

HIGHGATE NEWS

Issue 552

July 2015



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

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

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MONTHLY LUNCHEON

Monday 20th July 2015

Venue: Gallipoli Room

Time: 1130 hrs for 1215 hrs

STAND BY FOR THE OBE LUNCHEON Not all of our members turning 90 and 80 are able to come to the Lunch, so let us acknowledge and congratulate them here. "Well done" to ALL those LADS who've reached these significant milestones in 2015:

OBEs: Peter Harries PhD, John Thornton, Geoff (John) Cox, Alf Till RFD ED., John Morris, Stan Stewart, Basil Twine,

OBNs: Noel Monks, Bob Elliot, Bill Kynaston, Ted White ED RFD, Keith Morris, Capt Ronnie Leigh RM

For the **Monthly LUNCHEON (20th July)** PLEASE enter your name electronically on the **BOOK-IN SHEET** (by 1400 hrs Thursday 16th July) - using the web-site. Cost is \$30 a head.

Method: GO TO the web-site HOME page. Double-click on "JUNE LUNCHEON" below the photo of the Flame of Remembrance and **AS IF BY MAGIC, the printing will change colour and be underlined.** 'Click' on it again and the spreadsheet/Book In 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. EFT details appear at the **TOP** of the Book In spreadsheet.

You may need to Double-click IN the 'empty' cell for your name to register.

President's Report

July is here again, and, as is our custom, this month we celebrate our "OBEs" and "OBNs" - translated, as ever, for "over 80" (and Ninety!). Congratulations to all on reaching these milestones. We wish you many more happy years.

We are still in desperate need of a Secretary for the remainder of the year. John Cleary's injuries were significant, and we wish him well with his recovery. I must thank Bob Arnold, who has filled in on a number of occasions as Minutes taker for the Committee meetings - and also Kevin Graham, who has been similarly ready to be helpful.

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FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

LUNCHEON: 20 July, 2015 (Committee meeting at 11.00am that day)



(Continued from p.1)

At the same time, can I ask you to PLEASE volunteer for duty on the committee for the coming year. Many of the current committee have given many years of service and are in need of a rest. Our Treasurer has done the job for 12 years. I believe it is in the best interest of the sub-branch to introduce new people to the committee each year. Currently those in senior positions serve some seven or eight years on the committee as they move through.

Whilst on the matter of assistance we are always seeking members for the Honour Avenue Group and the Sub-Wardens. If you can assist, please volunteer. Some of those who currently do these tasks need time off for things like hip replacements. Increasing the number of volunteers also reduces the load on existing members. If you haven't been to a wreath laying ceremony at the State War Memorial or a plaque dedication at the Honour Avenue, I urge you to do so and support our members, who are doing a great job.

It is time to remind everyone that our Memorial Lunch at Fraser's is on Sunday, 9th November. Mark it in your diary and start getting your table together. To date we have no sponsor to help with this event. If you can assist in obtaining sponsorship, please advise the committee.

For the past few years the committee has been exploring means to assist older members to attend our luncheons. You may have read in the March "Listening Post" that our committee was congratulated on a proposal to establish a new category of "Retired Membership". The offer of this membership is to be made after deliberation by the sub-branch committee and is aimed at retaining a continuity of membership.

Congratulations to Bob Mummery on the award of an OAM in the Queens Birthday honours. Our congratulations are extended to Wayne Gardiner too, on his award of Anzac of the Year from the National RSL.

Again may I appeal to all members to book in for the luncheon by the Thursday before. Last luncheon we had 10 members who had not booked in. This can cause problems in the kitchen as well as requiring additional tables to be set up at short notice. Please also ensure a mate is actually attending before reserving a seat for them. There have been occasions where more than one seat is reserved for a member, causing distress to oth-

ers who have booked themselves in, but find there are no vacant seats available. Please be considerate of one another. Does it matter if you don't sit with a mate? - perhaps you'll meet another member.

Yours in fellowship,

BOB MUMMERY OAM

ALL MEMBERS OF THE SUB-BRANCH CONGRATULATE YOU ON BEING RECOGNISED WITH THIS AWARD BOB. "WELL DONE!"

Sub-Branch Snippets

Beaut to hear that **Ken Bladen** has come through keyhole surgery for kidney cancer very well - and 'twas great to see him front up at our June Luncheon looking terrific. Wonderful to have you back on deck Ken!

Barry Campbell is recovering well after his bilateral knee replacement op. Just as well - as he is booked to go on a wonderful European river cruise of the Rhine, Main and Danube in a couple of months time. Sending you a warm "Cheerio" Baz!

Another member with two brand spanking new knees is **Kevin Graham** - now walking well without ANY crutches, and no doubt back to his rewarding, sensitive roles as a Marriage and Funeral celebrant.

A warm "Cheerio" too, to **Abe Sher** - such a loyal attendee at our Monthly Luncheons for many a year. Abe is now 97 - hard to believe, isn't it?! And has decided to relinquish his Driving Licence. Take care of yourself Abe!

