



Issue 473
April 2008

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

MONTHLY LUNCHEON
PLEASE NOTE THAT THE APRIL MONTHLY LUNCHEON IS REPLACED BY THE GUNFIRE BREAKFAST

— **PRESIDENT'S REPORT** —

Guest Speaker – Gunfire Breakfast 2008

The Guest Speaker at the Gunfire Breakfast is Frank Taylor, a celebrated and renowned Military Historian. Frank was in the Merchant Navy when he was called up for National Service. While still a member of the Army Reserve, he joined the WA Police Force rising to the rank of Inspector. Today he is recognised for his knowledge of military sites in Europe, the Middle East and Asia that are of historical importance to Australians. Frank, who pioneered treks to these sites, has walked the Kokoda Trail some 140 times. He is recently returned from a tour of Crete with members of Highgate and 28 Infantry Battalion.

The Gunfire Breakfast will again be held at the WA Club. The conduct and operation of the breakfast is similar to past years with a registration table followed by the Coffee Royal setup in the bar alcove then move into the dining room and your table.

We still have limited seating available so please get onto Richard Adams to reserve your seat and should you make a booking or bookings for guests we will squeeze them in.

Committee Changes

Roger Tingley has stepped down as Senior Vice President and Martyn Thompson has taken over that role. Bob Bunney will hold down the dual positions of Junior Vice President and Secretary. Which means we are looking for a Secretary over the next few months, and those people I approached in the past for the job now is the time to off load some things preventing you and step up to the role.—We love volunteers.

State Congress

The State Congress is scheduled for the last weekend in June. If you have anything that may be raised at Congress on behalf of members please contact Jim Eayrs or Bob Arnold within the next three weeks.

Sub-Branch Auditor

We appointed Mr Jim Boot as our Auditor and he joined us for lunch in March. I hope, Jim, you will enjoy a long and happy relationship with Highgate.

ANZAC Day

I look forward to seeing many of you on ANZAC Day and I trust that you will all have a great day.

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FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Committee: 7th April 2008
Gunfire Breakfast: 25th April 2008



NOTICES TO MEMBERS

PARKING

Your committee is aware of the many phone calls and direct appeals made by senior members of Highgate Sub-Branch regarding the problem of parking their vehicles on a Monday Luncheon Meeting.

This has become even more acute following the closure of some parking facilities, which in turn, has put a strain on The Concert Hall and that of Riverside Drive to the extent that they are full by approximately 0800 each morning.

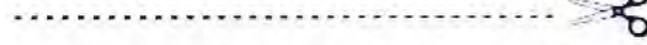
Alternatives, such as train, bus, Cat bus still require a walk to bus and train stops and ANZAC House and aging legs cannot cope with this task both ways.

Therefore, in an attempt to overcome the problem, it is our intention to approach Perth City Council and request that a number of bays be allocated to our members, once a month, in the Concert Hall, for a limited time.

Our members would need to pay the normal parking rates between, say, 1100 to 1430 hours and would be issued, by our Sub-Branch, with an identification card for placement in your vehicle to assist Council Parking Officers.

We do not know how this request will be greeted by Council, however we intend trying.

To give us an idea of how many parking bays we are talking about we would appreciate members, who have a difficulty in walking, completing the following slip and returning to the Editor or phone him on 9448 2757.



Please cut along here and send to: The Editor Bob Arnold
6 Currajong Road DUNCRAIG WA 6023 or phone 9448 2757

PARKING REQUIREMENT – IMPAIRED MEMBERS

I have difficulty in walking and request a reserved parking bay in the Perth Concert Hall for our Monthly Monday Luncheon Meetings.

Members

Name: _____



We would also like to hear your thoughts, should you have any other ideas on how the parking difficulties may be overcome.

Editor.

MEMBER CVs

A volunteer is needed to maintain the Highgate Sub-Branch's records of member cv's. This is an interesting, and not onerous task which takes little time as curriculum vitae are only required when a new member joins. And, unfortunately this is not all that frequently. If you have a computer and a basic knowledge of "Word" you have the necessary skills.

Should you be interested in undertaking this task would you please advise the Secretary, Bob Bunney whose contact details are on the front page of this newsletter.

DRESS - MONTHLY LUNCHEONS

There have been occasions when new members have attended their first Sub-Branch luncheon casually dressed. This proves to be embarrassing to them and as new members are invariably introduced by an existing member would you please ensure that you advise your nominee that the standard dress for luncheons is a jacket and tie.

KEITH FLANAGAN OAM

Keith Archibald Flanagan was born in Subiaco Western Australia in May 1920, one of five children to Edith and Archibald Flanagan.

