



Website: <http://Highgate-rsl.org.au>

# HIGHGATE



## NEWS

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

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## MONTHLY LUNCHEON AND AGM

Monday 21st October 2013

Venue: Gallipoli Room  
Time: 1130hrs for 1215 hrs

### GUEST SPEAKER: Ian King. TOPIC: "Geraldton: Boom or Bust"



With an extensive professional background as a proprietor and National Manager of oil and gas exploration/production supply chain logistics, Ian King held many posts and spent more than 25 years as a Company Director. With qualifications in Accounting and Transport Management to boot, he brought a wealth of expertise and experience to his service as Chairman of the Geraldton Port Authority since 2002, presiding over a number of multi-million dollar projects in that role - including the \$103 million Port Enhancement Project and \$53 million Bert 5 Iron Ore Expansion Project. He is an expert in Heavy Road and Freight Transport as well. Ian King served in the ADF from 1959-1965.

For the next Luncheon (21st October) **PLEASE** enter your name electronically on the **BOOK-IN SHEET** (by Friday 18th October), using the web-site (ie: click on **OCTOBER LUNCHEON** under the picture of the Flame of Remembrance, and the list will appear). **FOR THOSE WITHOUT** email please call **Margot Harness 9293 1076** (or any of the committee listed at left) to book in. Please note that the Book-In Sheet allows you to enter a "P" in Column 3 to indicate you are a **PERMANENT** booking.

## president's Report

May I thank all members for bestowing on me the honour of being your President for the coming year. I would also acknowledge the work and efforts of outgoing President Leon who we have to thank for, amongst other developments, extending our social activities and in particular instituting our Memorial Luncheon. Leon has volunteered to organise this year's Luncheon for which I thank him.

Once again through the support of Legacy we are able to invite the SAS widows and children to join us at this event. The continued support of Legacy in this is most appreciated. Through sponsorship and subsidy from the sub-branch we

(Continued on page 2)

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## FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

LUNCHEON - 21 October 2013

(Committee: 10am same day)



(Continued from page 1)

have again been able to subsidise the cost for members and their wives/partners. Should you wish to invite non-members they will be required to pay the full price. Preference will be given to members for attendance.

Our committee over the past years has been very strong. Last year Ray Galliot agreed to take on the position of Secretary for one year, and did a wonderful job. I thank Ray for his enthusiasm, ideas and efficiency over the past year and although he had been prepared to do a further month or two, this has been short-circuited by unexpected hospitalisation for a very serious infection in his right foot. So we now urge Ray to put his health first, and hope the doctors will soon be on top of the problems. We wish him all the very, very best.

I am pleased to advise though that Geoff Hourn has stepped up to undertake the position of Junior Vice President, for which I thank him warmly and welcome him to the Committee.

This still leaves the Sub-Branch in the difficult position of being without a Secretary. Many members have served the

Sub-Branch, over the years - hopefully someone will consider that he/she now has some time to give. It is not onerous. Committee meetings are held from 1000hrs on the morning of the Luncheon, which now means one less trip into the city. My urgent plea is for a volunteer for the Secretary position.

Our Editor, Margot, is doing a sterling job but I'm mindful of the need to have others available to step in if necessary. It is important to maintain our newsletter, as communication is so important for our members. Currently we are using Microsoft Office Publisher. If you can use this software or are interested in learning it, please consider volunteering your services for when they are required.

As most, if not all of our committee are retired, expect most to be away travelling at some stage during the year. Generally other members of the committee assume the responsibilities of these who are absent; and to do this effectively and efficiently we need a full strength committee.

Yours in fellowship,  
Peter

### Sub-Branch Snippets .....

As we all know, age and ill-health have caught up with many of our long-time members - meaning that they can rarely attend monthly Luncheons any more: their failing mobility just makes it too difficult, or nigh on impossible. **But many are still out there, and would probably appreciate a phone call or visit.**

**John Hatley** (ex-British Para) struggles to attend when he can, but is in-and-out of hospital a lot now and often unwell; **Keith Norrish** OAM is another we haven't seen for a long time; so too: **Eric Watts**. **John McKenzie** was recently involved in a MVA, and is still recuperating at his home in Sorrento. **Eleanore Wells** remains in a Nursing Home (Alfred Carson Nursing Home, 20 Bay Rd CLAREMONT). She loves visitors and a chat on the phone (6140 2018). **Alan Saville**, a Past President of Highgate, is finding it very difficult to get to Luncheons any more. **Stephen Scriven** suffered a stroke a couple of months ago, and he too has been hospitalized for some time for treatment and therapy.

FROM EVERYONE IN THE SUB-BRANCH LADS (and LASSIE!) know that we are thinking of you and send you our warmest wishes !!



