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

President's Report

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STATE CONGRESS

This will be held on the weekend of 1 – 2 July in Perth and Highgate Sub-Branch has prepared and lodged four items for submission to the Congress for consideration.

They include:

Immigration Policy and the English Language

Whereas it should be compulsory to learn the English language within the first two years of arrival in this country.

DFRDB

To index pensions to CPI or MTAWWE whichever is the greatest.

The Australian National Flag

That it be better protected by inclusion of the wording of the Flags Act 1953 in the Australian Constitution. This would mean that the constitution amendment, concerning the ANF, could only be changed with a majority support of the people at a referendum.

Educational Assistance for Returning Veterans

That returning veterans, with war like service, be assisted with part refund of fees associated with approved courses designed to help service personnel to return to a civilian occupation.

The National Congress, also to be held in Perth, will follow in mid September.

JULY LUNCHEON — A BIG ONE

Our July 17 luncheon meeting will see us gathering to celebrate with the OBE's of the Sub-Branch with ages reaching from eighty to 100 years. So it will be some birthday party.

As well we will have the opportunity to honour sixteen of our fellow members who are to be awarded service medallions for the years they have been a part of our Sub-Warden's presence at the State War Memorial during the many services held each year. Their dedication and proud bearing has often been commented on by not only those involved but also by the general public attending.

Highgate RSL are proud of their service and when it was proposed by our Sub-

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UPCOMING EVENTS

This Month's Luncheon: Monday 19 June 2006

Venue: Gallipoli Room

Time: 11.30 hrs Fellowship, 12.30 hrs Luncheon

Speaker: Jumae Atkinson, Department of Veterans Affairs

Topic: Fall Prevention

Committee: Monday 12 June 2006

Monday 3 July 2006

Luncheon: Monday 17 July 2006

Sub Wardens Duties

Wreath Laying ceremonies currently scheduled at the State War Memorial, Kings Park

Sunday 9 July 2006 — 10.15 for 10.30 — Z Special Unit International (Inc)

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Warden committee representative, Phillip Skelton, that a special medallion be struck for presentation to those who have given long and continuous service, it was unanimously supported by the committee. The medallions will be presented to the recipients by:

Mr. Ian Douglas Manager Perth-Defence Service Homes Insurance Scheme, the donors of the medallions, Warden Mr. Richard Court AC, Mrs. Ann Bradford Managing Director Buckingham Pewter, who donated the artwork and moulds for the medallions and Mr. Arthur Edgar Deputy Commissioner for Veteran's Affairs.

So mark July 17 on your calendar now and be early to get a seat for our big event.

HONOUR AVENUE DEDICATION SERVICE

The next dedication will be in Marri Walk (off May Drive, to the right, just down from the statue of Lord Forrest) on Saturday 24 June at 10.30am.

We urge Highgate members to attend this moving ceremony as some ten plaques are dedicated by relatives to Australians who enlisted in Western Australia and died on remote battlefields overseas. Medals to be worn.

I look forward to seeing you all at our next luncheon on Monday 19 June until then, good health.

Norm Manners



If a man does not make new acquaintance as he advances through life, he will soon find himself alone. A man should keep his friendship in constant repair.

Dr. Samuel Johnson

PENSION OFFICERS REPORT

The Repatriation Medical Authority (RMA) has announced revocations or changes to some of their Statements Of Principles (SOP's) on the following diseases.

- Soft tissue sarcoma
- Non-melanotic malignant neoplasm of the skin
- Malignant neoplasm of the lung
- Paget's disease of the bone
- Vascular dementia
- Open angle glaucoma
- Angle closure glaucoma

After updating myself on these SOP's I was surprised to see where service in Vietnam and exposure to herbicides seemed to figure more prominently in SOP's these days. I can only suppose that more medical research is finding the connection between diseases and Vietnam service/herbicides. I decided to scan through the total list of diseases for which the RMA have examined and produced SOP's on. Service in Vietnam and exposure to herbicides is a factor within the following SOP's.

- Soft tissue sarcoma
- Malignant neoplasm of the larynx
- Hodgkin's lymphoma
- Non Hodgkin's lymphoma
- Malignant neoplasm of the lung
- Malignant neoplasm of the prostate
- Myeloma

Some of these also show that cigarette smoking is implicated in their cause.

If you have any questions about these changes or want further information about these issues then please give your Pension Officer a call.

Best wishes

Jim Eayrs



SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT'S PAGE

MILESTONES OF WORLD WAR TWO—FEBRUARY 1942

Feb. 1, On Dutch Timor, as Australian troops surrendered, a group of several hundred Australian commandos took to the jungle, where they continued to harass the Japanese for eleven months, before being taken off to safety; in those eleven months, they killed 1,500 Japanese, for the loss of 40 of their own.

Ten Australian soldiers, captured at Sowacoed, on Amboina Island, were bayoneted to death by Japanese troops. When the principal port of that island was overrun, and its small garrison of 809 Australians surrendered, 426 were bayoneted to death by their Japanese captors, or were later to die from torture or starvation.

Also on this day:

The Japanese siege of American forces in Bataan, in the Philippines, began and

British intelligence suffered its most serious setback of the war. The German Submarine Command, as part of an internal security drive, altered its Enigma machine in such a way that it was to prove unreadable for the rest of the year.

