



Highgate Highlights

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

56 good reasons to attend AGM and Over Bl**dy Eighties Luncheon in October

There are 56 very good reasons to attend our Annual General Meeting and Over Bl**dy Eighty celebration this October.

Apart from giving you the opportunity to vote in your Committee and have your say – a privilege most of our members served and fought for – and to hear the extraordinary biographies of our Octogenarians and Nonogenarians, you get 56 pieces of Miss Maud's Queen Silvia Cake.

Not just any old cake, but a cake so magnificent, it is named in honour of the beautiful Queen Silvia of Sweden. With layers of chocolate buttercream and chocolate sponge, topped with chocolate ganache and strawberries, it has become our signature OBE/OBN dessert.

In true military fashion, it will be sliced in triumph for your sublime enjoyment by former Highgate member, Brigadier Dosoo Gimi's ceremonial sword, which was donated last year by his daughter, Kamal Plank.

And so, in accordance with RSLWA By-law 5, **NOTICE IS GIVEN** that the Highgate RSL Sub-Branch Annual General Meeting will be conducted at the Karrakatta Club from 1230h on Monday 21 October 2019, and all members are invited to attend...and eat chocolate cake.

Election information on page 3

Our AGM and OBE Luncheon is Monday 21 October at the Karrakatta Club in Sherwood Court Perth

Located at the foot of Sherwood Court, on the corner of The Esplanade in Perth CBD. (Sherwood Court runs south off St Georges Terrace, directly opposite London Court)

Monthly luncheon bookings

Our luncheon meetings are \$40 per person (plus \$5 per raffle ticket if wanted) at 1200 for 1230, usually on the third Monday of each month. For catering reasons, bookings must be made no later than the preceding Thursday, 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://forms.gle/1xHCDMLcqpTR9Yzw6>

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 21 Oct** | Committee Meeting - Karrakatta Club
- 1200 for 1230 | **Mon 21 Oct** | Luncheon - Karrakatta Club
- 1130 | **Sun 10 Nov** | Remembrance Day Service - State War Memorial
- 1200 | **Sun 10 Nov** | Remembrance Day Luncheon—Fraser's Kings Park

Last Post | Lest We Forget

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



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Our November meeting is on

Sun 10 Nov at

State War Memorial &
Fraser's Restaurant

Remembrance Service 1130
Luncheon from 12 noon

*Jacket and tie for gentlemen and
day dress for ladies
(with medals if appropriate)*

Our Remembrance Day commemoration and luncheon in Kings Park on Sun 10 Nov

REPLACES our usual monthly luncheon at the Karrakatta Club. Please use the website booking sheet at <https://forms.gle/kp9HvmwRHkTpGDnB6> or telephone any Committee member to register. The cost of the Fraser's luncheon, including beer, wine and soft drink, is \$80 per person, **payable no later than Fri 01 Nov**, please. Tables of 10 may be booked.

Everyone is welcome to attend our annual commemorative service and luncheon, which this year is held the day before Remembrance Day.

Highgate's Remembrance Day commemoration at the State War Memorial will be conducted by the Warden of the Memorial, Lieutenant Commander Guy Burton RAN (Retd) as his last official duty, Reverend Jeff Astfalck, and Deputy Warden Geoff Simpson. Private wreaths can be laid after the official wreaths.

Highgate's annual Remembrance Day Luncheon at Fraser's Restaurant, Kings Park follows the commemoration service and begins at 1200 on Sunday 10 Nov in the presence of the of the incoming Warden of the State War Memorial and former Governor of Western Australia, Hon Kerry Sanderson AC.

The luncheon includes the West Australian launch of the book

Remember – Lest We Forget by Julie Miller, in which an ANZAC Day March is looked at through the eyes of a young child who thoughtfully considers who the marchers are, what they have seen, and what they have done.



Support for Ben Roberts-Smith VC GC

On 22 Sep, Channel 9's high-rating 60 Minutes carried a story on the alleged war crimes of Ben Roberts-Smith during his service in Afghanistan. Ben has issued a detailed response which unfortunately has escaped attention by the majority of the news media:

I categorically deny the allegations made against me in tonight's 60 Minutes program. These allegations are already the subject of a defamation action against the Sydney Morning Herald/Age and the journalists Nick McKenzie and Chris Masters.

It is beyond comprehension why a media organisation has chosen to repeat defamatory claims against me before the Federal Court has determined the matter. I have filed comprehensive evidence in the Federal Court which clearly demonstrates that these allegations are false and should not have been made, let alone repeated. I will not be intimidated by their actions in re-publishing the defamatory allegations, and look forward to the Court determining this matter.

Let me be clear: I have never committed any of the acts alleged in the 60 Minutes' broadcast. I have never contravened any laws of war. I am proud of my military service and I believe I can demonstrate, with the support of numerous witnesses, that I have acted honourably at all times in my military service.