### MESSAGE "ALERT" - POPPY DAY on FRIDAY

8th November

**If you can help rattle-a-tin,** and have not already volunteered, please call Mike Harness Ph: 9293 1076 (or e-mail: [mhar-ness@westnet.com.au](mailto:mhar-ness@westnet.com.au)) or enter names on forms at the October Luncheon. Indicate preferred location and times that suit.

As usual, Highgate will be collecting at the Esplanade BusPort/Train station and at the Wellington Street Bus Station between 0600 and 1030 am. The early "Rush Hours" yield the best results!

### CALLING ALL YOU COMPUTER BUFFS:

How many of you have checked out the Highgate RSL web-site?? If you haven't - why not take a peek? John Cleary has done a marvellous job putting it together. Check out your own photo and brief CV on the "Hall of Honour": [http://highgate-rsl.org.au/hall\\_honour3.php](http://highgate-rsl.org.au/hall_honour3.php)

There is also a direct LINK to the current Newsletter at any time (as well as accessing previous copies). Go to the Highgate RSL Sub-Branch web-site.

### 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

Friday 25 October 2013 : 1530 for 1600 hrs - RSL WA Annual State Congress  
Sunday 27 October 2013 : 1200 for 1230 hrs - Consulate of Greece (National OCHI Day)  
Tuesday 29 October 2013 : 1000 for 1030 hrs - Royal Over-Seas League

## **"The Way We Were" Gallery ..... Our Golden Oldies .....**

It's is hard to know where to start when putting the career of Colonel (Ret'd) Phillip Skelton AM, FIEAust, CPEng, FRMIT (Comm Engr) under the spotlight, as his accomplishments are many, his interests eclectic and varied, and his contributions to the community at large quite remarkable. What shines through unmistakably is a well-demonstrated commitment towards caring for others, rather prodigious energy and a great zest for life!

Phillip grew up in a succession of outback towns in NSW, and almost became a high school maths and science teacher before early National Service sparked an interest in the Army. A graduate of the Royal Military College Duntroon, his military career encompassed many roles in technical and officer training as well as a variety of staff appointments. Some highlights were Command of a Troop in Vietnam in 1967, command of a Regiment in 1976-77, Australian Communications-Electronics Rep in the USA 1978-80, Commander Field Force Signals 1981, Director of Communications 1982-84 and Director Organisation - Army in 1985. In addition to Duntroon, he is a graduate of the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, The Royal Military College of Science (UK), the Australian Staff College Queenscliffe (he was equal first) and the US Armed Forces Staff College. One senses that this man was never the sort of student who needed to be nudged by tutors to submit his Assignments on time!

He was honoured with the award of Member of the Order of Australia for outstanding leadership.

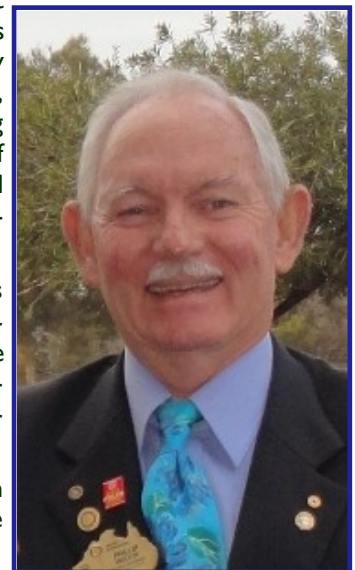
Not one to rest on his laurels, Phillip moved to WA in 1985 to work for the State government to improve access to telecommunications and broadcasting throughout WA. Amongst other projects he set up were the Westlink talk-back television network, which delivered TAFE and other courses by satellite to over 120 towns in the State; and led to many towns gaining radio and TV transmitters for the first time. He is an author of numerous submissions to Federal reviews on behalf of WA consumers, and once he semi-retired, enjoyed part-time consulting work until 2009.

Phillip must be a marvellous time manager, because for many years, in tandem with employment, he has actively and generously devoted time to a host of community organisations - most notably the RSL and Rotary: with whom he has been President of the Rotary Club of Perth, and Assistant Governor of Rotary District 9450. A little birdie tells us that he is currently involved in a Rotary project which is clearing mines from around a village in Laos, building a hospital there and rebuilding schools. Such works are typical of the altruism and generosity that so typify what Rotarians are all about.

Highgate is grateful for the loyal, innovative and utterly dependable eight years he spent as Deputy Warden of the State War Memorial - leading and organising the Sub-Wardens for countless wreath-laying ceremonies. Other wide-ranging senior posts in community groups included President of a Community Council, Director of a school Foundation, inaugural Director of a Music Foundation, Director of a marriage and family counselling organisation, a committee member of the Order of Australia Association (WA), Patron of two Police Recruit Squads, being on several Parish Councils of the Anglican church and Colonel Commandant Royal Corps of Signals Western Region. Phewww! That list reflects amazing commitment and dedication.

