



# Highgate Highlights

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

## From our President

Over the past year or so, I have been in regular contact with former Deputy Prime Minister Tim Fischer AC. Tim worked tirelessly but unsuccessfully to have Sir John Monash promoted to Field Marshall for the Centenary of Armistice.

The Sir John Monash RSL Sub-Branch was advocating Monash's promotion here in WA. I agreed to become the point of contact in WA for the nationwide *Saluting Monash Council*, when the Monash Sub-Branch President moved to NSW.

Tim is currently undergoing regular treatment for acute leukemia in Melbourne and his ability to travel is restricted. He hoped to visit Perth last year and I am still confident he will be a future guest speaker at Highgate.

In January, I asked Highgate member, Frank LeFaucheur, if he would write to Tim. Frank is a past WA Chairman of the Officer Training Unit (OTU) Association and Tim is an OTU graduate.

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## Our next Luncheon is on Monday 18 February at the Karrakatta Club in Sherwood Court Perth

The Karrakatta Club is located at the bottom of Sherwood Court, on the corner of The Esplanade in the Perth CBD. (*Sherwood Court runs south off St Georges Terrace, directly opposite London Court*)

### Monthly luncheon bookings

Our monthly luncheon meetings are \$40 per person (plus \$5 per raffle ticket if wanted) and held at the Karrakatta Club on the third Monday of each month. For catering reasons, your booking must be made no later than 1700 on the Wednesday prior to the luncheon, please.

### Three ways to book - Choose the best for you

1. Via the Highgate RSL website at <http://highgate-rsl.org.au> Click on *Next Luncheon*. Then click on *Luncheon Booking or Apology* and you'll be transferred to our new booking sheet page. Electronic funds transfer details are also on the page.

Or...

2. Go direct to the luncheon booking sheet by pasting this link into your browser:  
<https://goo.gl/forms/IP62qWDsJsVUpOa53>

Via the electronic booking sheet, you can add guests, food intolerances, purchase raffle tickets, check friends; and also register a non-attendance apology. If you book your luncheon via our website or direct, you will receive an email a couple of minutes later confirming your booking.

Or...

3. Via Committee Member: If you do not have internet access, please call Margot Harness on 9349 2847, or any Committee member, and they will help you book in.

### Important dates & events | please diarise now

- 1100 | **Mon 18 Feb** | Committee Meeting - Karrakatta Club
- 1130 for 1215 | **Mon 18 Feb** | January Luncheon
- 1100 | **Mon 18 Mar** | Committee Meeting - Karrakatta Club
- 1130 for 1215 | **Mon 18 Mar** | Monthly Luncheon

## Last Post | Lest We Forget

We remember with deep sadness and affection our departed Members and convey sincere condolences and sympathy to their family and friends



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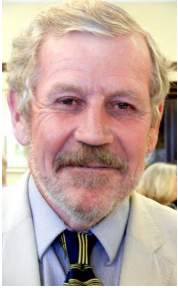
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## From our President

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Geoff Hourn

*the interest of Sub-Branch members”.*

As is Tim’s way, he responded quickly and included an article published in January 2019, plus one of the lectures he has given.

He added *“If you like, you can put them in your newsletter for the interest of Sub-Branch members”.*

Both provide fascinating reading and I have asked our editor if he will print one of the articles in this month’s Highgate Highlights.

In the lecture, Tim includes a key list of those who served at Gallipoli, survived World War I and then went on to contribute greatly to State and nation.

He calls the list *Great Gallipoli Nation Builders* and the lecture is very appropriate for publication in next month’s edition, in the lead in to ANZAC Day.

Reflecting on the Centenary of Armistice, I cannot help but think that not promoting Monash last year was a missed opportunity. It was an opportunity to add a lasting accolade to that brave, successful and wonderful generation of Australians who fought in World War I.

Recognising the genius and hard work of Monash, deserving as it was, was only part of it. It wasn’t so much about Monash. Rather, it was about recognising Australia on the world stage.

What the move to promote Monash was really about, was recognising the success of the Australian Imperial Force and a young Australia, through the simple expedient of promoting its outstanding leader to the highest possible rank.

