



# HIGHGATE



# NEWS

**Issue 510**  
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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 AND AGM

**Monday 19 September 2011**

**Venue:** Gallipoli Room

**Time:** 1130 hrs for 1215 hrs

**NO Guest Speaker, but in addition to Election of Office Bearers etc, Ken Bladen and Phillip Skelton will be debating the official RSL stance on whether names of SASR and other Armed Forces KIA in modern conflicts can be added to the State War Memorial.**

*(See Pages 5 and 6 for their respective Preview Summaries)*

### 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](mailto: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 SUSPENDED FOR THE TIME BEING. IF ATTENDING THE SEPTEMBER LUNCH/AGM PLEASE ADVISE MARGOT HARNESS (Ph: 9293 1076) BEFORE 15 SEPTEMBER. WE NEED TO BE ABLE TO ADVISE THE ANZAC CLUB MANAGER OF CORRECT NUMBERS FOR CATERING**

## president's Report

There is no doubt that there are times in one's life when it is easier to take on a more active role in an organisation and others when it is not. With the AGM rapidly approaching, I would like members to seriously consider nominating themselves or encouraging others to join the Highgate Sub Branch

*(Continued on page 2)*

## FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

**Committee: 3 October 2011 Monthly Luncheon: 17 October 2011**



(Continued from page 1)

Committee. It is a great way of gaining a better understanding of the aims and objectives of the Returned and Services League. If you can see your way clear to take on a position, then please don't be shy to come forward. WE NEED YOU.

Following the Annual General Meeting (AGM) there will be short presentations from Phillip Skelton and Ken Bladen relating to issues raised by the SAS War Widows about the inclusion of names on the State War Memorial (SWM). In this newsletter there is information that pertains to both the AGM and the SWM. It is important, so please be sure to read it, and then read it again prior to the meeting. If you are unable to attend the luncheon and would like your opinion about the SWM recorded, put your thoughts preferably in writing to the Secretary. Alternately telephone Margot or myself as soon as possible. There are a number of members who rarely attend a function. If you haven't been to a luncheon at ANZAC House for a while, why not book in straight away. I would like to meet and welcome you. If there is a problem in getting to the meetings, ring Ken Bladen or myself and we will do our best to get you there.

The Annual Poppy Day on Friday 11 November will soon be upon us. Jim Eayrs and I are seeking your support as collectors. If you know that you can give an hour or two on the day, please let us know now. This really is a case of 'more hands make light work'. As a Sub Branch, Highgate is required to send 50% of what we collect to the State Branch, whilst we retain the other half for welfare purposes. Although we may like to think that our members are unlikely to require assistance this is not so. In the past month my attention was drawn to a longstanding member who had a 'one off' need. The paperwork was quickly completed and the matter resolved in a couple of days. I thank the observant member concerned – you know who you are.

Anyone who has been to the website in the past week will be aware that there is a facility for online registration for both the September AGM Luncheon and the November Memorial Luncheon in Kings Park on Sunday 6 November. Richard Adams our ever patient but resourceful Treasurer and John Cleary the Website Administrator have devised a user-friendly system for those who have computer access. Judging by the number of online registrations for the Memorial luncheon the system is a runaway success (a number of places have been set aside for members on the postal mailing list so that they will not be disadvantaged). A few

teething problems have been identified and are being addressed. Because of privacy concerns the registration link has been removed from the view of the general public. The link has been emailed to members so if you did not save the information you will need to contact John. Those on the postal mailing can continue to book in the normal way.

This is my last monthly Newsletter report. I have spent 2 years as your President, a time that has been so very enjoyable. On looking back, it was a steep learning curve; there have been three or four glitches and plenty of Martyn moments - often maddening, sometimes memorable. The support and advice that I have received over this time has been much appreciated. I would like especially like to thank the dedicated Committee members and others who have done their bit to ensure that Highgate is alive and well with a great future.