Phillip has been a keen sportsman in the past, having regularly played both Rugby codes as well as Modern Pentathlon, sailing and many years playing tennis. Nowadays he is content to take a walk or pedal his bike, but maintains a keen interest in climate-sensible house design, astronomy and forensic science. His partner is the artist Leonie Dobrowski. Between them they have four wonderful adult children, who pursued successful careers in directions quite different to those of their parents, and 12 grand-children.

Whenever does this dynamo ever sit down and relax? Well, it seems he doesn't much - but if he ever decides to, your old mates at Highgate wish you a thoroughly enjoyable "retirement" Phillip. It will be richly deserved!



## LAST POST

In Memoriam - all Past Members of Highgate now Deceased - RIP

Lest We Forget



**Do you want one of these?**

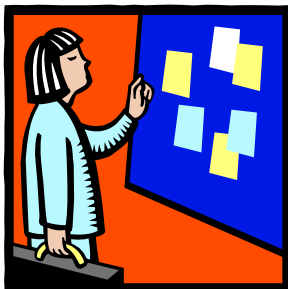
If so, pay \$10 **AT THE DESK** at the monthly luncheon and place your order for one

Payment: **EFT CBA, Highgate RSL**

**BSB 066 001, A/C 0092 5571.** Be sure to include your name in the message section (Surname and initial)  
eg: **Badge - Smith L**

**The Treasurer asks that Members attending Luncheons pay in CASH (at the Desk) please; BUT if you cannot attend a Luncheon, send your Cheque (with a note showing your First and Surnames) to:**

**Treasurer, RSL Highgate Sub-Branch, PO Box 3351 PERTH WA 6832**

**NOTICE : I M P O R T A N T !****The PLANNED BUSTRIPTO THE SPACE GRAVITY CENTRE AT GIN GIN HAS BEEN CANCELLED.**

There were several reasons for this, but it was primarily due to the fact that so few members had booked or shown an interest, that it would not have been financially viable to continue. Commitments had to be made re cost of Coach Hire, pre-booking of the Buffet Lunch at "La Shed" and so on, and the Sub-Branch could not risk this excursion to incur a loss.

We are grateful to Ray Galliot for all the initial work he did to get this outing organised. We, the Members, need to try to support these incidental trips on the rare occasions when they are on offer, as quite a lot of planning and pre-admin is done beforehand.

**A Pun Can be Fun  
Corner  
with an Irish "twist"  
this month**

A group of aspiring Irish medical students were attending their first class in Psychiatry at Trinity College, Dublin. The subject was "Emotional Extremes".

"Just to establish some parameters," said the professor to a student from Cork: "What is the opposite of **joy**?" "Sadness", said the student.

"And the opposite of depression?" he asked of the young lady from Galway. "'Sure, 't'would be **elation**", she said.

"And you sir," he said, turning to a young man from Limerick, sitting in the front row. "How about the opposite of **woe**?"

"Well sir", the young fellow replied. "Oi believe that would be 'giddy up'".

**The Menin Gate Memorial**

Many Australians will be making their way to Europe next year as centenary events in remembrance of WWI get underway. One important possible destination prospective tourists could consider attending is the nightly ceremony that takes place every evening at the Menin Gate in the Belgian town of Ypres (now marked on maps by its more modern phonetic name: "leper").

One of our members: Jim Tippetts (now residing in Denmark WA) once movingly described this daily ceremony which has taken place every evening at 2000hrs since 1924 (apart from the WW2 years). Police stop the traffic going through both ways five minutes before the ceremony is due to begin, and five or six smartly uniformed Buglers from the local Fire Brigade step forward in a line to sound the Last Post. After a minute's silence, and respectful hush, flags from all nations that lost so many of its men are lowered, and the buglers play "Reveille". It is all a gesture of profound gratitude and lasting esteem for all who gave their lives in the Battles for Ypres. This nightly ritual can attract quite large crowds during summer with fewer attending during cold weather; but takes place regardless.

Tens of thousands of British and Empire troops remain 'missing' in France and Belgium. Some lie in nameless graves while the remains of others have never been found. The Menin Gate at Ypres records the names of 55,000 of the missing in Belgium and a similar number are recorded elsewhere; there are 35,000 names on the Tyne Cot memorial.

The names of Australia's 6,000 missing in Belgium are engraved on the walls of the Menin Gate.



**W A N T E D****Sub-Wardens for the State War Memorial***Highgate Sub-Wardens on duty at the Flame of Remembrance*

Deputy Warden of the SWM, Geoff Simpson, is calling for volunteers to replace our dwindling "pool" of members who are Sub-Wardens. Wreath-laying ceremonies take place approximately two or three times a month through the year. Geoff seeks members who are willing to contribute their time to fulfil this important role. He asks for them to be punctual, smartly turned out and reliable. Ceremonies usually only take about 45 to 50 minutes including setting up beforehand.