George Washington was posthumously promoted to General of the Armies of the United States in 1976 for the US Bicentennial. Other precedents exist from around the world.

I hope the opportunity is not missed for the Bicentenary of Armistice. It is all about nation building.

Kind regards - *Geoff Hourn*

## HMAS Voyager 55th anniversary remembered

By David MacLean

**Fifty people gathered at the *Voyager* Chair in Kings Park on Sunday 10 Feb to mark the 55th anniversary of the sinking off Jervis Bay which saw the loss of the Daring Class Destroyer, at the cost of 82 lives, following a collision with aircraft carrier HMAS *Melbourne* during night flying exercises.**

The group consisted of *Voyager* survivors, rescuers, relatives of those lost, former members of the ship’s company, Ex-Service Organisations’ members, and members of the greater naval family.

The Fleet Air Arm contingent was led by WA secretary, Keith Taylor, and included a strong presence of serving RAN members.

A moving service was led by Chaplain John Marshall RANR, with a well received address delivered by Commander Troy Duggan RAN, Commanding Officer of HMAS *Arunta*.

The Alert, Last Post and Rouse was sounded by AB (MUSN) Josh Abbott RANR; and the Naval Ode was recited by retired CPO Kim Casas, a *Voyager* survivor.

Wreaths were laid by Hon Peter Tinley AM MLA, the WA Minister for Veterans’ Issues, Commander Duggan and WO Parnell RAN; with Mrs Kerry Forster representing the Department of Veteran Affairs.

Relatives of those lost, including Mrs Ethel Leipold and Mrs Barbra Head - sisters of LS Jack Sparrowhawk who was lost that night. The sisters have been the mainstay of the memorial service for many years.

Following the service, many remained behind to share fellowship and partake of a picnic lunch beneath the trees.

All tales told (some taller than the trees) were verified by the Chaplain.

The wreaths and floral tributes were later collected and distributed to hospitals and aged care facilities.



*From left - rear: Command Warrant Officer Jack Parnell, HMAS Arunta, Mrs Duggan (partially obscured), Commander Troy Duggan CO HMAS Arunta, AB (MUSN) Josh Abbott RANR, Mrs Abbott, CHAP John Marshall RANR, Mrs Marshall. Centre: Retired PO Communications Yeoman. Front: Mrs Dot Casas, ex-CPO Kim Casas HMAS Voyager.*

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

### **Sorry... Short rations this month**

This edition of Highgate Highlights is shorter than usual due to a computer data drive failing with no warning. It took nearly two weeks to troubleshoot, replace and reload data files, impinging on our newsletter production schedule

## 100 years ago | The banquet of all banquets

By Tim Fischer AC

Woodrow Wilson, Lloyd George, Billy Hughes, John Monash and Rudyard Kipling, together with Winston Churchill and Jan Smuts, all dined as guests of King George V at Buckingham Palace in Dec 1918.

It was a power dinner never matched since and never encountered before; a gathering of the best and the bold, with some of the most powerful people of the era, coming together for a night of glitter and gold, and contemplation of the future, just seven weeks after Armistice, and following four years of death and destruction.

Hosted by King George V were the then occupants of the White House and 10 Downing Street, several Commonwealth Prime Ministers, including Winston Churchill and South African leader General Jan Smuts, along with Sir John Monash, formerly a Jerilderie Riverina schoolboy, but now a revered Lieutenant General, and one of the key 1918 victory makers.

King George V spoke first, proposing the welcoming toast, observing that for the first time "...a President of the United States is our guest in England," and reflecting on the joint support of freedom and peace. The King was realistic in his choice of words, hoping some plan might be devised to avert the risk of future wars.

In front of the audience of about 120 people, US President Woodrow Wilson responded to the King's toast, speaking of right and justice and courage.

"There is a great tide running in the hearts of men ...and I believe, Sir, not only to apply the moral judgments of the world to the particular settlements which we shall attempt, but also to organise the moral force of the world to preserve these settlements, to steady the forces of mankind. There is something inspiring in knowing that this is the errand that we have come on".

Serious business was close to the

minds of the leaders present, including the forthcoming 1919 Versailles Peace Conference, extraction of reparations from Germany, and the dividing up of conquered lands, especially in the Middle East, sadly done against the wisdom of T E Lawrence and laying a basis for the agony existing in the Middle East to this day.

