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

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FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Committee:
Monday— 12 June 2006

Luncheon:
Monday— 19 June 2006

Monthly Luncheon

Monday 15 May 2006

Venue: Gallipoli Room
Time: 11.30 hrs Fellowship, 12.30 hrs Luncheon
Speaker: Commodore Bob Trotter
Topic: The Search for HMAS Sydney

President's Report

LADIES DAY LUNCHEON POSTPONED
It is unfortunate that circumstances dictate we must cancel the Ladies Luncheon on the 10th May. We have had a very weak response and this we believe has been influenced by the closeness of our Gunfire Breakfast and the normal monthly luncheon on Monday 15.

Other factors would include too much activity within a short time frame and of course there is the cost to members of whom many of us are retired.

Therefore, in postponing the function we will allocate a day for later in the year, one that will not clash with other engagements and we will notify members well in advance.

We look forward to welcoming you to our next luncheon in the Gallipoli Room of ANZAC House on Monday 15 May, 11:30 for 12:00hrs.

ANZAC OF THE YEAR – RON STONE

It is with great pride and pleasure that we, the Highgate RSL Sub-Branch of WA, is now able to announce this prestigious award as going to one of our great stalwarts and long serving members, Ron Stone.

Ron's untiring service to this club and that of the RSL in general has been recognized in a way that brings great pride to this Sub-Branch as it honours Ron.

On behalf of you all I congratulate an outstanding member, Ron Stone, ANZAC OF THE YEAR

THE GUNFIRE BREAKFAST

Again this proved to be a highly successful and popular event, held at the Western Australian Club of Saint Georges Terrace. Over 100 members and guests sat down to a well prepared and served breakfast at 0730. Amongst our VIP guests were the Heads of the three services in WA together with consular heads from Britain, the United States and Greece.

(Continued on page 2)

**Sub Wardens Duties****Wreath Laying ceremonies currently scheduled at the State War Memorial, Kings Park:**

- Monday 8 May 2006 — 10.45 for 11.00 — The Australian American Association (WA Division) Incorporated
 Tuesday 23 May 2006 — 10.45 for 11.00 — Women's Auxiliary Conference
 Monday 29 May 2006 — 10.45 for 11.00 — North American Veterans' Unit
 Sunday 11 June 2006 — 09.45 for 10.00 — Labuan and Borneo Association

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Our Guest Speaker, Neil James, spoke well of the ANZAC spirit that still exists in the ADF to this day and his mixture of lighter references to our KIWI cousins and US mates brought hearty laughs, as his descriptive passages of the cemeteries around the world, where our boys are buried, brought solemn contemplation. In all it was a thought provoking sharing of feelings from an excellent speaker.

Fortified with rum, which later was to prove invaluable as the rain bucketed down, those who were marching raced off at 0900 to join their various units.

The only sour note on the day was the raffle of a fine bottle of imported scotch which, was won by our Secretary Ron Adams, who refused to share it with the mob. Wayne Tarr was also seen to sneak away with a bottle of port and where others may place it in a cabinet Wayne, most probably, would place his under the 'bench'.

The Immediate Past President was seen to slip into his table's rum ration having no speeches to deliver at this year's breakfast.

Everybody enjoyed themselves and we would urge you to get in early for next year as soon as the Newsletter announces we are open for bookings.

THE SEARCH FOR HMAS SYDNEY

Members should not miss the May luncheon for it will feature Highgate member, Commodore Bob Trotter, the CEO of the Search for HMAS Sydney syndicate.

Currently in the news here it is a topical subject that sees two search teams looking to solve the mysterious sinking of a famous Australian warship off the Western Australian coast.

Bob will bring you up to date with the latest developments and it promises to be an enthralling presentation.

Until then I hope that those who marched dry out soon and I look forward to seeing you all at the Monthly Luncheon.

*Norm Manners***GETTING TO KNOW YOUR COMMITTEE**

As earlier advised, when space permits, we will include profiles of your office bearers.

In this issue we introduce:

Bob Norris—Senior Vice President

Born and raised in Applecross, Bob attended Applecross Primary before going on to Wesley College and eventually joining the National Bank Australasia Ltd.

After five years of being shunted around Perth, then the country he departed the bank and joined General Motors Acceptance Corporation. The following year was highlighted by his marriage and a partnership ranging over 43 years, sadly he lost his wife only recently.

