas.

We hope this small gesture of gratitude gave our troops a small taste of home, with some popular Aussie snacks to enjoy.

Tell us what was contributed toward this story/project/program?

The initiative involved two key costs, including \$1,239.00 to purchase the Aussie snack items and \$128.50 for Australian Post Boxes

Costs indirectly associated with this initiative were the time committed in coordinating local schools involvement, packing and lodging of the parcels by Club staff.

What was the measureable difference that the support made?

To the Defence Force:

Since the packages were sent, Ramsgate RSL have received three personal letters from recipients, thanking us for our support and kindness (please refer to attachment). The fact that three defence force personnel have taken the time to write and mail/email their gratitude demonstrates the positive impact of the initiative.

To Ramsgate RSL:

Staff and Management were incredibly eager to get involved in the initiative, and pack and write a note of thanks to our troops. Every staff member took part which is wonderful. The experience was very positive and memorable for the staff, so much so that it has been requested to take place each ANZAC Day to pay tribute to our defence force.

To the community:

Ramsgate RSL has received many positive responses from our community regarding the Care Package initiative. Many members of our community have vocalised their support and also volunteered to take part in the initiative next time (please refer to the attached Facebook feedback).

Do you have long-term plans/goals for this story/project/program?

Ramsgate RSL has previously aligned itself with various community fundraising activities for veteran associated services such as RSL Services NSW Homes for Heroes organisation. To date over \$20,000 has been donated via the Ramsgate RSL Sub Branch & Memorial Club to ensure those who have served our country do not become homeless.

The Care Package Initiative formed a positive extension of these other fundraising activities with current personnel, and we have therefore made the commitment to continue to provide care packages to our defence force for years to come, with the hope that increasing numbers of local schools get involved.

After such great response by our local community, we will also look at extending the invitation to others to come along and pack a box here at the club. This project has already seen such a great benefit for all involved, so we can only see our support increasing in the foreseeable future.