



HIGHGATE



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NEWS

The official newsletter of the Highgate (WA) Sub-Branch of the Returned & Services League of Australia

Monthly Luncheon - Monday 15 November 2010

Venue: Gallipoli Room
Time: 1130 hrs for 1215 hrs
Guest Speaker: Colonel Michael Edward Page.
Topic: Thirteenth Brigade asking more-doing more.

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Mike was born in Warwick, England immigrating to Australia with his family in 1967. He completed his secondary education at Wesley College in Perth. He was Captain of the House Rugby team and Vice Captain of the 1st XV. While playing rugby union for Wesley College he also captained the South Perth Colts rugby league team to a premiership.

After completing his secondary education, he spent ten years in the retail industry selling white goods for a retail/rental business. In 1987, he established TACTICS, a war-gaming and fantasy gaming retail store in Perth, which is now the second largest gaming store in Australia. TACTICS is a self-sustaining business, allowing him to meet his Army commitments and his interest in travel.

He is currently studying, a Bachelor of Arts in History, full-time at the University of Western Australia. He is the Mature Age Ambassador for UWA, has delivered three military battles lectures to the Classical History faculty and has been nominated for the 'Hugh Owen' history prize for 2009.

Mike attended OCTU in 1981 graduating in 1982 into the Royal Australian Infantry Corps. His first appointment was as a Platoon Commander, 16 Battalion, the Royal Western Australia Regiment (RWAR). He continued to serve in a majority of command appointments culminating as the Commanding Officer - 16 RWAR from 2000 to 2001. Colonel Page was awarded Student of Merit on his Company Commanders Course in 1994. Mike is a graduate of the Australian Army Command and Staff College, Queenscliff, completing the course in 1999. He received his Reserve Forces Decoration in 2000, a Training Commanders Commendation in 2004 and the Australian Defence Medal in 2006.

He was promoted on the 1st January 2007, and posted as the Director Army Personnel Agency Perth, and subsequently appointed as an Honorary ADC to the Governor General of Australia on the 1st January 2008. He is currently posted as the Assistant Commander of 13th Brigade.

**IF ATTENDING THIS LUNCH AND NOT ON THE PERMANENT LIST
PLEASE ADVISE BOB ARNOLD BY 11 NOVEMBER**

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Committee: 6 Dec 2010 Monthly Luncheon: 20 Dec 2010



HIGHGATE RETURNED AND SERVICES LEAGUE SUB-BRANCH

PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OCTOBER 2010

It gives me great pleasure to welcome our Past Presidents, RSL Life Members, the Executive Committee and members to the 63rd Annual General Meeting of the Highgate RSL Sub-Branch.

During the past year your Executive and Committee have worked diligently, harmoniously, and responsibly on your behalf and have at all times endeavoured to maintain the high standards set by those who have gone before. There has been a good mix of longstanding experienced members as well as some serving their first term who brought with them a range of knowledge, experience, skills and fresh ideas. One such person was Vice President Leon Griffiths who has been of great support to me. He organised a most interesting guest speaker program for you to enjoy, sought sponsorship to provide extra benefits for members, and is currently busy planning social activities for the year ahead. Another new face was our very capable Secretary Margot Harness whose patience and detailed knowledge of ANZAC House and RSL matters has been a great asset. Although we have seen less of Immediate Past President Ian Mulholland since his move to the South West, I thank him for his continued interest, advice and support.

The biggest issues for Highgate during the year were linked - the continued decline in membership, and Sub-Branch viability. Although these issues have been raised in the past I would be negligent if I did not draw your attention to them. Whilst we were very pleased to welcome several new members they did not offset losses that were primarily health and age related, so membership dropped from 286 to 275. The challenge to each of us is

to introduce at least one prospective member from any of the services, not just the army, - after all soldier, sailor, airman and servicewoman are each depicted on our badge. I urge you to give this matter your utmost consideration. To remain viable we also need members to regularly attend our luncheon meetings and to take an active interest in our Sub-Branch, rather than in some other organisation. Everyone needs to feel welcome, comfortable, satisfied and to go away from ANZAC House looking forward to the third Monday of the next month.