Yours in Fellowship

Martyn

### A "Pun can be Fun" Corner

Spanish-born Joe, born in a convent there, was one of the most popular lads at the Vauxhall vehicle plant in Luton. With his great sense of humour and charm he was always a hit with the ladies and a star in his line-dancing class. A bit on the "posh" side, but there was nothing he loved more than a good singalong and a party. No wonder then that he was known as that "top boot-skootin' lad of Luton, son of a nun from Barcelona, wag-time WOW-boy Joe".

### **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 11 September 2011 : 1130 for 1200 hrs- Maltese Association

**NOTE REVISED DATE:**

Tuesday 27 September 2011 : 0930 for 1000 hrs - Australian Army Cadets Brigade (hosting Surrey Army Cadet Force UK)

## **NOTIFICATION RE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING:**

**PLEASE PAY SPECIAL NOTE:** *The forthcoming AGM on Monday 19th September, will seek to endorse several candidate nominees for key positions.* However, a number of office-bearers are retiring, and their positions will be declared VACANT, so we are seeking members to nominate to replace them.

**REMEMBER:** *If everyone is prepared to do just one year on the Committee, then the responsibilities are rotated fairly across the Sub -Branch.*



**A lovely pic of Bob Mercer - a much-revered "Elder Statesman" of Highgate, and his wife, Jean - taken at our March Luncheon held at Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club: a wonderful occasion!**

Our talented member, Lynn Durant, took a host of photos that day, and she will be bringing a selection of prints to the AGM on the 19th Sep for those attending who might like to order copies.

John Cleary has also put Lynn's range of photos on the web-site, for general viewing.

Just go to <http://Highgate-rsl.org.au>

## **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 spickand-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 three-course sit-down Lunch and fellowship. Cost: \$70 a couple for members. More details (Menu, etc) later. Our thanks go to SVP: Leon Griffiths, who is the primemover and organiser of these very enjoyable occasions.



## **LAST POST**

Ean McDonald (former member)

**Lest We Forget**

**CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET (12 months—ending 30 June 2011)**

	<b>BALANCE</b>	<b>BALANCE</b>
<b>Accumulated Funds</b>	<b>30/06/2011</b>	<b>30/06/2010</b>
	\$	\$
General Account	9,091.43	3,084.70
Amelioration Account	11,484.30	5,044.45
Honour Avenue Cheque A/c Bearing Interest	3,732.84	5,135.88
Honour Avenue Business On-line Saver No. 1	15,196.70	15,279.83
Honour Avenue Business On-line Saver No. 2	15,066.24	21,268.95
Honour Avenue Term Deposit	19,800.00	19,800.00
	<u><b>\$74,371.51</b></u>	<u><b>\$69,615.81</b></u>
	=====	=====
<i>REPRESENTED BY:</i>		
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Commonwealth Bank General A/c	7,571.33	2,825.80
Commonwealth Bank Amelioration A/c	11,464.30	5,046.45
Commonwealth Bank Honour Avenue A/c	3,732.84	5,135.88
Commonwealth Bank Honour Avenue Investment Accounts	50,062.94	56,348.78
Undeposited Funds	4,000.00	0.00
Account Receivable		2,000.00
	<u><b>\$76,831.41</b></u>	<u><b>\$71,356.91</b></u>
	=====	=====
<b>Fixed Assets</b>		
Equipment at cost		
Less prov for Depreciation		
	<u><b>\$76,831.41</b></u>	<u><b>\$71,356.91</b></u>
	=====	=====
<b>Less Current Liabilities</b>		
Other Current Liabilities—Sub-Wardens	\$700.00	\$700.00
Overseas Fund		1,041.10
November Memorial Lunch/Raffle Proceeds	1,759.90	
	<u><b>\$2,459.90</b></u>	<u><b>\$1,741.10</b></u>
	=====	=====
<b>Equity</b>	<u><b>\$74,371.51</b></u>	<u><b>\$69,615.81</b></u>
	=====	=====

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Our Sub-Branch pays tribute to our longtime, capable Treasurer, Richard Adams, for this comprehensive Balance Sheet/Summary above, representing the last Financial year's transactions. NOTE: It is pointed out that monies held in "Honour Avenue" accounts, as detailed, are Public Monies and cannot be used for any other purpose than provision and maintenance of plaques in Kings Park the public has paid for.