NOTICE TO EX-AIF/RAN/RAAF WW2 VETERANS with Active Service:

The Australian Institute of Professional Photographers wants to honour 100 years of the ANZAC Tradition, and is seeking to photograph all surviving veterans in these categories. Those with computers can go to aippveterans.com (for more info, and to Register). For those without computers, Margot has REGISTRATION forms she can POST OUT to you. GET IN QUICKLY - we may be able to organise the photographer for the 20 July Luncheon.

Ring Margot on 9293 1076 ASAP



TEE-HEEs and Fiddle-Dee-Dees Corner

A Woman's Poem

He doesn't like my casseroles, And he didn't like my cake,
He says my biscuits are too hard - Not like his Mum could make.

I just can't perk the coffee right; He didn't like the stew,
I didn't mend his socks the way his mother used to do.

I pondered for an answer; I was looking for a clue,
So I turned around and whacked him hard... Like his mother used to do



SUB WARDENS DUTIES

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

Sunday	19 July 2015 :	1130 for 1200 hrs - Cypriot Community of WA Inc.
Sunday	19 July 2015 :	0830 for 0900 hrs - Association of the Movement of S.C. 'Draza Mihailovich' WA
Monday	27 July 2015 :	1030 for 1100 hrs - The Royal Australian Regiment Association WA Branch
Friday	31 July 2015 :	0950 for 1020 hrs - Australian Army Training Team Vietnam Assoc (WA)
Sunday	2 August 2015 :	1200 for 1230 hrs - Macedonian Community Council of WA

"The Way We Were" Gallery Our Golden Oldies

There would be few members of Highgate over the years, who haven't been well-acquainted with Alf Till. Alf, and his brother, Malcolm, both spent many years in the Citizen's Military Forces (CMF) - now better known as "the Reserves"; and have thus both served Australia well indeed. No doubt they were influenced by their Dad, Frederick, originally from Victoria, who enlisted in WA's 51 Battalion in WWI, and served in France. He married a lass in London (Florence), and brought her home with him to Perth in 1919. Frederick later put his age back, and served in WW2 as well!

Young Alf was born in Victoria Park and attended the local primary school. He completed his secondary education at Perth Boys' High School, before getting a job at the Commonwealth Bank as a clerk. It was here he met his wife, Lesley - also a CBA bank clerk; squiring her around town and impressing her greatly with his skilful ballroom dancing! Lesley remembers him taking her to many dances and a host of balls, especially around Vic Park. So graceful and elegant was he on the dance floor, that he later became a ballroom dancing teacher. These were busy days for the courting couple, as Alf was also a keen rugby player and loved sailing out of his Maylands-based club. But in 1956, things changed a bit when Alf was called up to do his "Nasho" service, and a love affair with Army "Khaki" began. After his compulsory service, he "signed on" to continue with the CMF. Always conscientious and hardworking, Alf rose quickly and steadily through the ranks.

In 1957, Alf and Lesley "tied-the-knot" and he commenced a course in Accountancy at the WA Institute of Technology (now Curtin Uni) shortly afterwards. Things were shaken up a bit when the Commonwealth Bank wanted to transfer the couple to a Branch in South Australia. Alf, preferring to remain in WA to finish his degree - and by now a Major, decided on a full-time stint in the Army instead. He was accepted, and spent four very happy years with a Survey Unit in Fremantle, simultaneously completing his Accountancy studies and graduating as a Chartered Accountant. In all, Alf rendered 28 years of faithful service in the Army, in various jobs and roles in WA's Reserves.

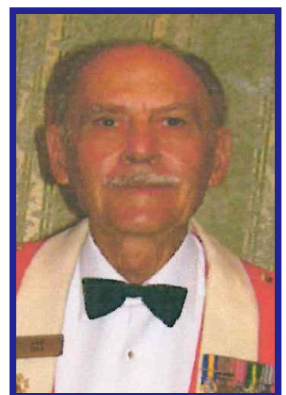
His civilian life was similarly successful, marked by a number of interesting and rewarding jobs. For some years, post-Army FTD, he worked for several building product companies. He then enjoyed an appointment as WA Sales Manager for Medibank Private Health Fund for some time, before taking a post as Management Accountant with Kingsize Menswear - working for the illustrious Don Blair! Alf and Lesley have been married 61 years and have one son (Stuart) and a daughter: Leita. For many years he has been an active, faithful member of the Freemasons (Seaview Lodge).

After retiring from the work-force, Alf joined Highgate's Honour Avenues Group (known as "the HAG") at Kings Park in August, 1999, initially working with the Maintenance Team. He then took over as Treasurer, when the late Ken Wood retired from that post. Alf was also Deputy Chairman until forced to retire due to ill-health last year.