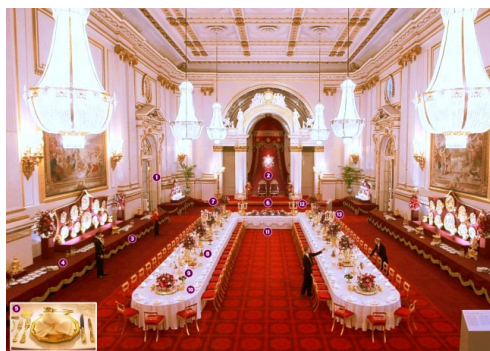


King George V and US President Woodrow Wilson

However, there was first this grand moment of deserved dining in the Buckingham Palace Ballroom, an evening of joy after all the agony of war.

John Monash sat between Rudyard Kipling and Lord Burnham, proprietor of the Daily Telegraph, while opposite were Louis Botha, Winston Churchill and artist John Singer Sargent.

The occasion was restricted to just five Ambassadors, representing an unlikely group of countries, namely Japan and Italy (both allies in WW 1) and France, Spain and the USA. Also present were the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, the Speaker and also the Lord Mayor of London, plus many other notables such as Asquith, Balfour and Chamberlain.



But the twist in it all for Australia emerged from the two Welsh-born Prime Ministers, Lloyd George of the UK and Billy Hughes of Australia. One was a strong advocate for John Monash, the other lukewarm towards Monash – but it was not as you might expect.

Lloyd George had wanted to sack Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig and had referred to Monash as a successor to Haig. However,

## February Guest Speaker Michael Piu

Our February luncheon guest speaker is Michael Piu, CEO of St Patrick's Community Support Centre in Fremantle.



For the past 47 years, St Pat's has been assisting persons in the region who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Michael engages with all sectors of the community, including business and government, with the goals of breaking stereotypes relating to homelessness, and helping vulnerable people live independent and fulfilling home lives.

St Pat's provides specialised services for young people and adults, women, families and those affected by addiction to alcohol and other drugs; as well as assistance that includes housing, health services, emergency relief and meals.

We look forward to your joining us.

Hughes while Prime Minister post-Armistice, a period of five critical years, ensured Monash was one step in rank 'denied' and kept as a mere Lieutenant General, while appointing him as London-based Director of Demobilisation.

As I have written previously, rank does matter then and now. Down the track, with caution, this can be rectified by the Federal Parliament posthumously and there is precedent.

However nothing was to mar this night of nights, with their Majesties departing the banquet at the stroke of midnight, bringing to a formal end the Banquet of all Banquets.

*In 1966, Tim Fischer AC RL was conscripted into the Australian Army, commissioned at the Officer Training Unit, Scheyville, and served in the Vietnam War. He was leader of the National Party from 1990 to 1999, Deputy Prime Minister in the Howard Government from 1996 to 1999, and is a former Ambassador to the Holy See. Tim was also patron of the General Sir John Monash Scholarship Foundation and has authored several books.*



## Kings Park Honour Avenues | Remember them with pride

By Norm Manners | Former Chairman - Honour Avenues Sub-Committee

Following its bombing by Japanese aircraft, the old coastal trader lurched and began to roll to one side, and it was obvious to the survivors struggling to get away from her looming hull and superstructure that soon the *Vyner Brooke* would roll right over and plunge into the depths of the Bangka Strait, off Sumatra, south of Singapore.

Built to carry only 12 passengers, the *Vyner Brooke* crammed in over 181 men, women and children passengers in their desperate bid to escape the inevitable fall of Singapore against the attacking Japanese Army.

Among the passengers were Australian Army Nursing Sisters of the 2/10, 2/13 Australian General Hospitals and the 2/4 Casualty Clearing Station who had been ordered out of Singapore against their wills, on 12 February 1942.

After saving as many people as possible, the Sisters were last to leave the sinking ship on the command of Senior Matron Olive Paschke. Sadly, 11 were to drown. The surviving Sisters drifted in to Radji Beach on nearby Bangka Island, and it was here they were discovered by a Japanese patrol which herded them into a line facing the sea and forced them to start wading. It was then that they shot them all in the back.

