



# HIGHGATE



# NEWS

Issue 519  
July 2012

Website: <http://Highgatersl.org.au>

The official newsletter of the Highgate (WA) SubBranch of the Returned & Services League of Australia

### President

Leon Griffiths  
Tele: 9332 9039 - 0439 033 399  
Email: [leon.griffiths@highgate-rsl.org.au](mailto:leon.griffiths@highgate-rsl.org.au)

### Vice President

Peter Farrell  
Tel: 9246 1367 - 0458 720 022  
Email: [peter.farrell@highgate-rsl.org.au](mailto:peter.farrell@highgate-rsl.org.au)

### Junior Vice President

Ian Petkoff  
Tel: 9275 9295  
E-mail: [thepetkoffs@hotmail.com](mailto:thepetkoffs@hotmail.com)

### Immediate Past President

Martyn Thompson  
Tel: 9383 2681  
Email: [martyn.tyn.thompson@highgate-rsl.org.au](mailto:martyn.tyn.thompson@highgate-rsl.org.au)

### Secretary

Ray Galliot  
27a Amaroo Place DUNCRAIG  
WA 6023  
Telephone: 0412 990 799  
Email: [raygalliot@gmail.com](mailto:raygalliot@gmail.com)

### Treasurer

Richard Adams  
PO Box 3551  
PERTH WA 6832  
Telephone: 0411 737 723  
Email: [richard.adams@highgate-rsl.org.au](mailto:richard.adams@highgate-rsl.org.au)

### Editor

Margot Harness  
Telephone: (H) 9293 1076  
(M) 0438 936 405  
Email: [margot.harness@highgate-rsl.org.au](mailto:margot.harness@highgate-rsl.org.au)

### Pensions Officer

Jim Eays  
Telephone: 9341 2979

### Website

[www.highgate-rsl.org.au](http://www.highgate-rsl.org.au)  
Email: [john.cleary@highgate-rsl.org.au](mailto:john.cleary@highgate-rsl.org.au)

## MONTHLY LUNCHEON AND AGM

Monday 16 July 2012

**Venue:** Gallipoli Room  
**Time:** 1130 hrs for 1215 hrs

### STAND BY FOR THE OBE Luncheon..

Not all of our members turning 90 and 80 are able to come to the Lunch, so let us acknowledge and congratulate here all those who've reached these significant milestones in 2012:

#### Turning 90:

Jack McLaren	Alan Potter
Doug Collins RFD ED (RL)	John Hately
Phil Zeid OBE	Alan Raphael
John Newton	Robert Kirk
John Harper-Nelson	Mick Michael OAM JP CM
Alan Saville	
Brian Walley	

#### Turning 80:

Malcolm Weatherhead	John Bush
Norm Manners RFM	Ray Doust
Richard Bird	

---

---

## President's Report

**A**nother month passes by and we are now on countdown to the business end of the year.

After the last newsletter I had expected to see a rush of membership applications but this did not eventuate. One application would have been nice, but maybe my expectation is too high? Not withstanding this lack of response, I feel our future strength as a viable Sub branch would benefit from encouraging affiliate members to join. Maybe this is where we should make more effort to find new members. We will see how this idea pans out so please make it a personal commitment to see if you can help boost numbers by introducing a new member.

On the subject of membership I feel we seldom take the time to recog-

*(Continued on page 2)*

## FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

COMMITTEE - 16June 2012 (at 10am, before) LUNCHEON - 16 July 2012



(Continued from page 1)

nize the hours of dedicated effort put in by many of our members over the years to ensure we have a continuing and effective organization in which people can participate and enjoy.

In the recent Queen's Birthday awards one of our esteemed members, Don Blair, was awarded the OAM for his services to the veteran community. Don has been a longstanding office bearer and member of Highgate and is a current trustee for the RSL WA. No-one better deserves this award in recognition of his effort. On my part I have found Don is always ready to offer help and give advice where it is needed and his background and experience has been invaluable in providing the right advice. From all of us - well done and well deserved Don!