Feb. 4, One hundred and fifty Australian prisoners-of-war were massacred near Rabaul.

Rommel wrote to his wife stating that "We have Cyrenaica back and *it went like greased lightning*".

Feb. 5, A further thirty Australian and Dutch prisoners-of-war were executed.

Feb. 7, General Percival declared that the city of Singapore "would resist to the last man."

Feb. 8, 5000 Japanese troops crossed the Johore Straits from Malaya and landed on Singapore Island.

Fritz Todt, Germany's Minister for Armaments and war production, was killed in a plane crash and was succeeded by Albert Speer.

Feb. 14, Japanese paratroops landed at Palembang in Sumatra.

Feb. 15, Singapore surrendered and 32,000 Indian, 16,000 British and 14,000 Australian troops were taken prisoners-of-war.

On the same day, in a broadcast to the British people, Churchill told the world that "Here is the moment to display the calm and poise, combined with grim determination, which not so long ago brought us out of the very jaws of death" He went on to warn his listeners "the only real danger would be a weakening in our purpose and therefore in our unity – that is the mortal crime."

Feb. 16, Bangka Island, off the coast of Sumatra, twenty-two Australian Army Nursing Service sisters surrendered to a Japanese patrol. Ordered to march into the sea, in line abreast, they were shot from behind. There was but one survivor, Sister Vivian Bullwinkel, who, although severely wounded in the side, 'played dead' and was later recaptured and interned by the Japanese for over three years.

Five of the largest German submarines, each of a thousand tons, were sent across the Atlantic to the Caribbean with instructions to attack Allied merchant ships off the blackout-free coast of America, from Trinidad to New York.

Feb. 18, Singapore Island. The first group of 5000 Chinese civilians were rounded up and massacred by the occupying Japanese.

Feb. 19, Japanese aircraft launched their first raid against Darwin sinking all 17 ships in the harbour and downing 22 Australian and American warplanes. The allied death toll was 240.

Feb. 20, Amboina Island. A further 120 Australian prisoners-of-war were executed by either sword or bayonet on the orders of Lieutenant Nakagawa.

The same day President Quezon of the Philippines was taken off Luzon by submarine.

Feb. 21, The President of the United States ordered General Douglas MacArthur to leave the Philippines and transfer his headquarters to Australia.

Feb. 23, The British submarine *Trident* torpedoed the German heavy cruiser *Prinz Eugen*.

Feb. 28, The American heavy cruiser *Houston* and HMAS *Perth* were sunk in the battle of the Java Sea. 352 Australian sailors were drowned; of the survivors rescued by the Japanese, 105 died as prisoners-of-war.

That day Japanese forces landed on the island of Java.

Twenty-seven crated aircraft, aboard the *Sea Witch*, were dumped into Tjilatjap harbour by the Dutch there being no time in which to assemble them.

By the end of February German submarines had sunk sixty-five Allied merchant ships off the American coast.

In Leningrad, still besieged, more than 100,000 people had died of starvation that month.

In the eight months since June 1941, 202,257 German soldiers had been killed on the Eastern Front, 725,642 wounded, 112,617 incapacitated by frostbite and a further 400,000 taken prisoner.

Next month we will record for you some of the milestones from March of 1942.

Bob Norris



Beating the Winter Bugs

(With thanks to Ashlea Hatcher – Hollywood Private Hospital)

Shorter days and chilly nights bring with them the prospect of cosy evenings around the fire, delicious warming food - and miserable winter colds.

Now is the time to consider how best to prepare both your body and your environment for winter and minimize the risk of contracting one of the 'droplet' spread viruses that cause colds and influenza.

According to Hollywood Private Hospital Director of Medical Services Dr Margaret Sturdy, there is an even greater need for protective measures this year because of concerns about avian influenza (aka bird flu) – especially for those working in hospitals.

So here's what to do ...

1. Vaccinate

The flu vaccine provides protection against the three common influenza strains identified this year – the New Caledonian, Californian and Malaysian strains. While the vaccine does not provide protection against avian flu, it does raise general levels of immunity. It is particularly recommended for all health care workers, those over age 65, and those with chronic health conditions. Hollywood Private Hospital is offering free flu vaccine to all staff.

2. Use tissues and good hand hygiene

Handkerchiefs spread bugs. Use a single-use, disposable tissue when you sneeze or blow your nose and dispose of it, then wash your hands well. This minimizes the risk of contaminating your environment or transmitting the virus-laden droplets to your colleagues or family.

3. Decontaminate

If you do have a cold, drastically reduce the environmental load by simply wiping down surfaces with some 'spray and wipe' antibacterial product and a paper towel – then bin it.

4. Stay home

Stay home if you are sick. Members of the caring professions are notoriously bad at taking care of themselves and tend to soldier on for fear of letting the team down. Coming to work with a cold or flu raises the risk of transmitting the virus to your colleagues and patients.

5. Care for yourself

Look after yourself by eating a nutritious balanced diet, getting sufficient exercise and at least reducing, if not stopping, smoking. Whether you take any of the myriad of vitamin supplements and natural therapies available remains an individual choice.

In summary, the take home messages are:

- vaccinate
- wash your hands

the best way to take care of others is to take care of yourself.