One WA Sister lost her life in the sinking of the *Vyner Brooke*, while another four West Australians were among the 20 massacred on Radji Beach.

As their bodies were never found you will find their names on the plaques in the Honour Avenue of May Circle, May Drive, Kings Park:

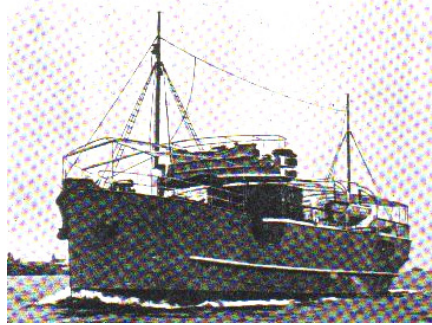
### Army Nursing Sisters 8 Australian Division

- Louvinia Bates, 2/13 AGH - lost at sea
- Alma Beard, 2/13 AGH - shot
- Peggy Farmaner, 2/4 CC - shot
- Minnie Hodgson, 2/13 AGH - shot
- Bessie Wilmott, 2/4 CCS - shot

This is only one of the stories of West Australians who gave their lives in time of war, and are commemorated among the approximately 1,700 plaques lining three Honour Avenues in Kings Park.

Sister Vivian Bullwinkel (Later, LTCOL Vivian Bullwinkel, AO MBE ARRC ED FNM) was the only surviving nurse, who escaped into the jungle but was later interned after giving herself up. She survived the war and passed away in Perth on 03 July 2000.

Highgate RSL Honour Avenues Group, based in Kings Park, processes all requests for plaques; and if the RSL's criteria are met, will carry out the work to a very high standard.



The dedication service involves an Army Padre, bugler, Chief Executive Officer of the Kings Park Botanical Gardens, and an honour guard from the Honour Avenues Group. About 10 plaques are dedicated at each service which are held quarterly, during which the Service person's civilian and military background is proclaimed to the assembled relatives and friends, before the plaques are placed in front of a tree on one of the avenues.

All plaques in the Honour Avenues are cared for by the Honour Avenues Group, whose average age is mid-70. This includes placement of new posts and plaques, straightening posts knocked by parking vehicles, refurbishing, and the replacing of older or damaged plaques.

Additional services include placement of an Australian flag on all plaques for ANZAC and Remembrance Days, school tours for local and overseas students, and speaking at service and community clubs and organisations.

During weekly inspections of all Honour Avenues, members are always pleased to see flowers placed at a plaque, for this means the family has not forgotten a loved one. We regard the plaques as crosses, the spiritual grave at home; and although feeling a great sadness at their sacrifice, we have great pride in serving and honouring our fellow Service men and women wherever they may lay.

## BIRTHDAYS

Members celebrating their birthday in January include:  
**Edward White, Errol Smith, Mick Coyle, David Grace, Charles Page, William Jamieson, Ruth Shean, Kevin Whiting, Don Rae, John (Jan) Klein and Lenore Fairfield**

## Australian Army Museum Sunset Concert Spectacular

1730 | Sun 24 Feb 19

Artillery Barracks  
Burt Street Fremantle

### Featuring

- Australian Army Band Perth
- Royal Australian Navy Band

### Massed Pipes and Drums from:

- Australian Army Band Perth
- 51 ACU Swan Regiment Drums and Pipes
- Presbyterian Ladies' College Pipe Band

**Tickets available through  
[www.trybooking.com](http://www.trybooking.com)**

- Adults - \$30
- Family (2+2) - \$65
- Concession/Groups of 10 - \$25
- Children under 18 - \$15

**Includes free museum visit  
prior to concert  
Seating provided  
BYO alcohol and food  
Plastic drinking glasses only**

**Sausage sizzle, hamburgers,  
soft drinks, icecream and coffee  
available for purchase**

**More information at  
[www.armymuseumwa.com.au](http://www.armymuseumwa.com.au)  
9430 2535**

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*Opinions expressed in Highgate Highlights are not necessarily those of RSL Highgate Sub-Branch or RSLWA. You are welcome to forward this newsletter to your colleagues and friends, although we would appreciate acknowledgment as its source.*