After due consideration, the Sub-Committee charged with reviewing our meeting venue, recommended that Highgate continues to use the facilities at ANZAC House. Cognisant of both members' expectations and reduced incomes following the global financial crisis, a number of measures were introduced to contain costs. Highgate is invoiced for the number of meals ordered in advance, so the practice of booking for luncheons was introduced as was the recovery of costs of late cancellation or non attendance. Whilst there were a few grumbles and initial hiccups 'book by Wednesday' is now accepted. With the arrival of a new House Manager and Chef at ANZAC House communication improved and a good working relationship now exists. For the last few months a simpler meal has been offered at a reduced price of \$25. I am very pleased to report that there has been a gradual increase in attendances at the monthly luncheons and most will agree that although we only have a main course, the standard has greatly improved. I recognise that a number of members who feature in the OBE list are not able to join in the comradeship and

fellowship that we try to promote but it would be wonderful if we could return to the days when at least 100 members came to each luncheon. If you have not been for some time, please come along, perhaps with a friend.

Another matter of concern has been the limited income that Highgate derives from membership subscriptions. The minimum to retain membership of the RSL in the past year was set at \$40 of which \$32 was due to the State Branch. Although Highgate chose to set the fee at \$50 it has proved extremely difficult, some might say impossible, to run the Sub-Branch on just \$18 per member. Do not be deceived by the financial report before you. It may look very healthy but the bulk of the monies are in accounts that cannot be used for general expenditure. To relieve some of Treasurer Richard Adams' worries and to give the members a few extras from time to time the Committee made a decision to hold a raffle at each luncheon; proceeds of the first raffle in July paid for the OBE birthday cake. Our major financial outgoing is the Newsletter which is put together beautifully by Bob Arnold. Generous sponsorship by Hollywood Private Hospital covers one quarter of the cost of production and postage which leaves about \$6000 to be funded by Highgate. Newsletters sent by email are approaching 65%. Whilst not everyone has access to a computer, if you do and are not on our email data base I urge you to make the change forthwith. Alternatively we may be reluctantly forced to reduce the number of issues in a year. No doubt Richard will enlarge on these matters when he speaks to his report.

On a brighter note a great asset that

(Continued on page 3)



SUB WARDENS DUTIES

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

Sunday	7 November 2010	1115 hrs for 1130 hrs - Highgate RSL
Thursday	11 November 2010	1000 hrs for 1100 hrs - Remembrance Day
Thursday	11 November 2010	1740 hrs for 1800 hrs - Venturer Scouts
Monday	29 November 2010	1030 hrs for 1100 hrs - War Widows' Guild

(Continued from page 2)

does not appear on the balance sheet is the value of you, the members who have proved to be so generous in many ways. Phillip Skelton and the team of Sub-Wardens have had a heavy schedule of duties at commemorative services at the State War Memorial. They have also provided a guard of honour at a number of funerals. The Honour Avenue Group under the leadership of Norman Manners met in Kings Park every week to carry out their program. A comprehensive report on the HAG activities will be tabled and published in the newsletter. It is pleasing that some of the newer members have become involved in these areas.

Many other examples come to mind. For instance, under the leadership of Jim Eayrs volunteers collected in excess of \$17,500, a 'best ever' for the 2009 RSL Poppy Day Appeal. At one of the luncheons the hat was sent around for the RSL Australian Forces Overseas Fund - more than \$1000 was collected. Centenarian Harold Birch would have spent many hours carving in wood a copy of the RSL badge which was presented to Highgate; it will have a permanent home at ANZAC House. Ken Bladen took on the portfolio of Hospitals and Health during the year and was soon organising transport for those who find it difficult to get to meetings. When Ian Mulholland gave notice that he would need to hand over the admini-

stration of the website, John Cleary immediately put up his hand and officially joined the Committee on 1 July. Howard Montagu's efforts in particular helped to arrest the decline in membership. On 1 July he took on the Membership portfolio so I am hopeful that our position will improve. Throughout the year Don Blair attended meetings as State Branch representative whilst others have also liaised with schools, sorted out pension and other problems, attended official functions, and conferences, assisted with the Annual Gunfire Breakfast, manned the door and ensured that our own meetings run smoothly. At what cost to Highgate? Very little; most of this work is done with a smile.