**UPDATE ON DFRDB/DFRB SUPERANNUATION DISSATISFACTION**

A "Fair Go" campaign is gathering widespread momentum as more and more ex-ADF superannuants protest against CPI-tied Indexation rates. Highgate Sub-Branch has formally forwarded Notices of Motions to the WA State Branch, seeking these issues to be added to the Agenda for State Congress in November. More up-to-date general information can be accessed by going to [www.dfga.org.au](http://www.dfga.org.au) or [www.rar.org.au/documents/advocacy](http://www.rar.org.au/documents/advocacy)



## **THE CASE FOR SASR VETERANS KILLED IN ACTION (KIA) IN OVERSEAS THEATRES TO HAVE THEIR NAMES INSCRIBED ON THE STATE WAR MEMORIAL (SWM) IRRESPECTIVE OF THE VETERANS' PLACE OF BIRTH OR ENLISTMENT INTO THE AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE (ADF)**

(a) First Special Air Service Company (1 SAS Coy) was raised at Swanbourne WA in 1957. 1 SAS Coy was redesignated the Special Air Service Regiment (SASR) in 1964 and remains permanently on the western seaboard. Once inducted, SASR soldiers remain in WA; unlike most members of the regular ADF, SAS soldiers are not transferred interstate.

(b) The writer was an inaugural member of 1 SAS Coy and served for 3 1/2 years.

(c) Candidates applying to serve in SAS are subjected to vigorous and sophisticated physical and psychological selection procedures. All are treated equally, irrespective of rank and come from different Corps and various parts of Australia. Successful candidates inducted into SAS become permanent West Australians.

(d) The families of married SASR soldiers also become West Australians and enrol in electoral rolls, get jobs and many purchase houses. Most remain domiciled in WA well after their husbands/fathers retire from SASR. SAS children from other States frequently marry local West Australians and remain in WA rather than leave.

(e) Recently the Australian SAS Association (ASASA) on behalf of its war widows whose husbands were KIA in Afghanistan, has sought to have deceased names inscribed on the State War Memorial (SWM). To date, the RSL in WA (custodian of the SWM) has rebuffed their requests on the basis of the following RSL criteria which has been in place for some 80 years.

“Deceased servicemen and women must either be born in WA or have enlisted in WA to eligible to be placed on the SWM at the end of the conflict”

**In suggesting that the RSL criteria is now entirely unsuitable for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the following points are relevant:**

\* **The SWM is a public place** where the names of all deceased WA veterans KIA should be inscribed for posterity. This venue caters for grateful members of the public as well as families and friends who wish to pay personal respects at any given time to those who made the supreme sacrifice in war.

\* **If the RSL criteria remains unchanged the following anomalies could occur:**

(a) Three SASR vets get KIA in Afghanistan in the same action. One was born in Queensland, one in Adelaide and one in Albany. Only the one born in Albany would be eligible to have his name inscribed on the SWM.

(b) Joe and Ted are mates and go to school in Hobart where both were born. At age 18 Joe enlists in the ADF and Ted takes up a mining job in Mt Newman, WA. A year later Ted enlists in the ADF. Within three years both have been selected and now serve in SASR. Should both be KIA, only Ted qualifies to have his name on the SWM because he enlisted in the ADF while in WA.

### **Current position**

\* The RSL State Executive apparently decided in February 2011 not to change its criteria following some 8 months of lobbying by the ASASA to have names of the SAS fallen inscribed. One war widow whose SAS husband was KIA in Afghanistan as long ago as February 2002 publicly described the RSL's position on the matter as a “copout”.

\* Adverse publicity against the RSL stand appeared in the print media and talkback radio on 28,29 and 30 April 2011. The RSL subsequently declared it would not discuss the matter further indicating that it would stick to a decision to put the matter to a vote at its State Congress on 25 November 2011.

