



Highgate Highlights

Official newsletter of Highgate RSL Sub-Branch
Returned & Services League of Australia (WA)
www.highgate-rsl.org.au

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Peter Garside & Jack Suriano

From our President

By now, you should have fully recovered from the over-indulgence resulting from your enjoyable Christmas and New Year with family and friends.

Our final meeting for 2016 was enjoyed by about 80 members and guests. It was a great opportunity to have a good time and bid farewell to the Gallipoli Room at Anzac House, our home for over 35 years, with a rollicking rendition of 'Auld Lang Syne' sung with gusto. If any member was at Highgate's first Sub-Branch meeting at the opening of the Gallipoli Room in 1981 we would like to hear from you, as it would be fitting for you to cut the ribbon when our first meeting is held in the new Gallipoli Room in 2019.

To all who attended the luncheon, thank you for contributing to this important milestone event in Highgate's history. A special thanks to Geoff Hourn for organising an excellent array of entertainment. On behalf of those present at the meeting, I sincerely thank our performers.

(continued on page 2)

WA Club is our February meeting place

Important: Please book before Tuesday 14 February as the WA Club needs catering numbers by Wednesday 15 Feb

Our next meeting on 20 February will be held at the Western Australian Club at 12 St Georges Terrace, opposite the Perth Concert Hall. Please enter through the revolving door and use the far right-hand lift to Level 11. The cost of the meal remains at \$30 per person. You can pay on arrival

Our March meeting will be at the Mercure Hotel, 10 Irwin Street (across the road from ANZAC House) and will cost \$40 per person.

Committee considered several city-based options for our meetings while ANZAC House is redeveloped, looking at access, convenience, cost and ambience. We narrowed the list to the WA Club and Mercure Hotel, both of which are close to ANZAC House. At the March meeting in the Mercure, members will be asked to vote on their preferred venue.

To book your lunch, please enter your name electronically on the booking page via the website, (before 12 noon on the Tuesday prior to the meeting. Go to our website home page at www.highgate-rsl.org.au and double-click HIGHGATE MONTHLY LUNCHEON below the photo of the Flame of Remembrance and you'll be transferred to the booking sheet page.

The booking sheet also lets you enter a 'P' in column three to indicate you are a permanent booking.

Electronic funds transfer details are on the spreadsheet. Cost is \$30 per person.

For those without internet, please call Margot Harness 9293 1076 to book in.

Important dates & events | please diarise now

- 1100 | Mon **20 Feb** | Committee Meeting - **WA Club**
- 1130 for 1215 | Mon **20 Feb** | February Luncheon - **WA Club**
- **Address:** Level 11 - 12 St Georges Terrace Perth (opp. Concert Hall)

Last Post | Lest We Forget

We especially remember with deep sadness and affection our departed Member, Alf Till, and convey sincere condolences and sympathy to Wife, Leslie, and family



From our President

(continued from page 1)

Performers on the day were Peter Harries, Margot Harness, David Grace, Roger Buddrige and Michael Munjak's (cameo role) who provided a most enjoyable and talented display of entertainment.

On the invitation of Pastor Sunny King, a veteran of the South Vietnam War, Malcolm and Wendy Weatherhead, Leon Griffiths and I attended the inaugural meeting of the Korean Ex-servicemen and Women's Association for Veterans in Western Australia. There are currently 72 Korean Veterans residing in WA, and Malcolm caught up with the only one in WA who fought in the Korean War. I was surprised to learn that the Republic of South Korea deployed over 300,000 troops to SVN where 5,000 were killed in action. In the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Republic of South Korea deployed the third-largest contingent of troops, after the USA and UK.

Your committee met in January to plan and discuss issues that may arise for the Sub-Branch with the closure of Anzac House. Committee is confident we will seamlessly and successfully manage the transition period, pending the opening of the new Anzac House in 2019. As members, your responsibility is to support the efforts of your hard-working Committee by attending our meetings when your health and mobility allows.