I would especially like to thank longstanding Committee members who stepped down after giving many years of service - Laurie Palmer and more recently Robert Mercer, who was awarded an ANZAC of the Year Award for his service to the RSL and the community. It has been a great privilege to be at the helm of Highgate. I thank you for your support, your feedback and suggestions. Highgate has survived another year but challenges lie ahead if the Sub Branch is to be pro-active, to flourish rather than flounder. I thank Matthew Holyday and the staff at ANZAC House as I thank you for your attendance today. I look forward to seeing every one at the meetings in the year ahead.

Martyn Thompson
President Highgate RSL Sub-Branch

The President's Monthly Report

Thank you all for supporting Vice President Leon Griffiths whilst he was Acting President during my recent absence overseas. I returned jet-lagged just in time for the Annual General Meeting. All incumbent Office-bearers had re-nominated and were elected unopposed. I congratulate and welcome Peter Farrell as Junior Vice President, a position that had been vacant for 12 months, Leon as Senior Vice President, Treasurer Richard Adams and Secretary Margot Harness.

Designated Committee positions were confirmed. We will miss the wise counsel of Don Blair whose position as Highgate representative on the State Committee is now in the capable hands of Richard Carter. Bob Mercer and Laurie Palmer both retired from the Committee a few months ago. Phillip Loffman and Tom Horton have more than 'done their bit' and have reached a stage where they can sit back and watch others take up the reins. As the Annual Reports form part of this newsletter I hope that Editor Bob will have room for a paragraph or two about these fine gentlemen in the next edition.

Notice was given in advance that a vote would be taken at the AGM to resolve the issue of whether or not the practice of singing the Royal An-

(Continued on page 4)

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

If so please contact me personally on 9244 8072

Ken Bladen



(Continued from page 3)

them 'God Save the Queen' at the monthly meetings should be resumed. Wishes expressed in writing by members who were not able to attend in person were included in the result which indicated that the majority of members did not wish the Royal Anthem to be sung. The meeting also voted that annual fees be raised and the Newsletter reduced by one copy per year. Whilst in London it was interesting to observe what is happening in the field of veteran affairs. One noticeable change is the way in which the private sector is lending its support to assist Armed Forces personnel who have been wounded in service. The charitable organisation *Help for Heroes* was founded by a group of friends just three years ago. With its slogans 'it's about the blokes' and 'remember the fallen: care for the living', the charity has not only raised more than 70 million pounds (about \$110,000,000) but has heightened awareness of the difficulties traumatised servicemen and women face when they arrive home. As I was leaving England the 'Fashion for the Brave' Gala supported by the British Fashion Industry was expected to raise more than a million pounds in just one evening. A remarkable achievement when one considers the severe financial pressures that the UK government, individuals and businesses are facing.

Planning is well in hand for our annual fundraising effort on Friday 5 November, the RSL Poppy Day Appeal. Coordinator Jim Eayrs has been quietly at work for the past 12 months with the hope that Highgate will better last year's record taking; target \$20,000. Many of our volunteers will be at the City Busports when it is still dark, getting ready to greet the city workers.

Another plan coming to fruition is the Memorial Luncheon on Sunday 7 November. Highgate has a special relationship with Kings Park so it is fitting that we should meet at the Flame of Remembrance to pay tribute to the fallen and then sit down to dine on fine food with fine friends. I do hope that all those involved as either a Sub-Warden or as a member of the Honour Avenue Group are able to attend. Whilst there will be some formalities during the luncheon these will be in keeping with the spirit of the occasion. Give thanks for our many blessings and take time to enjoy the day.

Yours in Fellowship
Martyn

(One for the proud Scots among us)

Battle of Bannockburn - 24 June 1314

The English arrived in sight on the evening, and a bloody conflict immediately ensued between the two bodies of cavalry, where Robert, who was the head of the Scots, engaged in single combat with Henry de Bohun, a gentleman of the family of Hereford, and at one stroke cleft his adversary to the chin with a battle-axe, in sight of the two armies. The English horse fled with precipitation to the main body.