Before joining up at the outbreak of the Second World War he was a reservist and a journalist with the Daily News. He was also an amateur boxer who became the welter weight champion in the 10th Light Horse Militia.

He served in the Middle East as a member of the 2/3rd Machine Gun Battalion during 1941 and returned to Australia in January 1942 when the Japanese army was heading towards Singapore.

Keith went on to fight in Java where Weary Dunlop created a General Hospital in Bandung high school to treat sick and wounded Allies. Following the capitulation of the Allies, Weary Dunlop was one of about 1000 men transferred from Java to Singapore and on to Thailand where they became the first Australian POWs to work on the construction of the infamous Thai - Burma Railway.

After the war he returned to journalism and acting and a distinguished career in both fields followed.

After his retirement his life was devoted to securing the memory of the soldier-surgeon Weary Dunlop, first with the Weary Dunlop Tour for Thai-Burma Railway veterans and their families and then the Dunlop-Boonpong Exchange Fellowship, in honour of the former shopkeeper and Mayor of Kanchanaburi who had smuggled money and medicines to the POW camps at the risk of torture and death.

Weary's memory is kept alive through the ANZAC Day Quiet Lion Tour, which Keith inaugurated. He died in Nedlands in March 2008.



SUB WARDENS DUTIES

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

Wednesday 9 April 2008 — 0915 hrs Rehearsal - Service 1015 hrs Schools' ANZAC Day Service - *Flame*

Friday 25 April 2008 — Bus at 0500 hrs - 0530 hrs for 0550 hrs - ANZAC Day Dawn service

- MEET YOUR COMMITTEE -

Members will recall from reading an earlier newsletter that we will, where space permits, give you some insight into the background of your Committee Members whose concerns include looking after your interests.

On this occasion we feature.



R.D. (Bob) MERCER AM

Robert Duncan Mercer who was born on 7th June 1930 and educated at North Perth State School, Sandstone State School and Wesley College. He married Florence Jean Jenkins in 1953 and has two daughters and one son. His civil employment over the years 1946 until his retirement in 1986, was with B Mercer Ltd., B Mercer Pty. Ltd., Mercer Traders Pty. Ltd. and Mercer Mooney.

of the 5th Training Group and in 1967 went to South Vietnam as part of a Citizen Military Force Observer Group. Following his return from Vietnam he was promoted Lieutenant Colonel and appointed Commanding Officer of 11th Battalion, The Royal Western Australia Regiment.

In 1976 Colonel Mercer was promoted Colonel and appointed Assistant Commander 5th Military District and 5th Field Force Group. During this period he was Honorary ADC to the Governor General of Australia, Sir John Kerr. In 1978 he was honoured by being made a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) for service to the Army Reserve. Colonel Mercer continued service with the command and Staff Training Unit as Chairman of Officer entry boards for members of the Army Reserve, until his retirement in 1985.

He served as the Government Representative from 1975 to 1983 on the Metropolitan Market Trust. He was also the Australian President of the National Chamber of Fruit and Vegetables and the State President of the Chamber of Fruit and Vegetable Industries.

He was a Committee Member of the Order of Australia Association from 1975 to 1990 and served on the Council of Management of the Police and Citizens Youth Clubs over the period 1983 to 1997

Colonel Mercer joined the 16/28th Infantry Battalion in 1948 as a Private Soldier; two years later he was promoted and commissioned as a Lieutenant. Between the period 1954 to 1963 he had several Command and Staff appointments. In 1964 he was appointed Chief Instructor

On his retirement after 37 years service, Colonel Mercer was appointed Honorary Colonel The Royal Western Australia Regiment.

He joined Highgate Sub-Branch of the RSL in 1985 and was invited onto the State Executive of the RSL in 1990. He has served on the Defence Committee, Listening Post Committee, State Congress, Agenda Committee and as Sub Warden of the State War Memorial. In addition to these duties Bob was also Liaison Officer for Yokine/Joondanna Sub-Branch and East Victoria Park/ Vietnam Veterans Sub-Branch. In 2001 he was honoured with Life Membership of the RSL and appointed a Trustee with the State Branch of the League.



LAST POST

Keith Flanagan OAM - James Kevan - Dr Alan King
Major General Ken Taylor AO RL



THE HEALING POWER OF DANCE

(With thanks to Ashlea Hatcher - Hollywood Private Hospital)

Dance can be a ritual, a means of celebration and a form of entertainment, but it can also be something more. Artistic director of the West Australian Ballet, Ivan Cavallari talks about his 2008 season and his love of dance.

When he was 16, Ivan Cavallari first saw *The Nutcracker* at the Bolshoi. It was his first night at that theatre shortly after his arrival in Moscow as a young student. He had no seat.

