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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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### HIGHGATE AWARD

I am pleased to announce that the Town of Vincent, during their Australia Day Ceremonies, presented the Premier's Australia Day Active Citizenship Award to the Highgate RSL Sub-Branch Honour Avenues Group. This was for fostering Australian pride and spirit through active citizenship and an outstanding contribution to the community.

Despite the 41 degree heat and a howling easterly that came straight off the desert, the members of our group turned out in their reefer jackets, adorned with medals and name tags. I was honoured to accept the framed citation on their behalf and that of the members of Highgate RSL Sub-Branch. It was presented by John Hyde, the Member for Perth representing the Premier and Stephen Smith, Federal Member of Parliament and the Mayor of Vincent Nick Catania JP.

I then addressed the audience, which mainly consisted of some 32 people from 19 different countries, who were the recipients of Australian citizenship and stressed the importance placed upon the plaques and war memorials of Kings Park by the citizens of this state. In closing I explained that Highgate RSL Sub-Branch has been caring for the plaques for over 30 years and we pledged to continue our work with younger members taking over from us when we are too old to carry out our duties.

In all it was a very good PR day for Highgate.

### LUNCHEON COST

For those members who did not attend the Christmas luncheon I reiterate that the luncheon is now \$35 and the original format will stand whereas drinks will be served to your table. The previous decision was reversed when a number of members objected to the change and at a show of hands at the December luncheon the meeting was overwhelmingly in favor of increasing the cost and retaining the drinks service.

### BOOK REVIEW

I was presented with a copy of Les Carlyon's latest book "The Great War" as a Christmas present and was able to get through the 860 page goliath over the holidays.

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## COMING EVENTS

**This Months Luncheon** : Monday 19 February 2007

**Venue:** Gallipoli Room

**Time:** 11.30 hrs Fellowship, 12.15 Luncheon

**Guest Speaker:** Brendon Fowler, Bluestone Equity Release. **Topic:** Reverse Mortgages.

**Committee:** 12 March 2007

**Luncheon:** 19 March 2007

## SUB WARDENS DUTIES

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

Sunday 11 February 2007—10.45 hrs for 11.00 hrs—Women's Royal Australian Army Corps Association.

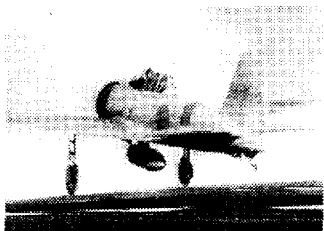
Wednesday 14 February 2007—09.45 hrs for 10.00 hrs—The National Servicemen's Association of Australia (WA Branch)

## PRODUCTION COSTS—HIGHGATE NEWS

The substantial costs associated with the **Highgate News** are being investigated and one of the proposals to reduce these costs is to email it to those members who have email. As the newsletter is produced on *Publisher* it cannot be read unless you have that programme. Microsoft Office 2003 version and beyond normally incorporates *Publisher*.

Should you be able to receive the newsletter by email would you please let the editor know via any of the contact numbers on the front page.

**Your assistance will help reduce the costs and will be of real benefit to our Sub-Branch.**



## AUSTRALIA UNDER ATTACK—1942-1943

An Australian War Memorial Travelling Exhibition

Concludes 28 February 2007

at the

Western Australian Maritime Museum, Victoria Quay, Fremantle.

Hours: 9.30am to 5.00pm

Entrance \$10.00 - \$5.00 Seniors and Pensioners

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The RSL and therefore Highgate Sub Branch is converting its financial and reporting year to the national financial year i.e. 1 July to 30 June. In view of this the Branch's next Annual General Meeting will be held in October 2007 and in October in subsequent years.



### LAST POST

Commodore Bob Percy CBE RAN Rtd

Peter G Mulrennan

Lest We Forget



## New treatment for the 'silent killer'

(With thanks to Ashlea Hatcher—Hollywood Private Hospital)

A new, possibly more effective method of delivering chemotherapy for ovarian cancer is being used at Hollywood Private Hospital.

Dr Alex Powell, a medical oncologist and consultant physician based at the Hollywood Specialist Centre, began using intra-peritoneal chemotherapy four months ago.

It differs from the traditional approach in that the chemotherapy drugs are delivered directly into the abdominal or peritoneal cavity. Usually the powerful anti-cancer drugs are delivered 'intravenously' – which involves inserting a line into an arm or leg vein. The drugs are then carried in the bloodstream to reach the cancer cells. But the problem with this method is that it can be difficult to successfully eradicate the small scattered areas of cancer cells that may remain after surgery.

Ovarian cancer has always been what Dr Powell describes as 'a challenge to treat' because of the nature of its presentation. It is often referred to as the 'silent cancer'.

"The disease is often quite advanced and has spread throughout the peritoneal cavity by the time the patient presents with symptoms. Any cancer is difficult to treat when it is advanced," he said.

The standard of care over the last decade has involved extensive surgery by a gynaecological oncologist to remove the uterus, ovaries and as many cancer deposits as possible within the peritoneal cavity. The surgery is followed by an intravenous course of chemotherapy over a four to six month period.

Even after this aggressive intervention life expectancy may be only three to four years.

"In an attempt to improve on that average life expectancy, we've looked at giving chemotherapy intra-peritoneal. It is a good way of mopping up more of the cancer cells that may be left behind after surgery," Dr Powell said. "Patients receive the usual intravenous chemotherapy as well."

The reason that this approach was thought to be worthwhile is that when ovarian cancer spreads, it tends to stay within the confines of the peritoneal cavity. Occasionally, the cancer spreads to the lung but this is rare.

The intra-peritoneal treatment has been tried for some years but it is only recently that results have clearly shown an impressive increase in life expectancy of more than one and a half years.

"We were astounded when we saw the results of the trial because usually if a new treatment for any sort of cancer improves life expectancy by even two or three months, it is considered substantial," Dr Powell said.

The side effects are more pronounced than with intravenous delivery even though Cisplatin and Taxol, which are the two drugs used in the intra-peritoneal delivery, are the same drugs as those given in the intravenous component of the treatment.

According to Dr Powell, the reason for this is that the drugs are absorbed more slowly and remain in the body for a longer period when administered intra-abdominally. This allows the drug to come into direct contact with any microscopic areas of cancer that remain after the surgery, and it allows more time for absorption before the drug breaks down or passes out of the body.

The intra-abdominal component of the treatment is delivered with the aid of a sub-cutaneous infusaport which is implanted just beneath the skin usually under the ribs. A catheter extends internally from the port and is implanted into the abdominal cavity. The chemotherapy drug is then mixed with warm saline and administered directly into the abdominal cavity where it remains until it is slowly absorbed.

Hollywood is the first hospital in Perth to set up a formal protocol for the new treatment regime. The first of Dr Powell's three patients has just finished the sixth and last of her 21-day cycles of treatment, and the second is now on her fifth cycle.

The support offered by the health professionals in the treatment team is considered an important factor contributing to the completion and ultimate success of the intra-peritoneal therapy. Only 42 per cent of the subjects in the GOG trial finished the course of treatment because they were unable to cope with side effects.