... Sir James Douglas, who commanded the Scottish cavalry, gave the enemy no leisure to rally, but pushed them off the field with considerable loss and pursued them in sight of their whole line of infantry. While the English army were alarmed with this unfortunate beginning of the action which commonly proves decisive, they observed an army on the heights towards the left, which seemed to be arching leisurely in order to surround them; and they were distracted by their multiplied fears. This was a number of wagoners and sumpter-boys, who Robert had collected; and having supplied them with military standards, gave them the appearance at a distance, of a formidable body. The stratagem took effect: A panic seized the English: they threw down their arms and fled: ...

David Hume, *The History of England*, 1754-62

*Lay the proud usurpers low!
Tyrants fall in every foe!
Liberty's in every blow!
Let us do or die!*

Robert Burns, 'Robert Bruce's March to Bannockburn'
1793

(One for the proud Englishmen among us)

Battle of the Nile, 1st August 1798

'Before this time tomorrow I shall have gained a peerage, or Westminster Abbey.'
Horatio Nelson, before the battle.

In this battle the French had a superiority over the British of one hundred and eighty four guns, and three thousand one hundred and eighty two men; yet they lost five sail taken, three sail burnt, one driven on shore and fired, and three frigates. 'A victory,' said the gallant Nelson, 'is not a word strong enough for such an achievement; it should be called a conquest.' From Bonaparte it drew this acknowledgement. 'The destinies have wished to prove by this event, as by all others, that if they have given us a great preponderance on the Continent, they have given the empire of the sea to our rivals.

'The Percy Anecdotes,



HIGHGATE RSL SUB-BRANCH HONOUR AVENUES GROUP 2010 ANNUAL REPORT

Each morning, during the working week, a succession of cars repeat their run along May Drive, taking the short cut through the Park, to save those precious minutes lost during their preparation for the day's work. Some adhere to the 40 kph speed limit whereas others don't. Later, the delivery vans and trucks will follow hoping to save time on a very busy schedule.

At 5 o'clock the exodus from the city begins. Some drive leisurely through the Park enjoying the bushland as they go while others just want to get home fast.

One wonders if these users of the roads and pathways of Kings Park actually see the hundreds of white posts, with black plaques, placed at the base of every tree they pass, or are they just an everyday blur, a background as their minds concentrate on more important and immediate things?

If only they knew that within the Honour Avenues of Lovekin Drive, May Drive and Marri Walk there are over 1,400 remembrance plaques each dedicated to a young Western Australian killed in war and buried somewhere overseas, or worse still, whose body has never been found, giving no comfort to the next-of-kin down through the years.

Do they realise that amongst these plaques there are many heroes and heroines? Men and women who have been honoured by their country for the selfless deeds they carried out?

They must have heard about the man with a donkey on Gallipoli from their school days surely?

Private John Simpson, of WA's 3 Field Ambulance, was once known to every Australian student as "The man with the donkey." Day and night he carried the wounded down from the battlefield of Gallipoli to the beach at ANZAC until the 19th of May 1915 when this brave young man was shot through

the heart. His mates buried him at Hell's Spit and he became an Australian icon to all who learnt of the sacrifice he made for his fellow man. Do they know that his remembrance plaque stands to this day in May Drive, just back from the Saw Avenue entrance to the Park and behind the new children's playground?

Then there are the Western Australians who have been awarded the Victoria Cross, or other high military distinctions for their bravery. There are the heroes of the Royal Australian Air Force whose aircraft went down over Europe, in the desert or in to the jungles of the Pacific. The Royal Australian Navy lads lost in the tumultuous seas of a world at war and then there are our men and Army Nurses who died at sea, or in Japanese prison camps.

Their citations can be seen on their individual plaques as you stroll through the Honour Avenues of Lovekin Drive, May Drive and Marri Walk.

Few people know the story behind the plaques of Kings Park. How did they get there? Who makes them? Where do the new additions come from and more importantly, who looks after them?

