



HIGHGATE



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Website: <http://Highgater-sl.org.au>

NEWS

The official newsletter of the Highgate (WA) SubBranch of the Returned & Services League of Australia

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MONTHLY LUNCHEON AND AGM

Monday 20 February 2012

Venue: Gallipoli Room
Time: 1130 hrs for 1215 hrs

GUEST SPEAKER: Max Boronovskis BAgBus MBA MSc(Ent)

With a background in agribusiness and international trade, Max was inspired to pursue a career in renewable energy whilst studying for an MSc at Lund University in Sweden. He will speak about the ways different countries are approaching solar and alternative energy challenges in a changing world.

PLEASE TAKE SPECIAL NOTE: To attend a monthly luncheon you will need to book your name on the **BOOK-IN SHEET** by the Friday before the Monday lunch (Friday 16 December, for the next one). You can do this by using the link previously emailed to you. **FOR THOSE WITHOUT** email please call Margot Harness on 9293 1076 (or any of the committee listed at left). If you need the link again send an email to our Treasurer (see email on front cover) and request it. Please note that the Book-In Sheet allows you to place yourself on a **PERMANENT** basis.

**** CHECK FOR YOUR NAME ON THE LIST, Page 3 ****

President's Report

Firstly - let me wish all our members a very Happy New Year for 2012! Let us hope that health, prosperity and happy times lie ahead for us all.

It has been sad to see the passing of our two "Centurions" these past couple of months: each distinguished in their own, unique ways. Harold Birch continued to attend Luncheons right up to the final months of his life, and was a much loved and talented member. Dr Alan King became very frail in his final years, necessitating nursing home care - but his tremendous service to the RSL (especially as a long-standing member of the State Executive, and many years too, as the Medical Expert on the Veterans' Affairs Committee) deserve to be acknowledged. His knowledge and expertise helped many hundreds of veterans attain Disability Pensions.

(Continued on page 2)

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Committee: 5 March 2012 Monthly Luncheon: 19 March 2012



(Continued from page 1)

Like the late Philip Loffman, Dr Alan King was taken prisoner by the Germans during WW2 - which was a difficult time for him. May all these valiant men Rest in Peace.

This year I would like to see members do their best to become more proactive in the SubBranch activities. Attendance at the Mixed Luncheon for Remembrance Day was excellent, and hopefully, the second forthcoming informal Luncheon at the Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club will prove to be equally popular.

But it would be gratifying if more could come along to monthly Luncheons as well.

As many of you know, new elections are due to be held for a number of office-bearer positions at the State Branch - date unknown at this stage, but expected to be approximately May.

I urge members to give serious consideration to nominating themselves, or suggesting a friend or colleague - to stand for the State Executive.

As most of you would be aware, I have nominated for the position of President of the WA RSL State Branch. In previous years Highgate has been ably represented by several members of the State Executive as well at this level, and it would be most pleasing to see our Sub Branch contributing in this important role once again. Please think about this very seriously.

In the meantime, I encourage as many members as possible to make our Luncheon at RFBYC a terrific success. The Yacht Club is currently undergoing major renovations to improve the wonderful facilities even more. It is a splendid venue, and we will be among the first to benefit from the up-dated furnishings and new surrounds. Once again, we will provide a Buffet meal with wide appeal to everybody. At this stage, the date will be Sunday, 22nd April (two Sundays after the Easter break). Further details re cost etc, will be advised in next month's Newsletter. Mark on your calendar!

In fellowship,

Leon.



VALE - Philip Loffman

Highgate lost one of its most enduring and colourful "characters" with the death of Phil Loffman in January. Having joined the Militia prior to the outbreak of WW2, by 1940 he was serving in Tobruk with the 2/28th Inf Bn. He was taken prisoner at El Alamein in July 1942, but escaped in Italy. He was recaptured and became a POW in Germany, but, ever-resourceful, escaped again - serving out the war with a Russian unit in Sudetenland.