Interested applicants should contact Geoff Simpson directly on 0408 925 432 or [gsimpson001@optusnet.com.au](mailto:gsimpson001@optusnet.com.au)

**HIGHGATE'S 2013 REMEMBRANCE DAY LUNCHEON**

**To be held at King's Park on Sunday, 10th November 2013**

**ASSEMBLE AT FLAME OF REMEMBRANCE AT 11.50am for Ceremony to start at 12 Noon SHARP  
followed by LUNCHEON at FRASER'S RESTAURANT (approx 1220 to 1500 hrs)**

Cost to Members (and their spouses/partners) - \$50 a head. (This includes all drinks).

*Cost for Guests and Non-Members is higher - \$75 a head (but also including all drinks).*

**NOTE: MEMBERS HAVE BOOKING PRIORITY**

**IF** Paying by EFT (the method, if possible, preferred by our Treasurer): CBA 066001 : 00925571  
(include your name); **BUT**

**IF** Paying by Mail: Complete this portion, attach your cheque, and post to the Treasurer

**To register/confirm your Booking:** go to our web-site: <http://highgate-rsl.org.au> and follow the prompts.  
(Look for the picture of Fraser's plus info re Sunday 10th November); or phone Margot Harness (9293 1076).

Post Cheques to: Treasurer RSL (WA) Highgate Sub-Branch  
PO Box 3551  
**PERTH WA 6832**

Name .....

Name of Spouse/Partner .....

Guest(s) .....



### PROJECT PAX FOR VETERANS OF WA Inc

Our well-known member, former RAN Commander (Rtd) Bob Mummery, has recently become involved with a very worthy and unusual project. "Project PAX" ("pax" being the Latin word for "peace") is a new association formed to assist disabled and traumatised veterans with counselling, mentoring and providing ongoing support. One paramount aspect of practical support and therapy is centred on encouraging affected veterans to voluntarily help to restore and maintain a former Naval vessel.

The vessel, a former USN Minesweeper, was provided on loan to the Royal Netherlands Navy from 1954 to the late 1960s, where it was commissioned as M855 "Breskens". Later returned to the USN, it was sold in 1977 to the Nizam of Hyderabad, who, before relinquishing his wealth to the Indian government, converted it to a luxury yacht and named it "Motor Yacht Kalbarri". The vessel was impounded by the WA government in the late 1980s after non-payment of wharf fees, and it was purchased by the former WA entrepreneur, Jayden Harman, and used for a time as a research vessel.

He, in turn, unable to on-sell it, kindly "gifted" the vessel to a worthy, non-profit organisation who would put it to good use.



(Above) "PAX", as she was as 272-tonne Dutch Minesweeper "Breskens" and (R) as she looks today

Thus it came into the possession of this new association, who would utilise it for the benefit and therapy of veterans: enabling them (and their carers if necessary) to work on it, relax on it, and provide a very 'different', open-air environment to distract them from their various troubles.

In all, it sounds like a most innovative way to "engage" men whose lives have been negatively and substantially affected by war. One can imagine the delight and curiosity it will stimulate among veterans who are accustomed to an outdoor life of variety and adventure, but had that part of their lives cut

short. It is also designed to support men suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. It's somewhat akin to the "Men in Sheds" movement, which not only teaches young and older men new skills but has done so much to provide venues for socialising and mateship among men who were formerly bored and often socially isolated and lonely. This seems a similar concept - with the bonus of tasting a bit of "Life on the Ocean Wave" as well, and wonderful opportunities to build renewed self-confidence and faith in the future.



So, this sounds a very worthy project for our esteemed member to devote himself to, and we say "Good on **you** BOB!" We'll bet you will soon have those engines purring along, as sweet as a nut!!

"Project PAX for Veterans of Western Australia Inc" has the backing of the DVA, RSL and major sponsorship from such esteemed businesses as Austal Ships, QBE Australia, Coates Hire and others.

The association asks that its work be made known to anyone they feel would benefit from participating in Project PAX. Contacts are Mr Norm Whitburn (0428 444 487) e-mail: [nwhitburn@bigpond.com](mailto:nwhitburn@bigpond.com), or his wife: Madeleine (0427 444 487) e-mail: [mwhitburn@bigpond.com](mailto:mwhitburn@bigpond.com), or David Hannaford (0427 476 196) e-mail: [davem@iinet.net.au](mailto:davem@iinet.net.au)

People caring for people & the environment



**THIS NEWSLETTER IS PRINTED AS A SERVICE TO THE VETERAN COMMUNITY  
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