With this in mind, please save Sunday 12 November 2017 so you can attend the Highgate Sub-Branch Remembrance Day Service and Luncheon at Fraser's in Kings Park. I know this is an early announcement, but the way the years fly past it is probably very appropriate to announce it and fill in the details as we move through the 2017 calendar.

The venues chosen for our initial 2017 meetings lack the flexibility of Anzac House catering facilities. Consequently it is essential that all members indicate their intention to attend on the booking sheet and this must be completed by the Tuesday before the meeting, as we have to advise our numbers on the Wednesday. If you are on the Permanent List and are unable to attend, please record your apology prior to the cut-off date.

February Guest Speaker | Emeritus Professor Alex Kerr AM

We will be welcoming Emeritus Professor Alex Kerr AM as our first guest speaker for 2017.

Born in Perth in 1921, Professor Kerr was educated at Perth Modern School, Oxford University, London University and the University of Western Australia.

As an economist he has worked for several international agencies and foreign governments in 20 countries in Asia, North America and Europe. He also represented Australia on veterans' memorial missions to England and France in 2003, 2012, and 2015. He served as an economist for 25 years at UWA and eight years at Murdoch.

He retired in 1983 as Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Murdoch University and moved into banking and finance, and finally into pearl culture. He was also deputy chairman of Challenge Bank.

In 2001, Professor Kerr was awarded Senior Australian Achiever of the year (WA); in 2003 he was made a member of the Order of Australia; and in 2006, was awarded an Honorary Doctorate in Economics by the University of Western Australia.

He served in the Cameron Highlanders of Western Australia for



Photograph: The West Australian newspaper

seven years before and after World War II and in the Royal Australian Air Force for seven years in the Air Force during the war.

A Bomber Command pilot, he was shot down over Germany in May 1941. However, he escaped captivity three times and was made a member of the RAF Escaping Society.

Professor Kerr is a Past President of the RAAF Ex-POW Association (Australian Branch) and a Past President of Perth Legacy.

He holds the following academic qualifications: Dip. Soc. Sci. (Oxford), B.Sc.Econ. (London), B.A., M.A., Ph.D. (UWA) and post nominals: AM, Hon D.Ec (UWA).

From our President (continued)

To those who use electronic funds transfer (EFT) it is also requested when you pay for your lunch to please add \$5 for each raffle ticket you wish to purchase. This will reduce the amount of cash collected at the desk and allow more time for fellowship.

For those unfamiliar with the on-line booking sheet, please call Margot Harness on 9293 1076 to register your attendance prior to Tuesday 14 February.

I wish all members a safe and healthy 2017, and look forward to seeing you at our Monday 20 February 2017 meeting at the Western Australian Club, Level 11 - 12 St Georges Terrace, Perth.

Steve Chamarette

Disclaimer Please note Highgate Highlights source material is edited to remove inappropriate content, and to clarify or shorten the item where needed. Although normal tests for accuracy are undertaken, you should not rely on this material without carrying out your own validity checks. Opinions expressed in Highgate Highlights are not necessarily those of RSL Highgate Sub-Branch or RSLWA. You are welcome to forward information of interest to your colleagues and friends, although we would appreciate acknowledgment as its source.

**This newsletter is printed
as a service to the
Veterans Community
by the Office of
Tim Hammond MP
Federal Member for Perth**

Sub Warden Duties | 2017

Wreath Laying Services | State War Memorial Kings Park

POC: Geoff Simpson OAM RFD | Deputy Warden State War Memorial

Sun 12 Feb 1030 for 1100 Women's Royal Australian Army Corps

Tue 14 Feb 1030 for 1100 National Servicemen's Association of Australia

Sun 26 Mar 1145 for 1215 Consulate of Greece

Mon 08 May 1030 for 1100 Australian American Association (WA Division)

Wed 31 May 1030 for 1100 Remembering Indigenous Service

Mon 29 May 0920 for 1050 North American Veterans' Unit



Do you know anyone doing it tough financially?