I am concerned that tonight's story and the previous publications by the Sydney Morning Herald and Age newspapers are an attempt to improperly influence the outcome of the Inspector-General of the Australian Defence Force Inquiry.

I have not been approached by the Australian Federal Police in relation to any alleged inquiry. It is unprecedented that a media organisation has sought to either influence or prejudice the

outcome of an investigation before its conclusion. None of the witnesses on tonight's broadcast provided any direct evidence of any sort to support their allegations. I have never met, nor served, with either of the two soldiers named in 60 Minutes' story. Moreover, the other two unidentified purported serving SASR soldiers, whose claims were delivered by actor voiceover, made assertions that suggest neither man was actually a direct witness to any of the alleged incidents in which Nine falsely slurs me as a war criminal.

I am appalled that the service of my colleagues and my service to my country and my regiment is being traduced in such an irresponsible way. I have fully cooperated with the Inspector General of the ADF.

I am also gravely concerned that there appears to have been an attempt to compromise the integrity of the Inspector General's Inquiry whereby, on Nine's admission, there has been malicious leaking against me from within the ADF.

It is utterly improper that I am subjected to false claims in the media while I am defending my reputation in both military and civil investigations. I strongly support the investigation of alleged war crimes. I do not understand how Nine and the SMH/Age can justify this story when there is already an ADF Inquiry under way that will no doubt test the veracity of these claims.

Nine has recklessly allowed its journalists to slur my reputation by calling me a war criminal, and by slurring the SAS I have been so proud to serve. It appears to be prejudging the outcome of an inquiry. Not only are these allegations false, they are also malicious, and I look forward to defending my reputation in court.

Saluting Monash update

Highgate Warden and former President, Steve Chamarette, received the following email from Michael Headberry, Director of Saluting Monash Council (Vic):

This update was intended for early August on behalf of the Saluting Monash Council and Chairman, the Hon Tim Fischer AC but was deferred due to Tim's deteriorating health and subsequent death on 22 August.

Tim will be sadly missed by Australians but remembered for his decency, integrity, respect and love for Australia and Australians, and his unwavering belief and advocacy over many years that General Sir John Monash deserved to be the second Australian-born Field Marshal, joining Sir Thomas Blamey (1950).

Regrettably, in July, the Saluting Monash Council received written confirmation that Prime Minister Morrison is not supportive of the posthumous promotion of General Sir John Monash, with the reason given that, "We do not have a tradition of posthumous promotions and there are many practical reasons why we should make no change".

While the Saluting Monash Council, based on advice, believes these reasons can be overcome - indeed the proposed Amendment Bill, introduced by former MHR for Indi, Cathy McGowan in October last year, covered the main practical reasons, the position of the current Prime Minister is clear.

The strongest opposition to the promotion of Monash comes from some former and serving senior Defence leaders, despite widespread support from within the sector, including those of Major General rank.

Indeed, the impetus for forming the Saluting Monash Council in 2016 came from within the Veteran community, and the majority of councillors have a military background.

A May 2019 letter from Brigadier KS Fegan DSC, Army Chief of Staff, states, "The Australian Army has unambiguously provided advice to Government that Sir John Monash cannot be promoted posthumously".

The Saluting Monash Council disagrees, again based on judicial advice, as the Prime Minister on behalf of the Australian people does have the power to make such appointment, as in the past.

All four Australian field marshal promotions broke with tradition and were precedents in their own way. Nevertheless, Prime Minister Morrison has followed the advice from Army Headquarters, as he is entitled to do.

There remains strong support within Parliament, the judiciary, the military, Veterans and the general community for the promotion of Sir John.

There is no inference that the untimely death of Tim Fischer was hastened by this unwelcome news of early July. But his disappointment was very obvious.



From our President

I remain one of the great number of Australians who have yet to be convinced that we can be made any more free or independent or democratic or sovereign, or profoundly more Australian than we are today, or that the world can be a better place by tearing down our institutions, heroes and long held traditions.



Geoff Hourn

The idea that we need to re-badge Australia, change our Constitution and tear down our history to assert ourselves as a free, independent and progressive nation is, in my opinion, mistaken.

When Australia actually became independent is debated. There are those who believe our independence came with Federation, such as former Attorney-General Lionel Murphy, who ruled from the High Court that we became independent in 1901. Others identify 25 April 1915 when Australians landed at Gallipoli. Others say it was in later years, like the Hawke government's Constitutional Commission that identified some time between 1926 and the end of World War II.

The timing, however, is unimportant. What is important is that through an evolutionary process, we are an independent, sovereign and very successful nation.

Despite this, and disappointingly, our nation has an increasing number of apologists in it these days. People who only see what, to them, is wrong and not what is so good and right about what we have.

As an example, I am astonished at the many attempts by apologists to re-write history and to teach 'slanted' history to younger generations. Australia has now started to disavow its history and disown its institutions because of vocal and small minorities.