It has been agreed both by the Botanic Gardens & Parks Authority and the Highgate RSL custodians, that the 1,400 existing plaques in Kings Park must be presented, at all times, in above average condition. Each bears witness, now and in the future, of the place where the serviceman or woman died and the manner of their death, "killed in action," "died of wounds", "missing" or "died as a Prisoner-of-War".

It records their age and the service they were in and finally who dedicated the plaque.

These plaques and white posts are their crosses, where ever they may rest and in Kings Park they share a comradeship in a park of peace. It is our honour-

able duty to preserve them for the future citizens of Western Australia as a reminder of what a terrible price these young men and women paid for the lives that our people enjoy today.

The task of caring for the initial 404 plaques, planted on the 3rd August 1919, was passed to the State RSL in 1922 by the Kings Park Board. The State RSL then appointed West Perth RSL Sub-Branch as the custodians to be followed by Subiaco, then the Public Service and Press and finally, in the early seventies, the task was given to the Highgate RSL Sub-Branch and it is they who hold the responsibility to this day. It is a responsibility that is not taken lightly for all of the active members involved are Highgate RSL volunteers and former members of the Australian Defence Force, some having seen service in WWI or Vietnam.

ACTIVE MEMBERS OF THE HONOUR AVENUE GROUP

There are 12 males and one female split as follow:

Group One Administration The Lodge 4 members

Group Two Workshed 3 members
Group Three (A Party) Outside 2 members

(B Party) Outside 2 members

(C Party) Outside 2 members

Average age is 75 years

HOURS WORKED

Over the period 01 July 2009 to 30 June 2010, 1,975 hours were logged over 102 days.

PLAQUE DEDICATIONS

These are held in August, November, February & May with normally 12 plaques per dedication.



(Continued from page 5)

WORK ACHIEVED

1. Plaques
Replaced 3 due to vandalism.
Fully refurbished 20
Newly dedicated 43 and placed in the Honour Avenues
2. Distinguishing Colour Patches
New (for dedications) and replacements 55 attached to posts
3 Posts
Prepared and painted 54 recycled
4. Dedication Services
Held in August, November 2009 and February, May 2010.
WWI 21 WWII 22
Army 35 Navy 2 Air Force 6
5. Five Year Expenditure Plan
 - a. Each plaque within the Park will be numbered on the front of the post for easier identification.
 - b. Each plaque will be fitted with an aluminium tube to facilitate the placement of Australian National flags on the 25/04 and the 11/11.
 - c. All cracked and welded plaques have been replaced with new plaques.
 - d. An audit, currently being conducted, will highlight plaques to be replaced because of worn typefaces, corrections etc
6. Additional
 - a. Each ANZAC DAY and Remembrance Day the Highgate RSL Honour Avenues Group, with the assistance of students from the Carine Senior High School, place the Australian National flag on every plaque

within the park. Not only does this pay tribute to those from our state who died in wars, it draws the public's attention to the plaques.

b. Through out the year community groups, schools, scouts and guides are addressed by the Chairman and the story of the remembrance plaques of Kings Park told. Media is utilised, as the opportunity arises, both community radio and ABC television having been used in the past.

Some people ask the question: "What will happen when there are no more wars to draw volunteers from to service the plaques?"

The answer is simple.
"There will always be an ADF and within it a Citizens Force. The RSL will draw from these members and the Honour Avenues Group, in turn, will obtain its volunteers from the RSL Sub-Branch."

The Honour Avenue plaques will never want for maintenance as long as there are service men and women for both they and our war dead are part of a large and exclusive family.

LEST WE FORGET

Norman Manners

Chairman
Highgate RSL Sub-Committee Honour Avenues Group

WW2

A couple of dramatic photographs - courtesy of Bob Mercer.



Deck crew member climbing up to get the pilot out. He did.



German 280 mm K5 Gun

LAST POST



Dr. Harry Pope James Robertson

Lest We Forget.

This publication is produced with the support of Hollywood Private Hospital and their generous assistance is greatly appreciated.

HOLLYWOOD PRIVATE HOSPITAL