 **MINUTES OF THE**

**MHSA FEDERAL COUNCIL MEETING – MONDAY 31 MAY 2021**

**Location:** Zoom Pro Conference facilitated by the President located in Canberra.

**Present: *Nigel Webster (Chairperson), Justin Chadwick, Neil Dearberg, Elizabeth Hobbs, Russell Paten, Leigh Ryan, Ian Stagoll,***

**Apologies**: ***Katrina Kittel, Russell Linwood, Paul Sutton, and Tom King*** (Secretary).

**Absent**: Nil

**Welcome by Chair**. ***Nigel Webster*** opened the meeting at 07.32 pm ADST.

**Approval of Previous Minutes (07 December2020).** Accepted as a true and accurate record.

Moved: Neil Dearberg  Seconded: Nigel Webster CARRIED.

These minutes may now be published on the MHSA website per FC Minute 9 of 25 Mar 19.

*Action*: ***Paul Sutton***, Webmaster

**Business Arising:**

*Progress on the new MHSA Constitution*

The President thanked the QLD branch for its work on revising the proposed constitution of the society.

Neil Dearberg commented on the rule making provisions of the proposed constitution and queried if those provisions were necessary, if not could they be deleted for simplicity? Discussion ensued.

The meeting then accepted the new version of the MHSA Constitution which needs some additional review and editing. Mr Ian Stagoll and Ms Elizabeth Hobbs abstained from the vote due to lack of familiarity with the material being discussed,

*Status of Revised 2020 Audited Financial Statement*

The recent provision of Annual Financial Statements was implemented by Nigel Webster as an aid to transparency and governance. However, MHSA as an unincorporated body is not obligated by law to produce these as part of our corporate responsibilities.  This cost $638.00 for the review and audit of the financial year ending 30 June 2020 which was conducted by Ian D. Bain & Company Pty Ltd.

The President advised that adjustments requested will be made to the 2020 Financial Statements to make them more easily understood. This will be done be the Federal Treasurer and was proposed by Neil Dearberg. He also noted that the delay in producing revised financial statements was unacceptable.

It was resolved by the meeting that in 2022-2023 that a voluntary or pro bono auditor be sought to save further expenditure by the MHSA.

*Military History Society of New South Wales*

The President advised the Council that the MHSNSW is considering coming back under the umbrella of the National organisation. They are ongoing discussions between the Nigel Webster and Mr Robert Muscat the president of the MHSNSW. As a starting point a Memorandum of Understanding is proposed for closer future cooperation.

*Key Correspondence*

*Out:* Nil

*In:* Nil

*Treasurer’s Report*

The Treasurer advised:

Cash on Hand $6,607.97

Term Deposit $27,511.95

The Treasurer also advised of a significant forthcoming payment of $1,155.00 for the production and postage of the latest issue of Sabretache.

**General Business**

*Ratification of appointments*

Ratification of appointment of Dr Justin Chadwick as the MHSA Federal Treasurer and the ratification of appointment of Mr Tom King as the MHSA Federal Secretary.

The President proposed that these two casual appointments be ratified. Carried by the Federal Council

*Future issues of Sabretache to be in electronic format which may lead to substantial savings and a resultant reductions to the annual membership subscription.*

As an introduction, the Editor of Sabretache made the following points:

1. The printing and postage of Sabretache in hard copy format is the Society’s biggest expense.
2. Electronic issues of Sabretache will be cheaper and available to the members more quickly.
3. Electronic issues can be easily produced with substantial use of colour (coloured illustrations). Colour production in hard copy printing is expensive.
4. These days most academic journals are available in electronic format.
5. Production and postage of each printed issue of Sabretache costs around $1500.00.

Discussion ensued that most copies will be in electronic format with members having the choice of choosing a printed copy. It was also suggested if a member desires a printed copy, they pay extra to cover the printing and postage.

The following wording will be emailed to all members in mid-June 2021:

**Delivery of Sabretache**

Over recent years, the Federal Council of the MHSA has become concerned over the increasing cost of the production and distribution of the Society’s journal, *Sabretache*. In the 21st Century where electronic transmission of information is normal it has been decided that *Sabretache* will now be delivered via a digital format for those members who so choose.

Members are being asked whether they would like to transfer over to delivery of *Sabretache* through their email or continue to receive a physical copy. By accepting *Sabretache* electronically valuable savings will be made by the Society and will be passed on to the membership in the future.

If you would like to continue to receive *Sabretache*in the current hard copy format, please respond to this email stating that is your preference. and if you would prefer to receive the journal in an electronic format via Email no formal response is required.

A prompt response would be appreciated by Friday 25th June 2021 as this will formulate analysis by Dr Justin Chadwick - Editor Sabretache which will form the basis for decision making by the Federal Council.

Please note, a physical copy will continue to be produced and will be available for these members who prefer *Sabretache* in a hard copy format. There is *no* intention to cease production of *Sabretache* in its traditional paper format.

*2021 MHSA Fellow Nominations*

The President advised Council members to identify worthy recipients for the award of MHSA Fellowships. If they become aware of any member of the Society who is deserving of the award of Fellow of the Society to please put their name forward for consideration by the Federal Council.

*Future MHSA Biannual Military History Conference to be organised by the Queensland Division of MHSA*

Neil Dearberg provided comprehensive details of the proposed conference.

The conference will be held on 14, 15 and 16 October 2022 at the Maroochydore RSL Club. The club has a seating capacity of 300 persons with no Covid 19 restrictions or 252 with Covid 19 restrictions. The club has plenty of car parking and there will be no charge for the hire of the conference rooms.

The theme of the conference will be Military history in the Post-Vietnam War era. A call for papers will be made soon.

The organisers are hoping for the involvement of past and serving defence personnel and historians. Given that the new constitution of the Society allows for membership of institutions, the organisers are also hoping for sponsorship from corporate partners.

The President announced two prospective presenters, Robert Hadler who has authored “Dark Secrets – the True Story of murder n HMAS Australia and “Mutineers – at true story of heroes and villains’ books and Paul Malone who has written “Kill the Major – the true story of the most successful Allied Guerrilla War in Borneo.”

*National Light Horse Trail*

Neil Dearberg is an Ambassador for the General Sir Harry Chauvel Foundation - it promotes awareness of Chauvel, and the Australian Light Horse and others involved with the ALH.

General Chauvel's granddaughter, Honor Auchinleck, lives in Cooryong on the NSW/Vic border and with the support of the Chauvel Foundation is proposing a LH Trail in Victoria. Another Foundation member, Dr Anne Food who lives in Wagga Wagga, is likely to promote an NSW Trail to join that of Vic. Neil is very keen, to help develop a Qld Trail that would join on and form a national trail. This seems most appropriate since Harry Chauvel began his full-time military career as the Adjutant of the Moreton Regiment in Brisbane from his then home in Canning Downs.

Many towns in Qld have museums and memorials to their WW1 and WW2 servicemen and women. Many have specific memorials to the Light Horse. Neil stumbled upon a magnificent memorial in Diranbadi (somewhere way west of Brisbane) on his way home from the desert trip - to Brigadier Grant who led the Beersheba charge and moved there after the war to see out his years as a pastoralist.

General Discussion: Procedures for dealing with military history questions raised by public

Discussion ensued on this agenda item. It was informally resolved that military history questions raised by the public be forwarded onto the Federal Council Secretary who will then forward the enquiry onto all Federal Councillors for resolution.

Next Federal Council meeting will be at 7:00 pm AEST on 5 July 2021.