**DRAFT MOTION: That the constitution of the RSL (WA) be amended as soon as possible to implement the following:**

(a) The names of all SASR veterans KIA plus the names of all other ADF veterans KIA whose families and/or next of kin were permanently domiciled in WA at the date of death shall be inscribed on the SWM within three months of date of death; and

(b) All names inscribed on the SWM shall be reviewed annually, between 1 November and 31 December.

**KEN BLADEN AM**





## STATE WAR MEMORIAL, WA: ADDITION OF NAMES

Australians remember with sadness, gratefulness and pride the sacrifice made by servicemen and servicewomen in all wars. They give thanks for the sacrifices that helped preserve the wonderful free, safe, open democracy in which we live.

Until very recently (part way through the Vietnam War) servicemen and servicewomen were buried on the battlefield where they were killed. Later as many bodies as possible were exhumed and reburied in a nearby official war cemetery. Thus there was no grave in Australia where relatives and friends could visit to grieve and pay their respects.

Thus a large number of war memorials were built to be both a substitute for a lack of a grave in Australia and as a place where members of the public unrelated to the servicemen and servicewomen killed in action could visit to pay their respects. Typically such war memorials included the names of servicemen and servicewomen enlisted in their local area. Adding names now is not required as the servicemen and servicewomen killed in action now are brought home, treated with significant honour and publicity, and have a grave here in Australia.

The Australian War Memorial records the names of all servicemen and servicewomen killed in action or died of wounds shortly after. State War Memorials mostly do not record any names; South Australia and Western Australia being the only exceptions. The Shrine in Victoria has no names on it but stores "carefully inscribed Books of Remembrance" recording names from WW1 only.

In light of the WA Government not taking up such an idea, in 1924/1925 the RS&SILA WA, while recognizing that there were numerous war memorials in suburbs and country towns, considered the need for a State War Memorial. Minutes of meetings record that the League did not consider it appropriate to take the lead but rather foster formation of a committee of citizens. Such a committee of citizens was formed and elected Sir William Lathlain as its chairman. The public appeal raised sufficient funds for the project.

Late in the appeal the committee of citizens decided to add to the memorial the names of the over 7,000 "gallant men who gave their lives in the cause we fought for" and sought the significant extra funds from members of the former battalions and others. The required extra amount was raised. The committee of citizens determined that to have their name inscribed on the memorial the person "must have been borne in Western Australia, or have enlisted in Western Australia, and also their death must be accepted as due to war service". On 24 November 1929 the State Governor unveiled the State War Memorial and "in the name of the people of the State, committed the Memorial to the custody and care of members of the Western Australian Branch of The Returned Sailors and Soldiers' Imperial league of Australia". The League has consistently honoured the trust it was given, including the decision criteria for names on the Memorial.

Quite apart from the principle involved, there are practical difficulties in widening the eligibility for names on the Memorial. Indeed there is a case for not adding any further names, even of those meeting the criteria. On the other hand establishing an Honour Roll section in the RSL WA website opens the possibility for including more names as well as correcting some minor anomalies.

Such an electronic Honour Roll could not only enable correction of the small number of anomalies in names now on the memorial, but make the names far more easily accessible to family members, researchers, educators, and members of the public. It would also enable (by clicking on the name of interest) the viewer to read a short bio of the person's service and other details, rather than the cryptic surname and initials that space allowed on the Memorial.

It is recommended that:

1. recognizing that bodies are now always brought home to Australia for burial and hence the grave is accessible by loved ones, no further names be added to the State War Memorial; and
2. funds be sought for a project encompassing research into all the names now on the Memorial and establishing a website on which to publish them with additional detail than simple surname and initials; and
3. add to the proposed website a section for those killed since the last of the current names inscribed on the Memorial were added and who comply with the original eligibility criteria; and consider adding a further section of the website for categories outside the original selection criteria who nonetheless have a compelling association with Western Australia.

**Phillip Skelton AM** (Deputy Warden—State War Memorial)

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

**HOLLYWOOD**  
**PRIVATE HOSPITAL**