Post-war, he worked for Boans for 47 years - his creative talents devising splendid window arrangements. He always maintained active links with the 2/28th Inf Bn Association, POW Association, and the RSL.

A long-time member of Highgate, he served in many capacities, including President.

A devoted family man, Phil is survived by Betty and six of their seven children.

A "Pun can be Fun" Corner

A marine biologist developed a race of genetically engineered dolphins that could live forever if they were fed a steady diet of seagulls. One day, his supply of the birds ran out so he had to go out and trap some more. On the way back, he spied two lions asleep on the road. Afraid to wake them, he gingerly stepped over them. Immediately, he was arrested and charged with-- transporting gulls across sedate lions for immortal porpoises.



The RAA Historical Society

SEEKS A GUNNER TO BE ITS TREASURER

We meet at Karrakatta each Wednesday and including a substantial morning tea the treasurer's involvement is well over by mid-day. The duties are not onerous and the company great. Should you like to help please give Neil Lodge a call on 9272 1927 or Bob Arnold on 9448 2757.

NEED A LIFT TO ANZAC HOUSE TO ATTEND MONTHLY HIGHGATE LUNCHEONS?

If so please contact me personally on 9244 8072

Ken Bladen



SUB WARDENS DUTIES

Wreath Laying Services currently scheduled at the State War Memorial Kings Park

Sunday 12 February 2012 : 1030 for 1100 hrs- Women's Royal Australian Army Corps Assn
Tuesday 14 February 2012 : 1030 for 1100 hrs- National Servicemen's Assn of Aust WA Branch Inc

STILL RE-WORKING THE "PERMANENT LIST" FOR MONTHLY LUNCHEONS:

As outlined on the Front Page, we now have an "on-line" Booking In system in place each month, but those wishing to register as a "Permanent", just as before, will have his/her name "carried forward" automatically from month to month. It is still a "system-in-progress".

PLEASE CHECK TO SEE IF YOUR NAME IS LISTED BELOW.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE YOUR NAME ADDED TO THE LIST, ring Margot (9293 1076). Bear in mind that once you register for this, you will need to notify Margot ONLY when you CANNOT attend.

Adams Richard	Griffiths (Pres) Leon	Lane Bert	Stacey Roy
Arnold Bob	Harness Margot	McKenzie John	Thompson Martyn
Bladen Ken	Harness Mike	Mercer Bob	Walkley Cecil
Campbell Robert	Harper-Nelson John	Morris Keith	Weatherhead Malcolm
Coy Les	Harrison Rev Tim	Morriss John	White Ted
Durant Lynn	Homer John	Newman Don	Wilson Bill
Eayrs Jim	Hummerston Peter	Palmer Laurie	Wood Ken
Farrell Peter	Hutchison Arthur	Quartermaine Eli	Young Adrian
Graham, Kevin	Kennedy Peter	Sher, Abe	

LATE NEWSFLASH!!

It may have been three months ago, but as usual, Poppy Day: which was held on Friday, 11th November last and coincided for once with Remembrance Day itself- was a huge success for Highgate.

Credit must go to Jim Eayrs and Martyn Thompson for undertaking ALL the preparation and coordination. Jim gained all the necessary permissions from the various authorities. Poppy Day has always been a major event on Highgate's calendar and this year more than 50 members assisted at the two collection points at the Busports at Wellington Street and The Esplanade.

The public responded most generously, and collectors at the Esplanade were rushed off their feet so much so that all poppies had been sold by 9am, necessitating urgent resupply from the Wellington Street team. Highgate's combined effort was an amazing total of \$22,740.19: (the first time Highgate has ever "cracked" \$20,000), comprised of
Wellington Street Bus Station (under the leadership of Jim Eayrs): \$8,217.19; and the
Busport and Esplanade Railway Station (team leader: Martyn Thompson): \$14,523.00.