Again shunted around Western Australia this expanded into being shunted around Australia, with positions in WA, SA, NSW and Victoria culminating in an appointment as Regional Operations Manager based in Melbourne.

This provided him with the opportunity to visit New Zealand, which he liked and in 1989 he took up the position as Managing Director GMAC NZ Ltd. Here he was to stay for three years before returning to Perth.

Further moves to SA and finally three years on a Project Team working in England, Taiwan, India and Indonesia followed before his final appointment as Asia Pacific Coordinator for the Y2K project.

Bob retired in 2001 and took up some volunteer work as State and Federal Treasurer for the Royal Australian Armoured Association, State Treasurer for the Defense Reserve Association and the 4 Wheel Drive Club of WA.

He is a member of the Highgate Honour Avenues Group as well as holding office as SVP of Highgate Sub-Branch.

His Military experience was as a Reservist and included National Service Training during 1956 with 17 National Service Training Battalion.

Being a "Travellin Man" Bob would like to see more of our great state as well as many regions overseas as yet unexplored..



DAY 2 - GALLIPOLI

The Reverend A.P. (Percy) Bladen OBE VD

You will remember, that in the last issue, we covered Day 1 of the landing on Gallipoli as told by Percy Bladen. We can now bring you Day 2 and a description of "permanent" accommodation.

It was a strange sight which met our gaze when the day dawned. Other units besides our own had arrived during the night. The whole gully was crowded with men from the top to the bottom. Both sides of the hills were honeycombed with dugouts, which here were mere holes cut horizontally into the earth. We had not seen them in the darkness of the previous night. During the day we took possession of them. They were very shallow and not to be desired greatly as residences. We withdrew into their recesses with a newly acquired modesty when shrapnel was in evidence.

The whole scene, with the men moving about, the small fires used for cooking, the holes in the ground, and the heaps of upturned earth, was singularly suggestive of an Australian mining camp. Apart from the khaki uniforms and the continual sound of firing, it was difficult to believe that we were there with intent to kill.

That day was Sunday. What a violent contrast to the Sundays at home, with their quietness and rest and worship!

I shared a dugout that night with our regimental medical officer and the second in command. We lay side by side with our heads and bodies in the hole which opened semi-circularly into the hill, and was about three feet high, while our legs covered with a blanket lay under the stars.

On Monday we received orders that our battalion was to occupy the trenches at a place called Lone Pine. They were the most advanced of the trenches in that part of the peninsula, and the last which had been captured from the Turks. The Twenty-third and Twenty-fourth Battalions were to man the trenches alternately, assisted by some of the Thirteenth Light Horse, who were fighting as infantry on Gallipoli. We took up our quarters at Brown's Dip, which formed the top of a gully stretching up from the sea, and was contiguous to the trenches. The dugout of which I took possession was much more pretentious and comfortable than the holes in which we found temporary rest during our first two days on the peninsula. Indeed, as residences went at that time, my dugout could be called commodious and convenient. Its internal measurement was about six and a half feet square, with a height varying from four and a half feet at the entrance to five and a half at the back. A strip of about twenty inches wide was dug out in the centre of the floor to a further depth of one foot. I slept on one side of this middle trench in which was placed a small table. At the end of the other side was the entrance. A waterproof sheet did duty for a door. The front of the dugout with the exception of the door space was a wall of sand bags. The roof was galvanised iron covered with sand bags and the ground rose slightly behind.

(More to follow as space permits)

Editor.

for rather large stein of beer in my hand. complim weather.

PENSION OFFICERS REPORT

From time to time I receive enquiries from our more senior members about how to go about applying for the Extreme Disability Adjustment (EDA) rate of pension.

The first issue is that you can't specifically apply for the EDA. If your service caused disabilities are becoming intolerable to the extent that your life style is ruined then a claim form applying for a disability pension (for those who have never claimed before), or for an increase in an already accepted disability, or for a new disability, can be completed and submitted to the DVA. The other form that must be completed and submitted is the Lifestyle Form. Your local friendly pension officer can provide advice and assistance in the compilation of these forms. Both of these forms are very important in the claim process.

