



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 17 October 2011

Venue: Gallipoli Room
Time: 1130 hrs for 1215 hrs

NO Guest Speaker - indeed, this is our annual "Informal" Luncheon, where members are encouraged to get up and share/relate an amusing or entertaining anecdote from their war or service experience - just for five minutes a time. Don't be shy!

IMPORTANT NOTICE—REMEMBRANCE LUNCHEON AT KINGS PARK : 6 November 2011. *(More info p.3)*

BOOKINGS ARE RAPIDLY FILLING UP, as many members accessed the Web-Site on-line and added their (and their spouses) names. (This procedure had to be ceased though, due to "security concerns").

Bookings can still be made by contacting Margot Harness: 9293 1076 or margot.harness@highgate-rsl.org.au **OR** any of the other Committee members listed (at left). (Please provide first name of your partner/spouse to assist the SVP with name-tags/seating plans etc).

PLEASE TAKE SPECIAL NOTE: THE "PERMANENT LIST" HAS BEEN SUPERCEDED BY A "DIRECT BOOKING IN" SYSTEM. THOSE ON E-MAIL HAVE BEEN SENT THE DIRECT GOOGLE WEB-SITE. MAIL RECIPIENTS NEEDING TO BOOK SHOULD ADVISE MARGOT HARNESS PLEASE (Ph: 9293 1076) BEFORE 13th OCTOBER.

President's Report

A short note from the Incoming President:

Thank you for your vote of confidence in electing me as the new President of Highgate RSL Sub-branch. I can assure you all that this confidence is well placed. It is an indeed an honour and privilege to be the President of a SubBranch with such a rich history and tradition. In the year ahead our focus will be centred on meeting our on-going obligations and towards planning an interesting and enjoy

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FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Committee: 7 November 2011 Monthly Luncheon: 21 November 2011



(Continued from page 1)

able calendar for all members and partners to enjoy.

I wish to thank the 2011 committee members for putting their hands up to take on these sometimes thankless duties. In particular I would like to thank Adrian Young and Ray Galliot for taking on the Secretary duties right at the death knock..

We still need someone to step forward to take the reins of Junior Vice President?

Finally I ask the long serving members and new members to be forever vigilant and let either the committee or myself know of any issues that are of concern. Also we do not always hear of any members that are experiencing illness or hardship and therefore cannot offer assistance as it may be required.

Keep in mind we are here to help as well as provide a forum for some conviviality.

Take care
Leon Griffiths

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT - AGM September 2011

It gives me great pleasure to welcome our Past Presidents, RSL Life Members, the Executive Committee and members to the 64th Annual General Meeting of the Highgate RSL SubBranch and to present my Annual Report for the twelve months ending 30 June 2011.

Once again Highgate has had a very busy year with many challenges. The Committee made up of the elected Executive and members appointed to particular positions met formally eleven times to carry out the day-to-day business of the Sub-Branch.

Each Committee members had been accountable for a particular portfolio and has often gone beyond the call of duty when carrying out the duties associated with that portfolio. Four of the Committee represented Highgate as Delegates at the rSL WA Branch Annual State Congress in October. Early this year Richard Carter took on the position of State Representative when, after years of service, Don Blair stepped down from the Committee. I thank Don most sincerely for his outstanding commitment to Highgate and RSL. In May there was another change when Newsletter Editor, Bob Arnold, handed over to Secretary, Margot Harness. Margot capably juggled both hats for a time.

One of our many challenges Highgate faces is that of membership. Whilst in June 2010 membership stood at 275, as at 30 June 2011 it was down to 270. New members and transfers from other SubBranches did not quite cover the losses, the majority of which were members who passed away during the year. Unfortunately, we could not find a replacement for our excellent Membership Officer who was unable to continue. Nevertheless it is not just a question of numbers. For some time now the average age of our membership has been more than 80 years. Many of the OBE's who have been pivotal to Highgate's development and wellbeing have served as Committee members, SubWardens or been involved with the Honour Avenue Group. They are now at a stage when they deserve to enjoy the comradeship that Highgate offers with no strings attached. So we need *active* members and members who are *proactive*. We need to be better at mentoring our new and younger members, to encourage them to attend luncheons and functions and to involve themselves by serving in one capacity or another—if only for one year. We need to ensure that all members feel welcome and comfortable, and that no one feels lost. For only then will they feel part of Highgate rather than peripheral to it. And let us not forget that we must reach out, look out for, and stay connected to one another. In this respect I am heartened by the number of calls and messages that I have received in the past year. Sadly a number of these calls were to advise that a member was hospitalized or had passed away in which case Highgate was usually well represented at the funeral. On many occasions the Sub Wardens provided a Guard of Honour.

