



HIGHGATE



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NEWS

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 18th February 2013

Venue: Gallipoli Room

Time: 1130 hrs for 1215 hrs

GUEST SPEAKER: Bruce Willis (same name as the Hollywood actor, but as a former CO of the SASR, this Bruce Willis is a real-life "action man" - not a pretend one!) His topic is: "Security in Afghanistan - Now and into the Future". Bruce Willis BA(Asian Studies), Grad Dip (Management) and MA (Sports Management) was born in Papua New Guinea and grew up in WA. He joined the Army in 1983, being accepted for the SASR in 1987 - in which he served for over 20 years: both as a soldier and an officer. Bruce has seen operational military service in Cambodia, Bosnia, East Timor, the Solomon Islands, Afghanistan and Iraq.

GENTLEMEN, PLEASE NOTE: In deference to Perth's even-warmer-than-usual Summer months - your Committee has voted to allow the wearing of ties and jackets to be **optional!**

For the next Luncheon (18th February) PLEASE enter your name electronically on the BOOK-IN SHEET (by Friday 15 February, 2013), using the link previously emailed to you. FOR THOSE WITHOUT email please call Margot Harness on 9293 1076 (or any of the committee listed at left). If you need the link again send an email to our Treasurer (see email on front cover) and request it. Please note that the Book-In Sheet allows you to place yourself on a PERMANENT basis.

President's Report

Welcome to the first newsletter for 2013.

I hope everyone had an enjoyable and relaxing festive break and is now looking forward to a bigger and better year ahead.

Since our last Newsletter we have certainly seen some changes in management with a new State President, (Graham Edwards AM) of the RSL at the helm and the State Executive re-arranged. So far the feeling from the membership is that it is a step in the right direction. Our own committee also has the potential to make a stronger contribution this year with new blood and ideas coming into play.

The Memorial Lunch was a huge success and has been booked again for Sunday 10 November 2013. The Christmas lunch was also a great day and

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

LUNCHEON - 18 February 2013 (Committee: 10am same day)



special thanks must go to David Grace, Roger Budrige and Ken Bladen for making it so enjoyable. So much hidden talent in our ranks! Apart from our normal entertainment program this year we are looking at new venues and activities to keep everyone happy and encourage new members to join.

On behalf of the Sub Branch I wish to congratulate Mark Webb, CEO of the Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority for the award of the Public Service Medal in the Australia Day Honours in 2013. Mark has always been a strong supporter of the Sub Branch and has been very active in helping our members carry out their duties at Kings Park. These medals are in short supply with only three being awarded within the Public Service this year. From us - well done Mark!

This year will no doubt be a busy one with some anticipated changes occurring at all levels in the RSLWA. We are also leading into the Centenary of ANZAC so it is timely to start thinking about whether we contribute in some way toward the celebrations as a group. Any suggestion you have would be very helpful if we are to recognize the significance of the occasion and ensure the younger generations continue to uphold the tradition of ANZAC.

Once again I encourage everyone to participate in all our activities and see if each member can recruit one new member or associate to join so we can build our numbers. If you have not already done so make it your New Year's resolution?

Yours in friendship, Leon.

SUB-BRANCH SNIPPETS:

Quite a few Highgate Members have been "on-the-move" over the Yuletide break. **Ann and Terry Spiro** took to the 'high seas' in high style: a 17-day cruise on the Holland-America ship "Volendam", from Hong Kong back to Singapore, at a very leisurely pace. The only active thing they had to do as they dodged over the waves was resist the temptation of never-ending eating!

Lynn Lovell-Durant and her husband Harold (President of Cottesloe RSL Sub-Branch) visited family in Sydney, and then drove north to catch up with two of Haz's ex-WW2 Commando mates in Port Macquarie and Tweed Heads. The rains began as they drove to catch their plane back to WA so they are very relieved to be safely home.

Our industrious web-site manager, **John Cleary**, and wife **Brenda** took her 83-year old Mum to Bali to experience a truly tropical Christmas, which she loved. "Brownie points" to you John!

Past President, **Martyn Thompson** and wife **Jill** were very happy to remain at home however. Their two sons live in London and Sydney respectively - so it was a busy but special time for M & J to host both families (three grandchildren under eight). Fortunately their proximity to the beach was a blessing during our West Aussie "white-hot" Christmas!

WA AGED SAILORS, SOLDIERS & AIRMEN'S RELIEF TRUST FUND

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A "Pun can be Fun" Corner

We all know that the English language contains many words derived from the Latin and Greek - known as "roots". Many words are of Grecian origin, especially a range of medical terms and multiple words used in mathematics, such as geometry.

There are many stories to help explain the interesting ways these words originally came about. Legend has it that a contemporary of Pythagoras was watching a parrot playing with some twigs, once upon a time. Although birds often play with twigs and leaves and branches, this parrot, to the mathematician's amazement, actually arranged the pieces of wood into some sort of a pattern. Then, unfortunately, the bird keeled over, gave one last, final gurgle ... and died.

The mathematician was so moved that he named the shape, "Dead parrot" although -- of course -- he said it in Greek. That is why, today, we call that shape a "polygon".

And perhaps why doctors term a laxative for a parrot or cocky as a "polypop".