On behalf of the President and Committee, grateful "Thanks" are extended to all members of Highgate who pitched in to help achieve this magnificent result. It was a great effort- and special "Thanks" are extended to hardworking Jill Thompson who supported Martyn and his team so capably throughout the day. WELL DONE ALL!



LAST POST

THE HON ROBERT WALLACE AO Dr ALAN KING PHILIP LOFFMAN

Lest We Forget



HEAR YE HEAR YE

Last year's Informal Luncheon at Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club proved to be so popular, a return event has been planned. At this stage, our hoped-for date in March isn't possible (as renovations won't be completed until the end of March). Although it is close to ANZAC Day, we've accepted Sunday 22nd April.

WATCH FOR MORE DEFINITE DETAILS IN THE MARCH ISSUE.

BOOK REVIEW:

A NEW HISTORY OF THE 2/11TH INFANTRY BATTALION: 'TIS WORTH THE LONG WAIT

It is now nearly 67 years since the end of the Second World War, but members of the 2/11th Aust Inf Bn (most notably long-time Assn President: Ivan Walter) never gave up hope of someone writing a definitive history of this WA-raised unit to preserve their story.

Fortunately, Wes Olsen, a keen Army Reservist and locomotive driver with the Pacific National railway, was prepared to step-up-to-the-crease, and it would be hard to find a better written account of the exploits of this valiant unit. Entitled "Battalion into Battle"- a title suggested by Ralph Honner - a former 2/11th Company Commander, this book is exceptionally well-written as well as a superbly presented, 500page volume, featuring dozens of photos and maps.

Typical of their generation, WA men from all walks of life volunteered, and from November 1939. the unit became an entity in its own right. In all, 2,962 men served in the Battalion. 184 of them paid the supreme sacrifice, 582 became prisoners of war (the vast majority taken in Crete)- and almost 300 were wounded. Just five months after its formation, the unit sailed for the Middle East in April 1940, part of the 6th Australian Division. So varied were the experiences and travels of the 2/11th, as they also saw heavy fighting in Greece, Crete and New Guinea over the next five plus years, that much of it reads like an absorbing adventure story.

The book provides a moving and first-hand account of the trials and tribulations of those taken prisoner in Greece and Crete, describing the sorts of deprivation endured over days at a time en route to various Stalags, jammed and sealed into cattle trucks with little food or water and nil facilities.

Some extraordinary men signed up in this unit. It's first CO was Thomas Louch: the only son of an Anglican Minister, who pre-WWI became a solicitor in Albany. Louch had seen action with the original 11th Bn 1st AIF at Gallipoli on 25 April 1915, and acquitted himself well for over four months there before being wounded in his right arm. After being invalided back to Australia for some months, he was commissioned and sent to France where he won a Military Cross. Post-war Louch resumed his legal career but maintained his connections with the 11th Bn through the CMF, was also a Statelevel hockey champion, and participated in Repertory acting and in the Weld Club. In the latter 1930s, with rising tensions in Europe, Louch by now a Lieutenant Colonel and 45 years old - was tasked with raising the 2/11th. He capably led the 2/11th through Bardia, Tobruk, Derna and Greece (from where they had to be evacuated) before being relieved.

Another fascinating soldier was Alf Passfield (now Dec'd), widely known as "The Escape Artist"- as he escaped from German Stalags on eight occasions. Alf couldn't bear captivity, and eased his frustrations by tattooing himself (or having others do it for him) to relieve his boredom. He later published his own book: named, of course, "The Escape Artist". Less scholarly than Olsen's book, it is nevertheless a wonderful read!; as is "Don't Cry For Me", by Arthur Leggett - thankfully, still a "wag", very much alive and still living in Perth.

Any person with an interest in Military history would value "Battalion into Battle", which can be purchased through the author: wes.dale@westnet.com.au I can thoroughly recommend it!

Editor

The continuing support of Hollywood Private Hospital and their generous assistance to RSL Highgate Sub-Branch is warmly and greatly appreciated.

HOLLYWOOD

PRIVATE HOSPITAL



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