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SUB WARDENS DUTIES

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

Sunday 23 October 2011 : 1200 for 1240 hrs- Consulate of Greece - OCHI Day.

OUTCOMES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING on 19 September:

Outgoing President: Martyn Thompson delivered his Annual Report before formally handing over to incoming new President: Leon Griffiths. Other key officebearers newly elected (or confirmed) were:

Senior Vice President - Peter Farrell
Secretary (until Nov/Dec) - Adrian Young
Secretary (after Nov/Dec) - Ray Galliot
Treasurer - Richard Adams

* * * * *

NOTE: Unfortunately, no-one present nominated for the positions of Junior Vice President or Membership Officer. We would still welcome and value any willing soul prepared to "step-up-to-the-crease" for either of these positions. *IT'S NOT TOO LATE - PLEASE THINK ABOUT IT!*

VICE-REGAL "Snippet":

Following a longtime custom, both our outgoing President: Martyn Thompson, incoming President, Leon Griffiths and SVP: Peter Farrell, recently called on the newly appointed State Governor of WA: Malcolm McCusker to pay their respects. They found him to be relaxed and charming. Hopefully, in the days ahead, he may find the opportunity to address the Sub Branch as Guest Speaker at one of our Monthly Luncheons.

NEED A LIFT TO ANZAC HOUSE TO ATTEND MONTHLY HIGHGATE LUNCHEONS?

If so please contact me personally on 9244 8072

Ken Bladen

A "Pun can be Fun" Corner

An Indian chief was feeling very sick, so he summoned the medicine man. After a brief examination, the medicine man took out a long, thin strip of elk rawhide and gave it to the chief, telling him to bite off, chew, and swallow one inch of the leather every day. After a month, the medicine man returned to see how the chief was feeling. The chief shrugged and said, "The thong is ended, but the malady lingers on."

COMING EVENT!

The success of last year's Memorial Luncheon at Fraser's Restaurant in Kings Park has produced something of a stampede of bookings for Sunday 6th November this year. Fraser's will be looking spick-and-span, after it's re-fit for CHOGM and the Queen's visit. Once again, the broad programme will begin with members and wives/partners assembling at the Flame of Remembrance for a Memorial Service to the Fallen before adjourning for a threecourse sit-down Lunch and fellowship. Cost: \$70 a couple for members. Wines/drinks included

MENU:

Entrée: Smoked breast of chicken on roast pumpkin and pinenut pissaladier; rocket and chardonnay dressing.

Main: Roast eye fillet of Beef (cooked medium) with potato and sweet potato pie, choice of one sauce- red wine, béarnaise or pepper sauce **OR**

Chargrilled Atlantic salmon fillet with chick peas, preserved lemon and cucumber yoghurt.

WITH BOTH - Choice of steamed green veg or salad

Dessert: Mango and blueberry crumble with rhubarb and vanilla bean ice-cream. (Tea/Coffee etc)



LAST POST

Phil Atherton

Lest We Forget



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Several factors have ensured that Highgate is in a stronger financial position than twelve months ago. These include the \$20 Highgate membership fee voted at the last AGM and the State Congress decision to return a greater proportion of the annual RSL subscription to Sub-Branches. Hollywood Private Hospital continued its generous support of the newsletter and following a successful approach to the Hon Stephen Smith, Federal Member for Perth, his office is now mailing out the newsletter. Our energetic Treasurer, Richard Adams, has kept a close watch on the budget and ensured that Highgate complies with financial regulations. Later in the meeting Richard will present the financial statements.

Monthly Luncheon Meeting attendance has averaged around 60 members with occasional guests. Matthew Holyday, House Manager at ANZAC House has been most helpful in our endeavour to retain table service at a reasonable price. In spite of increased food costs we were able to keep the luncheon at \$25. Response to the change from one large main course to two small courses has been positive. **Raffles have provided for the occasional extra such as the OBE birthday cake.**

Seven of the nineteen members who reached the 80 or 90 year mark attended the lively festive Luncheon. During the year, JVP Peter Farrell took over the responsibility for the guest speaker programme. Without exception speakers have been informative and frequently entertaining. The August meeting included an informal meal and an opportunity for members to share some of their interesting anecdotes. With so many yarns still to be told, this format will be repeated in October.