In the same vein I would also like to thank Geoff Simpson and Jim Eayrs for willingly stepping forward the help co-ordinate the coming luncheon for the OBE's. This is an important event on our calendar and we all like to make this is a memorable day for one and all. To ensure this effort is not misplaced I encourage members to make it their business to come along to make sure the day is a success. Of course in expressing these thanks I am not forgetting the work of our other forever active committee members.

The Sub branch committee now meets in the morning prior to the monthly luncheons so we can bring information fresh to members on the day. Committee members details are included on the front of the newsletter so if anyone has any issue or suggestion please bring this to our attention beforehand.

See you all at the OBE luncheon.

Yours in friendship.  
Leon.

\*\*\*\*\*

**NOTE FOR NEXT MONTH: Our Guest Speaker for the August Luncheon will be eminent dentist and UWA Professor of Restorative Dentistry: Dr Peter Mack.. His Topic: Forensic Dentistry, promises to be very interesting!**

**DUE TO LACK OF RESPONSE, WE ARE ASKING AGAIN: IS THERE NOT SOMEONE OUT THERE WHO COULD HELP? It is not a hard job.**

### AN URGENT PLEA FOR HELP

Your Highgate RSL Honour Avenue's Sub- Committee has continued to work hard to ensure the success of plaque refurbishment, the Dedication of new plaques and the ongoing financial stability of the Honour Avenues of Kings Park.

We enjoy an enviable reputation, amongst the Senior Officers and Board of the Authority, for the dedicated work carried out in the field, the workshop and our administration centre.

Now we need support from the Highgate membership. **We need a volunteer member to fill the position of Assistant to the Treasurer.**

This is a new appointment and you will be working by the side of the Treasurer, Alf Till, in our air conditioned offices in The Lodge, Kings Park.

Aspects of the position are:

- \* Required Tuesday mornings only between 0800 and 1100 hours
- \* Free parking facilities behind The Lodge available.
- \* All banking accounts and financial records computerized
- \* Excellent team spirit amongst those whom you will know as you ease into the job.

Ring the Chairman, Norm Manners on 9405 2421 if you want to be a participating volunteer and hold up the pride of Highgate Sub-Branch as well as ensuring the spiritual graves of the men and women of this state are correctly cared for.

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

Ready to Assist Veterans and Dependents in need or necessitous circumstances

Apply: Welfare Officer - (08) 9287 3707

### 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, 15 July 2012 : 0830 for 0900 hrs- Assn of the Movement of Serbian Chetnicks Combatants  
Sunday, 15 July 2012 : 1130 for 1200 hrs - Cypriot Community: to commemorate the Invasion of Cyprus in 1974  
Sunday, 29 July 2012 : 11.30 for 1200 hrs- Commemoration of National Day of Independence of Macedonia

### A "Pun can be Fun" Corner

A story is going round that in her younger days, Mary Poppins – that children's Nanny extraordinaire, met up with Mahatma Ghandi, and they became firm friends. We all know that Mary invented some uniquely quaint words of her own, but who could have guessed that she based her longest one on her wonderful old Indian friend:

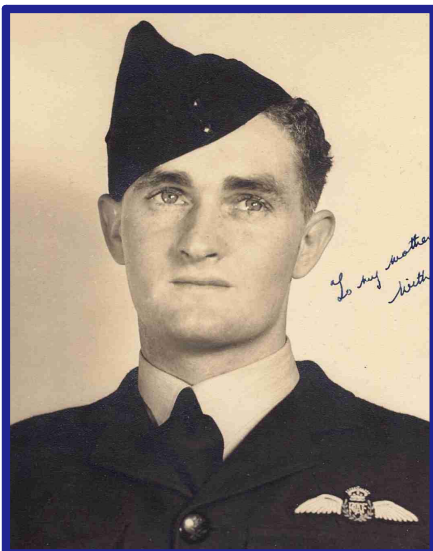
He was a "super calloused fragile mystic hexed by halitosis".

