



RETURNED & SERVICES
LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA

QUEENSLAND BRANCH

HIGHFIELDS SUB BRANCH, INC

Dear Friend,

In 2017 the Highfields RSL was granted permission by the Toowoomba Regional Council to rename the road leading to the community memorial at Highfields in memory of a fallen soldier. The road will be renamed Sean McCarthy Way in memory of Signaller Sean Patrick McCarthy who was killed in action in 2008. Sean lived locally and had also served for a number of years at the nearby Borneo Barracks at Cabarlah.

To celebrate this significant event the Highfields Sub Branch and the McCarthy family are hosting a renaming ceremony on the 17th March 2018, at the Highfields Community Memorial, located at the Highfields Cultural Centre.

On behalf of David and Mary McCarthy and the President and members of the sub branch, I cordially invite you and a partner to join us for this ceremony.

Details for the event are contained in a separate enclosure to this letter.

LEST WE FORGET

Yours Sincerely,

Steven R Dudley
President

19th December, 2017



Highfields RSL Sub Branch

SEAN MCCARTHY WAY Renaming Ceremony

17th March 2018



- Date:** 17th March 2018
- Time:** 0915 (9-15am) for 1000 (10am)
- Location:** Highfields Cultural Centre – Sean McCarthy Way HIGHFIELDS
(previously known as Community Court Highfields)
- Dress:** Civilian:
- Gentlemen: Lounge/Business Suit (with Medals)
Ladies: Day dress, trouser suit, skirt and jacket/coat (with Medals)
- Military:
- RAN: Dress Order S2, Summer uniform without sword
Army: Dress Order 1B, Ceremonial Service Dress
RAAF: 1A, Cool weather with tunic
- Format:** A Formal Military Guard with the Parading of the Royal Australian Corps of Signals Banner (The Princess Anne, The Princess Royal's Banner).

All details of the event, including the latest news and security procedures can be found at
www.highfieldsrsl.org/events.htm

Please note that The Honourable Dame Quentin Bryce, AD CVO the 25th Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia and Mr Bryce will be attending. Additional security procedures may be in place depending on advice from the Queensland Police Service. Please check Facebook and the above website for details closer to the ceremony.

SIGNALLER SEAN PATRICK McCARTHY

In an Anzac Day address a past Commanding Officer of the Special Air Services Regiment (SASR) Lieutenant Colonel Paul Burns paid tribute to SASR Signaller Sean McCarthy, killed by an improvised explosive device in Afghanistan on July 8, 2008, aged 25.

It was, he said, well known that Sean had served the people of Australia with distinction, with passion and enthusiasm, and with outstanding professionalism. What was not so well known were his actions during the patrol in which 33 year old SASR Sergeant Matt Locke had died, nine months prior to Sean McCarthy's own death.



"Only a few of us know that this wasn't Sean's turn to head out on that particular patrol, but after discussions with his opposite number, he requested that he take part in the mission, feeling that he had had a lighter workload than the other bloke."

While conducting the task, the troop - E Troop - became heavily engaged by the enemy, taking fire from three sides, and with a man down almost immediately. They were at risk of being cut off from support. Throughout the contact, another patrol on a mountainside was in a position to provide fire support, to potentially enable the troop to shift to a more favourable position.

"Distinguishing friend from foe in the green - especially at a distance - is difficult, if not impossible," Burns said. "Without a marker, the supporting patrol was unable to accurately engage the enemy without putting their mates' lives at risk." So the supporting patrol requested that E Troop mark their position so that they could accurately determine their location.

"Without being asked, Sean immediately broke from his position of relative safety to place a marker panel in the open where it might potentially be used as a reference for fire support. On returning to his covered position he discovered that the patrol could still not see the marker panel. So again without request he moved out into the open, under heavy fire, recovered the marker panel and climbed a tree to place the panel in a position where it would hopefully be seen."

The panel was shot out of his hands. He recovered it, climbed the tree again and finally moved to cover, where it was confirmed that the patrol on the mountainside was able to locate the troop's position and start giving fire support.

"These actions assisted in the prevention of loss of further life and the medivac of Sergeant Locke from the battlefield. In this single action we see all three traits of courage, boldness and perseverance.

Sean McCarthy truly upheld the legend of Anzac."

"CERTA CITO"



Biography of

8215477 SIGNALLER SEAN PATRICK McCARTHY KIA 8 July 2009



Sean Patrick McCarthy was born in Auckland in January 1983, and was one of three children of Mary and David McCarthy. Sean grew up on Queensland's Gold Coast, where he attended St Francis Xavier Catholic Primary School at Runaway Bay, and later Trinity Lutheran College in Ashmore. Sean was an avid sportsman, representing Trinity in its 2nd XV Rugby squad, water polo, and its student representative council. Sean was quick-witted, had a great sense of humour, and was always courteous and considerate of others.

Sean enlisted in the Australian Defence Force in 2000 after finishing high school. He completed recruit training at Kapooka, New South Wales, and a number of mandatory courses within the Royal Australian Corps of Signals that enabled him to become an Electronic Warfare Operator – Technical Signals specialist. He was posted to 7th Signal Regiment in July 2003 and was based at Borneo Barracks at Cabarlah, Queensland. There he provided tactical electronic warfare support to units of the 6th Brigade, operating a large range of complex, state-of-the-art electronic interception and monitoring equipment.

Sean spent four years with the 7th Signal Regiment before transferring to the elite Special Air Services Regiment in 2007. Several months after moving to Campbell Barracks in Western Australia, Sean was deployed to Afghanistan as part of the Special Operations Task Group. Based out of Tarin Kot in Uruzgan Province, Sean was actively involved in conducting counter-insurgency operations.

On one occasion, Sean's patrol was heavily involved in an engagement with Taliban forces, resulting in an Australian casualty. During this engagement, a visual marker panel placed to be used as a reference for fire support could not be seen by a nearby patrol. Sean broke from his position of relative safety and ran out into the exposed area, climbing a tree under enemy fire so that their position could be identified. For his actions that day Sean received the Special Operations Commander Australia Commendation.

Sean returned to Australia in January 2008, and soon after was briefly deployed to East Timor as part of Operation Astute. He returned to Afghanistan in June to again take part in counter-insurgency operations in Uruzgan Province. On 8 July 2008, in his troop's first patrol since returning to Afghanistan, the vehicle Sean was travelling in triggered a 20-kilogram Improvised Explosive Device as it crossed a wadi in the Mirabad Valley. The blast severely wounded Sean and four others. All five casualties were casevaced to hospital at Tarin Kot, but Sean died before arriving. He was 25 years old.

Sean was buried with full military honours at Southport Lawn Cemetery in Queensland in 2008, with a memorial plaque placed at the Pinaroo Cemetery. Sean was well respected by his comrades, who say he embodied the essential qualities of courage, boldness, and perseverance that made him such a highly skilled and professional soldier. He continues to be sorely missed by friends and family.

Special Operations Command Commendation

Presented to

8215477 SIGNALLER SEAN PATRICK McCARTHY



I commend you for excellent achievement in the application of battle craft beyond the standard expected whilst acting as a special operations electronic warfare operator during Operation Slipper, Special Operations Task Group, Rotation V.

Despite being in contact with the enemy, you maintained your presence of mind and displayed excellent soldier skills. You showed courage and mission focus.

Your actions demonstrated excellent application of battle craft above your recognised training levels in a complex, dangerous and confusing situation. Your deeds have brought credit upon yourself, the Special Air Service Regiment and Special Operations Command.

(Abridged Version)

T.J. OWEN, DSC, CSM
Major General

18 April 2008