The Lifestyle points score on that Form must register 6's in all categories of the form (or as near as possible). Sometimes an elderly veteran may score a five in one of the categories and the DVA will round the applicant's overall score up. One category that the DVA pay very close attention to is the veteran's mobility. To score a 6 in this category the veteran must be so immobilized by his/her service caused disability that he/she can no longer drive a car in any circumstance. The ability to drive the car in an emergency situation will score a 5 and several fives scored in the other categories of the Form may cause the application to fail the EDA rate. I must say at this point that the applicants who are usually successful in receiving the EDA rate are those who are in a very poor condition indeed and this is clearly reflected in the Lifestyle Report and driving the family car is simply beyond them.

After the forms are submitted to DVA, the case is investigated by them, often with additional medical reports on the veteran's condition obtained. If the claim is eventually accepted by DVA then the rate of pension paid to the veteran is equivalent to 150% of the General Rate and if the veteran does not already have a Gold Card then that comes his/her way as well.

In the event of the veteran's death, the veteran's widow has an automatic entitlement to a DVA War Widow's pension and the Gold Card.

Best wishes from

Jim Eayrs

Guess: Who are the two boys? (in short pants)



Clue: State Memorial Wardens.

If you know, or think you know, names to me before the May luncheon please. And, the first to come up with the correct answer will win a First Class bottle of Port, to be presented by *one of the boys*, at the 15 May luncheon.

Editor



HOLLYWOOD IN FOCUS

(With thanks to Ashlea Hatcher)



Hollywood Private Hospital's medical staff are excellent and just as esteemed, but somewhat less recognised, are the patient service's assistants that frequent the hospital wards. The Hollywood Star had a chat to PSA Rob Williams to uncover some of the more hidden aspects of his job.

Q Rob, how long have you been a PSA with Hollywood?

A I moved back to Perth from Darwin and started with Hollywood 11 years ago, when it was privatised. I'm 51 years old and I have met so many patients over the years I've been working here. I've been here so long because I love the people I work with and the patients I deal with on a day to day basis.

Q What would you do in a typical day on the ward?

A It's a varied role, but to sum it up I porter patients around the hospital, keep the ward clean and serve meals and cups of tea and coffee to the patients. There are some out of the ordinary things PSAs do and we are sometimes asked medical questions because patients don't realise we aren't nurses or doctors. I talk to the patients a lot because often they don't have anyone else to talk to. They really like the support and caring that conversation brings.

Q Do you get close to your patients talking to them every-day?

A I look after about 30 patients a day and talk to every single one. I follow them from admission to discharge so I definitely get close to the patients. I think a lot of people don't realise that PSAs do get attached to the patients and sometimes we end up knowing them better than the nurses because we aren't necessarily talking to them about medical issues. You are a bit like a counsellor at times and a good support for the families. Hollywood is getting a lot more of the younger patients coming in and it does get really hard if they pass away. With the older veterans it is a little bit different, only because they have been in pain for a long time and are ready to move on so you become slightly more hardened with them. With the

young ones it can be harder to handle. Four months ago a 20 year-old man passed away from cancer that I'd grown close to. His mum came into the ward the other day for the first time since he'd died to say 'hello' and give us some chocolates for looking after her son so well.

Q How does this affect you?

A I'd been hoping to raise money for research for a while and when the 20 year-old patient passed away, it prompted me to do something positive. There was nothing I could do for him medically so I decided to try and help the cause. This year I organised a Christmas raffle for which the hospital donated a flat-screen and I got together some other great prizes and managed to raise \$2,510 in one month. I am giving the money to the Cancer Council of Western Australia for cancer research. I will probably do something for Christmas again this year, but I will get on to it sooner to raise a lot more money!



Did you write home often. If so - remember these WWII Postal Acronyms?

- BURMA..... Be Upstairs Ready My Angel
- MALAYA..... My Ardent Lips Await Your Arrival
- NORWICH..... (K)nickers Off Ready When I Come Home
- SWALK..... Sealed With A Loving Kiss
- HOLLAND..... Hope Our Love Lasts And Never Dies
- ITALY..... I Trust And Love You
- BOLTOP..... Better On Lips Than On Paper

A short message from the Senior Vice President

Contrary to last month's Newsletter I did not return in time for last month's luncheon as I was forced to sit before a raging fire in a small tavern in Germany with a rather large stein of beer in my hand, compliments of the European weather.

We are looking forward to hosting the Old Boys Birthday Party Luncheon again this year, further details later.

Regards

Bob Norris.



LAST POST

James Richard Driscoll