The Gunfire Breakfast was again held at the WA Club. Acting US Consul General, Neal Vermillion, gave a short address in place of Aleisha Woodward, who at the last minute had to return to the USA. Many many not be aware that one of the early venues for the Gunfire Breakfast was the West Perth home of Past President: Ean McDonald, who passed away recently at the age of 94.

Special Functions

Two social functions were held. The first was the *Highgate RSL Sub-Branch Memorial Luncheon* on 7th November which began at the Flame of Remembrance with a short but moving service organized by Deputy Warden, Phillip Skelton. During the Luncheon at Fraser's Restaurant, retiring Warden: Kevin Cass-Ryall was farewelled; incoming Warden: Ian Petkoff was welcomed; and medallions were presented to three retired Sub-Wardens: Mick Michael, Ken Birks and Bob Campbell.

Guests included Mark Webb, CEO of Botanic Parks and Gardens Authority and Senior Park Management Officer, Alan Pearse, who work closely with the Honour Avenues Group (HAG) and Sub-Wardens.

I am grateful to SVP Leon Griffiths for organizing this function and to Hollywood Private Hospital for their substantial donation to the event which will be repeated in November 2011.

The second event in March was a bufft luncheon at Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club when more than 100 members and guests whiled away quite a few pleasant hours.

Special thanks to Lynn Durant for facilitating the function at the Club and to Leon for the organization.

Highgate is fortunate to have

many 'living treasures' whose contribution is immeasurable. Amongst them are Norman Manners and members of the HAG; and Deputy Warden, Phillip Skelton and the Sub-Wardens who have attended many commemorative services. Norman and Phillip, who was a recipient of an RSL (WA) Australia Day 2011 Award for Community Service, will provide reports on these activities for this meeting.

The Poppy Day Appeal on Friday 5th November, was a 'best ever' with Coordinator, Jim Eayrs and volunteers at the two city Busports collecting around \$18,000. John Cleary gave the web-site a fresh look and has kept it updated. He also organized highgate-rsl.org.au email addresses for the Committee. Ken Bladen continued to visit those who were unwell and arranged transport for those who needed a lift to Luncheons while Jim Eayrs dealt with pension and welfare requests as needed. Many others such as Eli Quartermaine and 'Tim Harrison see what needs to be done and get on with it. I thank you all.

What a privilege it has been to be so deeply involved with Highgate. It has not always been smooth sailing and whilst you, the members, have not always agreed with me, I have grown to appreciate the honour that was bestowed on me two years ago. However nothing would have been possible without the support I received from my wife, Jill, from the Committee and from you, the members. I wish the incoming Committee well and look forward to enjoying Highgate in a different capacity. I thank you for your attendance.

MARTYN THOMPSON

President Highgate RSL Sub-Branch



A Shield of Honour for Peter Hummerston RFD

Few of us enjoy the privilege of public recognition in this life- but the exemplary lives and achievements of some **are** suitably recognised; and one of our erstwhile members has been suitably acknowledged by a new Australian Air Force Cadets (AAFC) trophy being named in his honour. A "Peter Hummerston Perpetual Shield" has been established this year: the 70th Anniversary of its formation, which was recently presented for the first time. It will continue to be awarded to the Dux of each Junior NCO Course.

Peter has had a distinguished career, and his enduring association with the AAFC, and later, RAAF, goes back a long way.

Flt Lt Peter Hummerston was born in Perth in 1923 and joined the newly formed Air Training Corp in 1941 - one of its original members.

In March 1942, he enlisted in the RAAF in Course 26 of the Empire Air Training Scheme, undergoing courses



(L to R.) Graeme McGlashan (Sec, AAFC Branch and maker of the shield); Peter Hummerston; and LCDT Stuart Neil (Dux and inaugural winner of the Peter Hummerston RFD Shield)

at Clontarf, Ballarat and Sale (both in Vic) before qualifying as a Wireless Operator Air Gunner. With successful Navigational Training at Nhill (Vic) and Mt Gambier (SA) completed, Peter joined 36 Sqn at Townsville (Q) flying Dakotas - becoming operational.

No 36 Sqn flew throughout the South West Pacific on many varied missions, including medivacs, supply drops and parachute drops, carrying troops, ammunition, food and medical supplies. With the nickname "The Hydraulic Squadron - We Lift Anything", they were widely known as the "Biscuit Bombers" - a name that underestimated the hazards of often treacherous weather amid the great mountains and valleys of New Guinea - and the Dakotas being unarmed, unescorted and sometimes subjected to ground fire. On occasions, crews were known to lob hand grenades onto the enemy down below.