Ever loyal, quietly spoken and every inch a gentleman, Alf Till has always been a hugely popular member of HAG - so it was a great shock to them all when Alf suffered a sudden, nasty fall last year, and hit his head. His health declined rapidly after that, and he now resides in a nursing home. Fortunately, most days his faithful, beloved Lesley is able to visit him and keep him company.

Their shared love of old dance tunes and melodies endures, and Lesley says he loves to recognise certain tunes and songs they used to sing together - and dance to.

Warmest wishes from us all Alf! Wish we'd known you were such a great dancer - you must have been something to see!



LAST POST

We remember ALL former members who have passed away

Lest We Forget





ALEX KERR AM PhD - AND HIS AMAZING ADVENTURES!

Our very own member, former WW2 pilot, Alex Kerr, has finally published a secret diary he maintained after his burning Wellington bomber was shot down over Hamburg in mid-1941, and he became a PoW of Germany: "Prisoner 182"

His book, "Shot Down" tells a remarkable and inspiring story of "derring-do": a gripping tale of incredible survival, resilience, mateship, escapes and resourcefulness.

Alex was only 20 when on his fourth operation the plane he was piloting was hit by flak and tracer bullets from a German fighter. He was hit by seven bullets and badly wounded when the aircraft's rear gunner clambered forward, clipped on Mr Kerr's parachute and shoved him out of the burning plane. Alex rallied sufficiently to pull his rip cord - but was bleeding so badly from wounds, he doubted that he'd survive. Fortunately, he was taken to a German hospital, where a French Surgeon, himself a PoW, did a very good job patching him up. It was here that he began keeping a diary - saving every scrap of paper and using tiny writing - always careful to avoid writing down any potentially compromising information.

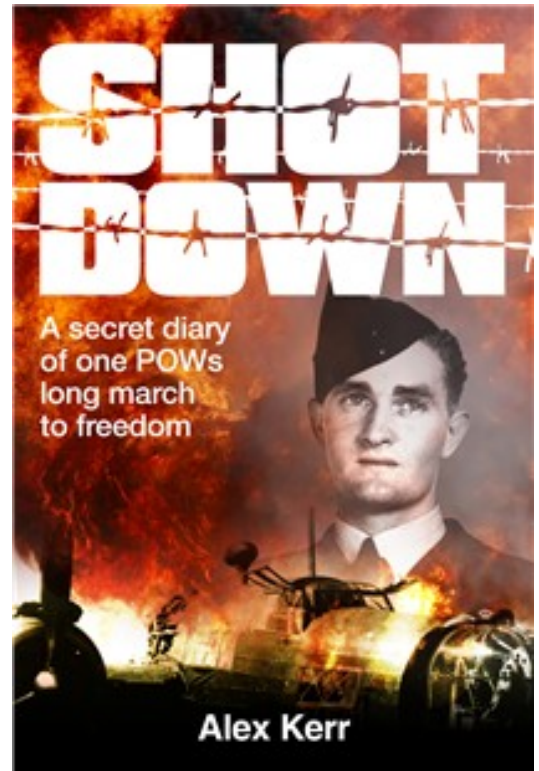
From his boyhood in Perth, to his flying days in Britain, through the trauma of being WIA and being shot down; then through his captivity and several escapes - all these events are chronicled, derived from Alex's meticulously maintained diary. Even at war's end, and part of a large group of PoWs being marched across Europe as the Germans retreated, he was lucky to narrowly miss being shot **again**, as the group was strafed by Allied aircraft believing the group to be Germans.

Blessed with a fine intellect and a load of energy, Alex utilised his time in captivity to begin studying economics. Returning to Australia after the war, he continued with his studies, eventually attaining a PhD and becoming a senior academic. He spent a number of years as a Professor at Murdoch University. He eventually became Deputy Vice-Chancellor of the University.

Alex attended the 2012 dedication of the long-awaited Bomber Command Memorial in London; and in May this year, returned to London to celebrate the 70th anniversary of VE day. He again met up with Dave Fraser - his old crewman mate who'd shoved him through the hatch and saved his life.

A remarkable story. A remarkable man!

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"Shot Down" by Alex Kerr, (\$24.99), is available at Book stores and can be purchased online at www.bigskypublishing.com.au



A Letter to the Editor of the Sydney Morning Herald about Older Drivers

It's about time the authorities did something about older drivers on our roads.

For far too long older drivers have caused havoc as they hog the left lane, stick to the speed limits (even the road work limits) and stop at STOP signs, causing great inconvenience and often preventing others from doing whatever they like.

Another major concern is that by avoiding fines and demerit points, they are not doing their bit for the revenue of our state, and are therefore placing a further burden on younger drivers.

Until older drivers can prove that they are proficient at weaving in and out of traffic, driving while texting, tailgating, using drugs or doing burnouts, they must be banned from holding a licence.

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

**HOLLYWOOD
PRIVATE HOSPITAL**



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 FEDERAL MEMBER FOR PERTH**