By Margot Harness | Committee Member

With another Poppy Day just behind us, it is useful to know where the monies collected actually go! Over the past four years, loyal collectors from Highgate Sub-Branch have collected an average of \$20,000 each time.

However, few members would be aware that half of the money is retained by Highgate RSL Sub-Branch for the amelioration and welfare of its own members, and their wives/widows/dependent children.

The other half is remitted to the WA RSL State Branch, to be paid into what is usually termed the Welfare Fund or the Trust Fund (but its formal name remains that assigned by a WA State Act in 1932: the WA Aged Sailors, Soldiers and Airmen's Relief Trust Fund. This money is also utilised for amelioration and welfare purposes for the broader veteran and ex-ADF community. Help is even available for veterans, ex-servicemen and women, (plus widows/dependents), who are not RSL members.

Amelioration basically translates to 'assistance in times of financial hardship'. Many couples, or people living alone – particularly pensioners or part-pensioners, have times when everything goes wrong at once. So if you or a veteran/ex-serviceperson you know is suffering financially, be aware of the following:

What sort of help comes under 'amelioration'?

You have just paid your council rates and your bank account has been depleted. Then, in the same week, your house insurance becomes due, you get a parking ticket, the cylinder head goes in your car, the fridge conks out, and you cannot afford to pay an overdue electricity account. Or perhaps you need a mobility product; or help with funeral costs? It's at times like these that RSL financial assistance can be a Godsend.

Who can seek assistance?

An applicant needs to be a veteran, ex-serviceperson (who has had at least three months in the ADF), the spouse or widow/widower of a veteran or ex-serviceperson – and be genuinely experiencing financial hardship. A person doesn't have to be a member of the RSL.

What is the procedure for someone to seek financial assistance?

At Sub-Branch level: This is a less formal approach. If a Service member (or spouse of a member) of Highgate Sub-Branch, it only takes a private word with the Sub-Branch Welfare Officer or Treasurer. (On one occasion, we were sent a letter, setting out the needy person's dilemma). Show him/her your unpaid bills, quote(s) for car repairs or replacement item(s). Cash is not given – but sometimes the timely payment of a couple of utility bills can free up money for other necessities. If a grant is made, the only formality is to fill in a simple one-page form to verify financial need and record the payment made. (This is retained securely by the Treasurer solely for audit purposes).

Are inquiries kept confidential?

Yes. Totally.

If I need assistance, but don't want to approach the Sub-Branch, is there any alternative?

Yes. An alternative is to speak to Rosalind Howat, RSL Welfare Officer at State HQ. Rosalind is Secretary to the Welfare Fund trustees (who meet monthly) and she has their application forms, which are not available on-line. You can ring her on 9284 3707 and she will post one out to you; or you can make an appointment to speak with her confidentially. Rosalind's email is: welfare@rslwahq.org.au These application forms seek more detailed financial information than is required at Sub-Branch level – but are flexible and helpful, and may involve larger amounts.

CONGRATULATIONS Wayne Gardiner OAM



Photograph: RSL WA

On behalf of all members of Highgate RSL Sub-Branch, President Steve Chamarette, offers his most sincere congratulations to our highly esteemed member, Captain Wayne Gardiner RFD, on his being awarded the Order of Australia Medal in the 2017 Australia Day Honours for service to military history, and to veterans and their families.

Wayne is known to most members as the ABC's honorary expert commentator on ANZAC Day coverage since 1995; as Assistant Manager at the WA Australian Army Museum; Secretary of the RSL Centenary of Federation Committee 1999-2001; and Member of the Commemoration Committee 1999-2001.

In 2015 he was recipient of the ANZAC of the Year Award.

Each year, Wayne, along with a valued team of experts including John Burridge, David Burridge and Henry Fijolek, provide valuations for the public at RSLWA's Military Antiques Roadshow.

Military Truisms

Five second fuses only last three seconds

Your weapon was made by the lowest bidder

Defence Force Welfare Association (DFWA) has sent us the following information:

You may have read media reports about some widows claiming to have lost their War Widows pension because of recent changes to the assets test.