**PLEASE TAKE SPECIAL NOTE: To attend a monthly luncheon you need to book your name on the BOOK-IN SHEET by the Friday before the Monday lunch (Friday 13th July, for the next one). You can do this by 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.**

### "The Way We Were" Gallery ..... Our Golden Oldies .....

As we go to press, our esteemed member, retired Professor Alex Kerr AM is in London- one of 100 former WW2 Bomber Command air crew representing the Australian contingent at the unveiling of the long awaited Bomber Command Memorial by the Queen.

Alex was only 19 years old in 1940 when he joined the RAAF and did his pilot training. On returning from a raid over Hamburg on 11 May 1941, as Second Pilot of a Wellington (115 Sqn RAF), their plane was hit several times and caught fire. Despite



having been shot in the chest, hit in his left arm and leg and drifting in-and-out of consciousness, a fellow crewman virtually shoved him through the hatch. He thus parachuted to safety, but destined for three and a half years of captivity as a POW. He managed to escape; was recaptured, and commenced University studies (B.Sc (Econ)) during this time, before finally escaping to seek out British lines during the final stages of the war. He later became Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Murdoch University.



### LAST POST



Ron Smith (former Bomber Command, who died last year without the Sub-Branch being made aware) William (Bill) Pooley *May they both Rest in Peace*

**Lest We Forget**



## AFTER SEVENTY LONG YEARS .....

A major public memorial to commemorate the tragic loss of 55,573 young Bomber Command airmen during WW2 was unveiled and dedicated by the Queen on 28th June.

The moving event brought together thousands of elderly Bomber Command veterans from around Britain and parts of the Commonwealth, widows of those who lost their lives and other family members- all of whom were there to remember the bravery and sacrifices of those who never came back.

The Memorial itself is comprised of seven 2.7 metre high bronze figures depicting airmen gazing at a horizon from which their comrades would never return. This is surrounded by a gallery of Portland Stone on which is inscribed the names of all 55,573 who paid the supreme sacrifice.



For some it was a bitter-sweet occasion - long disappointed and hurt that the recognition had been so slow in coming; and that it had had to be financed from private sources. The courage of the then young men who believed they were striking at the heart of the German war machine during WW2 was tarnished by post-war angst about the ethics of bombing civilians. The German city of Dresden, in particular, was often cited, where 25,000 civilians died. To some extent these deaths too have been acknowledged on the new Memorial, which features a special inscription commemorating all the lives lost in the bombings of 1939-1945.

The ceremony also featured the last flying Lancaster bomber, which dropped poppy petals during the dedication service, creating a shimmering, shifting red cloud against the blue sky. Seconds earlier, five RAF Tornados - the results of a military partnership between Britain and its former enemies, Germany and Italy- had flown overhead in formation.

Survivors of the 125,000 in total who served in Bomber Command during the war included men from South Africa, the US, Canada, New Zealand and a contingent of 100 from Australia. As mentioned on p.3- our member Alex Kerr was one; and on the brief ABC footage, I recognised former Lancaster pilot: Doug Arrowsmith OAM (President of Claremont RSL Sub-Branch WA) as well. I can imagine that our John McKenzie would have loved to have been able to go too!

One survivor, interviewed by a journalist at the ceremony, said he coped psychologically with the constant losses of friends and comrades by telling himself: "They'll be OK- they're prisoners of war. But they weren't. I later had to face that they had probably been blown to pieces".

Another veteran, now 89, said the Memorial had come "very late", but the day was overwhelming. "We didn't think much of Bomber Harris [Arthur Harris, head of Bombing Command from February, 1942]. We called him Chopper Harris because he sent us out to get the chop. But it was only a job he was told to do by Churchill: "wipe out German industry"; and, in the end, I think we did it. In the process we killed a lot of Germans. But then I was in London for the Blitz".

**Editor (acknowledging quotes derived from Guardian News and Media Ltd and MOD UK)**

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 THE HON STEPHEN SMITH, MEMBER FOR PERTH**