On one occasion, en route to Zamboanga, the aircraft batteries aboard Peter's Dakota exploded and nearly asphyxiated the crew. On another, flying from Towns-

ville to Morotai, his aircraft hit a downdraft. Freight broke loose, damage was considerable, passengers were injured, Peter was thrown into the cabin roof, injuring his shoulder - scarred to this day - and on landing, the door fell off and smashed into the elevators. A very close call.

Peter was discharged from the RAAF in November 1945, having flown over 1400 hours and taken part in 84 supply dropping missions. Among his various Australian medals and campaign stars, he received the Philippines Liberation Medal.

After WW2, Peter resumed his career in the refrigeration business, and joined the RAAF Reserve. He was a foundation member of No 35 Sqn Branch, which later became the Australia-Pacific Branch. In 1953 he was attached to the WA Squadron Air Training Corps as an instructor, and later became CO of 12 Flight (Belmont). He showed great initiative in equipping the Flight and was instrumental in acquiring and restoring an old Link Trainer, that gave many cadets their first flight training.

After 30 years of service with the AAFC, Peter retired in 1983. However, in 1986 he was one of the founding members of the Ex-WA AIRTC Instructors Group, which at one stage numbered over 500.

In 1989, he returned to Papua New Guinea and flew the skies of WW2 with his son, Major Lyn Hummerston of the Army Aviation Corps - a special shared time for them both. Sadly, just two years later, his son was killed in a Nomad aircraft crash.

Throughout his post war years, Peter kept active in the RSL. He has been a long-term member of the Highgate Sub-Branch, a Marshal for the ANZAC Day services and March, a committee member for the King's Park Honour Avenue Group, and in 2004 was appointed as Warden of the State War Memorial.

Peacetime awards include the Reserve Forces Decoration and the Cadet Forces Medal. He has Lifetime Membership and a Certificate of Service from the RAAF Assn; and a 50 year Service Award from the RSL.

In war and in peace, Peter Hummerston RFD has demonstrated outstanding leadership, enthusiasm and devotion to duty and the community. He thoroughly deserves this special accolade. Well done Peter!



HOLLYWOOD NEWS: HEROES BOOST HOSPITAL RESEARCH

Decorated WW2 hero, the late Jack Wong Sue, and Z Special Unit are well known in our military history. Their legacy continues with a recent generous donation of \$100,000 to the Hollywood Private Hospital Research Foundation.

The money, the remaining funds of the recently disbanded Z Special Unit International, founded by Jack Sue, was presented by Mr Ernst Baints at a luncheon at the hospital on 29th August. Mr Baints is one of only five remaining members of Z Special Unit.

The Research Foundation is a not-for-profit initiative with running costs fully provided by Hollywood Private Hospital, allowing 100% of donations to be directed to research.

To date, a total of \$500,000 has been granted for medical research in areas such as prostate cancer, asthma and chronic lung disease, Alzheimer's disease, knee replacement surgery, autologous knee cartilage implantation surgery, orthopaedic rehabilitation and palliative care.

It has also provided grants to support trials of curcumin (turmeric) and berry extracts in the preventive treatment of Alzheimer's disease; as well as funded investigations into the role of the antifolate antibody as a possible cause of recurrent miscarriages.

Acknowledging the generous Z Special Unit donation, Foundation Manager, Mr Terry Baylis said: "We are overwhelmed by the generosity of Z Special Unit International. Their contributions over the years have made significant research advancements in areas from orthopaedics to Alzheimer's and even palliative care".

"We may not have furthered our knowledge in these areas without their kind support".

The Foundation raises funds from hospital social events, staff contributions and community donations.

Hollywood Private Hospital is also donating all proceeds to the research foundation from the sale of its book: "Everyone's a Hero—Celebrating 70 years of an amazing Hospital", which to date has reached \$70,000.

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Hear Ye ... Hear Ye ... POPPY DAY is coming up.

This is no time for subtlety! Martyn and Jim will be seeking volunteers for Remembrance Day itself - "the 11th hour of the 11th day" ON the 11th, in 2011 - at the next Luncheon. Hands up please??



In echoes of Lord Kitchener's call

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

HOLLYWOOD

PRIVATE HOSPITAL



THIS NEWSLETTER IS PRINTED AS A SERVICE TO THE VETERAN COMMUNITY BY THE OFFICE OF STEPHEN SMITH