Those reports are inaccurate.

The War Widows pension is not means tested and is not affected by changes to the assets test, which came into effect on 01 January 2017. It is therefore not possible for a widow to lose her War Widows pension because of the recent changes.

However DFWA understands some War Widows in receipt of a supplementary pension, may have been affected as a result of the changes to the assets test.

By way of explanation, some widows were offered and elected to receive a lump sum compensation payment instead of an ongoing War Widows pension (this being dependent upon which Parliamentary Act was involved at the time of application).

Such widows then do not receive a War Widows pension, although are still classified as War Widow (and have a DVA Gold Card). This is because the War Widows pension is classified as compensation and one cannot be compensated twice (because of having received a lump sum).

However - and this is where the confusion lies – they may still qualify for a supplementary pension. Some widows mistakenly view that supplementary pension as being their War Widows pension. It is not, and unlike the full War Widows pension, is subject to asset testing.

Therefore, the recent changes to asset testing means that some widows may have had their supplementary pension affected (but retain their Gold Card).

All should be reassured that any widow who is affected by the recent changes to asset testing will have received a letter from DVA some time ago explaining their personal circumstances.

Should you have any questions on this matter or your pension and entitlement payments, please contact your DFWA Branch and ask to speak to one of our Pension Advocates.

Of course, please also contact DVA and/or Centrelink, depending on your personal circumstances, noting that our advice is given in good faith and to the best of our knowledge.

Happy birthday to Highgate Members celebrating in January or February, including:

JANUARY | Tom Arnautovic, Ken Ashman, Don Blair RFD ED, Trevor Boag, Kevin Campbell AM, Chris Chapple, Brian Cooper, Barry Eather, Barry Gravelle, Leon Griffiths, John Harper-Nelson, Jamie Holloway, Brian King AM MBE, Noel Monks, Annette Newell, David Orr, Ronald Rigg, John Spatcher, John Stephens, Phil Sumner, Frank Taylor, Rod Willox AM RFD ED JP

FEBRUARY | Mick Coyle OAM JP, Leonore Fairfield, David Grace, William Jamieson, John (Jan) Klein, Bert Lane, Keith Morris, Charles Page, Don Rae AM, Ruth Shean, Errol Smith, Edward White ED RFD and Kevin Whiting

2017 marks 75th anniversary of bombing of Broome, Wyndham, Port Hedland, Derby and Darwin

This year marks the 75th anniversary of the World War II bombings of northern Australia, when the Japanese flew 64 raids on Darwin, and 33 raids on other targets in Northern Australia.

More than 235 people died and about 400 injured when 188 Japanese planes bombed Darwin in two air raids on 09 Feb 1942 in what was the largest single attack on Australian soil.

Two weeks after the Darwin bombing, on 03 Mar 1942, Broome suffered Australia's second-worst air raid, with the attack killing at least 70 people (perhaps 100), and injuring 40, as well as destroying 24 aircraft.

At that time, Broome was a significant staging post for military and civilian air evacuees from Java, then part of the Dutch East Indies (now Indonesia). Evacuees were ferried in Dutch, American and Australian military and civil aircraft, including flying boats of Qantas Empire Airways. In the last two weeks of Feb 1942, 8,000 mostly Dutch refugees, including many women and children, passed through Broome on their way south.

On the day of the attack, nine Japanese Zero fighter planes attacked without warning, promptly destroying the targets they found; and as there were no Allied fighters in the area, they faced minimal opposition.

Fifteen marine aircraft, mostly Dutch Dorniers and Catalinas, but also some British and US Catalinas, as well as two Australian 'Empire' Class flying boats, were burned or sunk at their moorings. At the nearby airstrip, several US B-17 Flying Fortress and B-24 Liberator heavy bombers were destroyed, as well as Douglas DC-3 transports of the Netherlands East Indies Airline (KNILM). Not a single operational aircraft was left in Broome when the Japanese departed.