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

Sunday, 10 February, 2013 : 1030 for 1100 hrs - Women's Royal Australian Army Corps Association

Thursday, 14 February, 2013 : 1030 for 1100 hrs - National Servicemen's Association of Australia WA Branch Inc

"The Way We Were" Gallery Our Golden Oldies

Few of the original Highgate founding members are still with us - but, fortunately, still admirably hale and hearty in his 93rd year, Tom Horton is one of "the few", and usually fronts up for our monthly Luncheons. During his many years with Highgate, Tom has served on the Committee many times, and was Sub-Branch President in 1998. He later became a JP.

Tom was born here in WA in October 1920, the son of a WWI veteran who was wounded in France. He had one sister and grew up in South Perth. He met his good mate: Phil Loffman (another Highgate notable, now deceased) at school, and the two became lifelong friends. The photo (below left) shows Tom (centre) with Phil (right) in the Middle East. Tom was already a Sgt in the Militia when WW2 broke out, but itched to exchange his role as a weapons training instructor for real action. This came in 1941 when posted to the 2nd AIF in the Middle East; and where he linked up with his mate: Phil Loffman. Phil was a member of 28 Bn; whilst ever-handy-with-explosives Tom went to the 2/3rd Tank Attack Bn. Both were heavily involved in the Battle of El Alamein, in which Phil and many in the 2/28th were taken prisoner by Rommel's troops. Tom was quite badly wounded by shrapnel, necessitating his eventual return to Australia and six months in hospital, recuperating.

It was during some leave in 1944, when he ran into another old friend at the Savoy Hotel, Perth, who urged Tom to quit the Army and join him as aircrew with the RAAF. Tom decided on this change, and spent the remainder of the war as a RAAF Navigator/Bomb Aimer, flying various supplies and Red Cross cargo around Australia, attaining the rank of Flight Sergeant. After discharge, Tom was at Perth Railway Station to greet his old pal, Phil Loffman, on his eventual return to Australia following his POW exploits. The two close mates served each other as "Best Man" at their respective weddings not long afterwards, and their close friendship endured thereafter.

Post-war, Tom Horton resumed working for Wesfarmers for some years, where he had acquitted himself well in management. But he was approached and recruited by a fledgling company which had developed a range of agricultural chemicals. Offered part-ownership, he took it over fully after the owners died, and when the business was eventually on-sold, Tom retired on the proceeds.

He took his wife and four children travelling - living in the Cotswolds in England for two years, before touring Europe as a family for a further seven months. It was a terrific "bonding" time for the family, and all four of his children subsequently became successful in their professional lives.



Tom Horton, at 92 plus, retains the vigour and wit that has characterised his long, and interesting life. He is a merry soul - still quick with the 'gags': "You've heard of Casanova?? Well, I am Casanunder!" is one. It would have been fun to have heard his banter with the girls in his hey-day!

Casanunder or not, there is no question that he has contributed to the well-being of our nation in war-time and many years in business. He has staunchly supported the RSL and given many years of service to Legacy too.

"Well done Champ!"



LAST POST

Jack McLaren.

Lest We Forget



IS IT A BIRD? ... IS IT A TRAPEZE ARTIST? Nope It's 85-year-old PADRE TIM!

Every Highgate member who regularly attends the monthly Luncheons is familiar with the witty "Grace" Padre Tim treats us to before we partake of our meals. Indeed, whilst we know what an intrepid soul he can be (hardly "run-of-the-mill" clergy(!)) I wonder how many of us are aware that he served in WW2 and is a former Royal Marine? That he enjoyed a long professional career as an engineer - working in a number of West African countries? And that during these times he served in the King's African Rifles, then 21 Special Air Service and 4 Parachute Field Ambulance? Oh yes: this man had a full and adventurous life before taking Holy Orders and being ordained as an Anglican priest in 1988.



Padre Tim - all smiles after his successful descent!

It doesn't come as a huge surprise then to learn that when WA was gearing up for "Seniors' Week" late last year, they focussed on this "daring-older-man-hooked-on-to-his-flying-abseiling-cable" - wishing to fulfil a long-held dream to abseil down to the ground from the top of the 40-metre bell tower of St George's Cathedral, where he serves as an assistant priest.

The abseil event was organised by Amana Living (WA's principal Anglican aged and community care provider), who were looking for an energetic, healthy and active person to exemplify Amana's philosophy of encouraging the elderly to remain as active as possible, and "focussing on what people CAN do, rather than what they CAN'T do".

Apparently family and supporters watched on with some trepidation as Tim calmly strapped himself into the necessary sling before smoothly swinging his legs over the tower edge and sliding serenely to the ground. "All my life I have put my faith in Jesus Christ, but for the last ten minutes it has been with Mick upstairs," the Rev Tim was overheard to remark; adding: "It sounded like a good idea at the time, but I changed my mind half way up".

The event was facilitated by local adventure sporting outfit: "Adventure Out", who provided and set up the equipment. Tim was clearly appreciative of their professionalism: "It is a question of trust. You trust your gear and you trust your mate, and that also goes for life. I have had some good mates and I have had some good gear", he said, once he'd safely reached "terra firma". (The more "firm(er)" the less "terr(or)" eh Tim?!) He later observed that the experience reminded him he still had a few good years left. He certainly gave everybody concerned a very positive image of an "ageing person"!

Editor's Note: Big "thank you" to Lynn Lovell-Durant for bringing this item (courtesy of Sydney's "Sun-Herald") to her attention. Also a formal acknowledgement to Rev Tim Harrison, for his inspiring and moving tribute to the Fallen, at our Remembrance Day ceremony at the Flame of Remembrance last 4 November.



Rev Tim, mid-descent - looking as though he does it every week

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

HOLLYWOOD

PRIVATE HOSPITAL



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