A colleague from Ivan's school suggested they wait until the lights went down before they would look for a place to sit. To his surprise, after a few minutes he indicated to Ivan a seat in the very front row.

"I was petrified as the curtain was raised and I had a feeling that my heart would explode any minute!" Ivan said. "Maximova and Vassiliev were the stars on that night and they remained my favourite dancers for many years after."

This childhood excitement is still present in Ivan as he talks excitedly about his 2008 season with the WA Ballet. After 28 years in the industry, Ivan still has a passion for ballet that he hopes to convey to audiences when he choreographs the world-famous *Nutcracker* in his own personal and unique style.

Ivan was born in Bolzano, Italy. He received his initial training at the Teatro alla Scala Ballet School in Milan where his teachers noticed his talent and awarded him a scholarship to the Bolshoi Ballet School in Moscow in 1981, where he finished his training in 1983.

He has danced in *Swan Lake*; *Onegin*; *Romeo and Juliet*; *Taming of the Shrew* and the leading role in *Edward II*; *Sleeping Beauty*; *Giselle*, Ivan played the man and the "Ewige" in *Song of the Earth* and the brother in *My brother, my sister*.

For the Stuttgart Ballet, Ivan choreographed the *Pas de deux Fishy*, and the State Opera Ballet Hannover commissioned from him a piece set to the music of John Adam and entitled *Harmonielehre*.

Ivan went on collaborate and stage major ballet productions all over the world including *La Dolce Vita* with the Swedish Royal Ballet; *Onegin* in Italy; Tchaikowski Im-

pressionen in Vienna; and a musical in Japan called *On Your Toes*.

Ivan's achievements make for an impressive resume but, for all his accolades as a director and choreographer, ever since he was younger Ivan always knew he wanted to dance.

"I insisted with my parents that I wanted to become a dancer, even though at the time I didn't really know myself what a dancer was. However I just had this motivation within myself, without really knowing why," he said.

"Attending a ballet performance, where you literally see the music, or images of this music, it's quite exciting in a way. I feel greatly privileged to do this work."

Hollywood Private Hospital is proud to be a major sponsor of the WA Ballet in 2008 for a number of reasons. Firstly, it is a time of transformation for the Company – under the artistic direction of Ivan – as they build their core ensemble of dancers and develop a comprehensive repertoire of major works to place Perth firmly in the pantheon of great ballet cities.

The Company's new look reflects this evolution, and WA Ballet's growth from State ballet company to internationally attractive Ballet destination. "Hollywood is in the business of healing and community initiatives such as sponsorship of the WA Ballet is a way of 'taking care of' the emotional and spiritual aspect of rejuvenation," executive director Kevin Cass-Ryall said.

Wellness is a term that embodies the physical, emotional, spiritual and environmental. Hollywood is looking at each of these individually to aid a patient's recovery and speed up the healing process.

Ivan believes dance can connect everyone because it is a universal need of the human.

"It has even been proven that Mozart's music has been used to treat depression as a therapy," he said. "There really is a universal connection with music and dance that is approachable for everyone."

"I couldn't live without music. I could live without many things, but not without music because for me stepping into the ballet studio was always a healing process.

"It didn't matter how bad a mood I was in or how sore I was feeling because the moment I stepped into the theatre I started smiling," Ivan said.

It is true that illness is a part of everyone's life and even though going to hospital at any point in life often can't be avoided, it doesn't mean the experience has to be an entirely painful one. Ivan believes that if we create a pleasant atmosphere using dance, music and other mediums and start living already while going through the recovery period, you may emerge stronger and healthier than before.

It is said that rhythm is beneficial. Our muscles, including the heart muscle, synchronize to the beat of music. For example, some classical music approximates the rhythm of the resting heart (70 beats per minute).

Self-expression in music therapy can reveal subconscious thoughts and feelings and be therapeutic in the same way psychotherapy has shown to be therapeutic.

The creative process of creating art whether it is through music, painting, sculpture, or dance can be beneficial.

"In fact I just recently saw an article in the paper quoting a scientist from Montreal who was saying that when we are listening to music it doesn't matter if we're sitting – we're all dancing," Ivan said.

"It's reaction of the brain. We are all choreographing different steps whatever we are listening to. He discovered that we are all dancers. It doesn't matter if we are sitting or lying down but we are all dancing along with the music – we are really moving.

"I think this is true and attending a ballet performance can be exciting because when you see the dancers creating images of the music it can translate a lot because it also connects people to what we are all thinking."

The Nutcracker is showing at His Majesty's Theatre from 16 May to 31 May 2008.