Many victims were Dutch women and children packed into flying boats on the harbour, either waiting to be ferried ashore or for departure to the south. Another 30 mostly military crew and passengers, were lost when an American Liberator bomber was shot down shortly after taking off. The bodies of the Dutch victims, initially buried at Broome, were moved in 1950 to the Perth War Cemetery at Karrakatta.

Today, six of the 15 bombed flying boats are exposed on the mud-flats of Roebuck Bay at low water spring tides, opposite the town of Broome – serving as a reminder of the trauma of war as well as the actions of townspeople and military personnel who engaged in valiant rescue attempts.

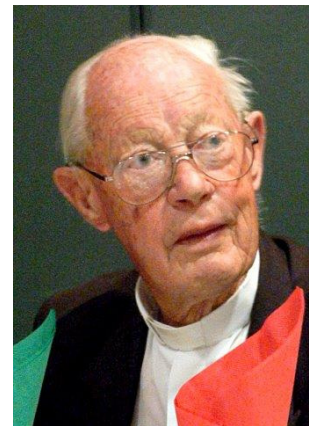
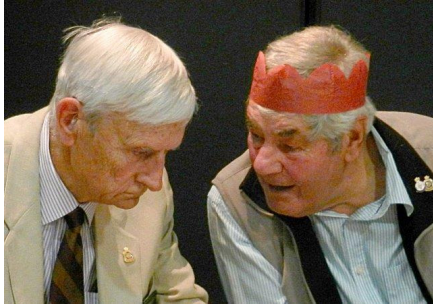
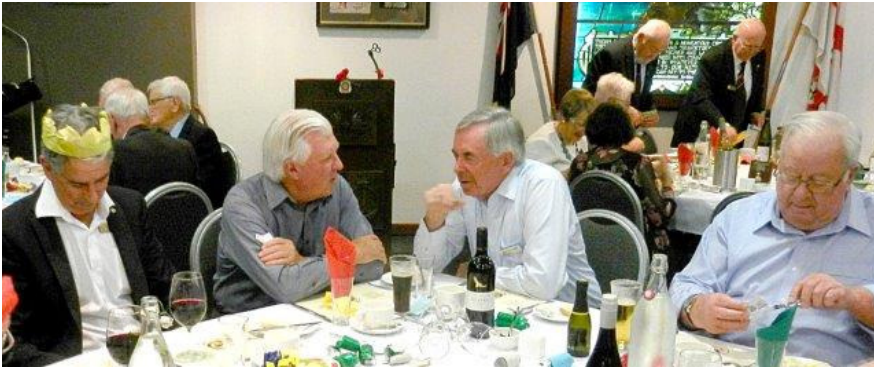
Other WA towns and bases attacked by the Japanese included Wyndham, Derby, Port Hedland and Exmouth, with loss of military and civilian lives. From the first raid on Australia on 19 Feb 1942 until the last on 12 Nov 1943, our nation and its allies lost about 900 people, 77 aircraft and several ships, with many military and civilian facilities also destroyed. The Japanese lost about 131 aircraft during the attacks.

Christmas 2017 and our last meeting at ANZAC House before rebuilding



Last ANZAC House Committee Meeting





Christmas 2016





Christmas 2016



Motions | 101st RSLWA State Congress

Government House Ballroom | Sat 15 Jul

Motions must be received by State Headquarters no later than 4pm Wed 03 May 2017.

Motions shall be State or National in character, of an affirmative nature and accompanied by adequate preamble and support material.

Sub-Branch Motions for consideration by State Congress must be approved by a majority vote present at a properly constituted meeting, and signed by not less than five financial members present.



INVITATION | RSLWA Women's Forum

10am - 3pm | Sun 12 Mar 2017
Army Museum | Burt Street Fremantle

In line with International Women's Day and the theme of *Be Bold For Change*, RSLWA Women's Network will be discussing key topics affecting women and their families.

The forum will include guest speakers, networking, workshops, prizes and light lunch. You may also bring a friend.

Please register your interest with Events Coordinator
Wendy Moss at events@rslwa.org.au or 9287 3799