The latest push by vocal and small minorities is to re-badge Christmas, despite Christmas being no more alien to Australia than cricket, AFL, rugby or Shakespeare. Whether one has religious faith or not, Christmas is part of the fabric of society.

It is loved all around the world and I have even seen Christmas decorations in Islamabad, Amman, Dubai and Kabul.

Our links to Christmas only embellish our society and it would be a blander Australia if those links were to be removed because of a small minority of vocal and deluded apologists.

Similarly, I am astounded by the motive of other apologists who want to change our culture and society. The motive of the founders of the *Extinction Rebellion*, for instance, is to tear down capitalism under the guise of 'fixing' climate change. The motive of *Extinction Rebellion* is clearly unveiled at the corner of South Street and Hampton Road in Fremantle where a large sign, bearing the *Extinction Rebellion* logo, reads "Capitalism Extinction".

We are who we are today because of capitalism (and colonialism, for that matter) yet apologists can only see negativity. They repudiate the benefits and only portray the supposed evils.

Most Australians are proud of their citizenship and national identity. Australian citizenship is one of the most cherished prizes this world has to offer. Millions of people from around the world have come here to partake of that citizenship.

People have flocked to Australia. The reverse is not true; very few people give up Australian citizenship for that of another country.

It is ironic therefore, that Australia's multiculturalism is now being used to try to change what we have.

I am not one of those people who believe Australia suffers from an identity crisis. I believe that the Australian identity is so distinct and our shared values are so robust and so many of our achievements such a legitimate source of pride, that we do not need the seemingly endless handwringing and navel gazing that occurs.

As a people, Australians have generally been wary of elitism. Yet elites are heroes and are essential in every society. We need elite doctors, elite scientists, elite engineers, successful business owners and elite sailors, soldiers and airmen, to mention just a few.

This month, the Highgate Committee was disturbed at the continued

Highgate AGM details

Let them eat cake...



At the AGM this month, all Committee positions become vacant, and nominations will be called for President, Senior Vice President, Vice President and Newsletter Editor, Treasurer, Secretary, Warden (up to two), Membership Officer, State War Memorial Liaison Officer, Honour Avenue Group Liaison Officer, Pension and Veterans Affairs Officer, Hospital and Welfare Officer, Website Administration Officer, and three Committee Members.

A nomination pro forma is detailed below, and must be lodged with the Secretary prior to the AGM. This form is available from the Secretary or you can draw up your own with the following details:

Returned & Services League Highgate Sub-Branch NOMINATION FOR COMMITTEE & SUB-COMMITTEES 2019-20

We hereby nominate:

For the position of:

Proposer:

Seconder:

Acceptance by Nominee:

Date:

BIRTHDAYS

Members celebrating their birthday in October include:

Ken Jones, John Morriss, Phillip Skelton, Arthur Hutchison, Peter Rowles, Margot Harness, John Lindsay, Shirly Mooney, Ian Sutherland, William Munro, Richard Hooper, Howard Montagu, Don Newman, Stanley Stewart, Paul Brabazon, Glenn Darlington, Ian Mulholland, Roger Buddrige, Ian Healy, John Barnes and Jack Suriano



From our President *Continued*

attempt to tear down some of our military heroes through 'trial by media'. The most prominent example of this was the recent *60 Minutes* program about allegations against Australian soldiers and Special Forces.

We were concerned that the program may have sought to improperly influence or prejudice the outcome of an investigation by the Inspector General of the Australian Defence Force (IGADF). We were also concerned with the grief and anxieties caused to wives and families by such crass reporting.

The grief caused to families and individuals has been totally ignored by television producers, and by newspaper editors, for commercial gain. This is despite the findings of a long running investigation are yet to be revealed and the families and individuals have been subject to endless anxiety throughout the long years of investigation.

Such ponderous and long drawn-out investigations have a distressing and demoralising effect on individuals, families and the ADF. Such distress and demoralisation can only have been heightened by the *60 Minutes* program.

We, therefore, decided to write to Ben Roberts-Smith VC MG to offer support to him, his colleagues and their families. Without pre-judging the IGADF investigation ourselves, we said it is vital that current and former members of the Australian Defence Force, who have served their country with courage and pride, are supported when unable to protect themselves from media innuendo, rumours and accusations. We trust that knowing they have community backing buoys them.

In all of this, when so much focus is on what some people claim to be wrong with Australia, we should give a proper perspective by focusing on what is right about Australia. That, along with maintaining an ever-active sense of humour, will continue to save us from succumbing to the nihilism of apologists.

The RSL plays its part, as a well-respected community organisation, by paying tribute to the courage and determination of our predecessors who created and defended our nation.

Continued page 5

Abe at 101 is alive and well

How appropriate that this month we can report on Highgate member, Abe Sher, who was born in May 1918, just six months before the guns fell silent at the end of World War 1, and who celebrated his century at our OBE last year.



Abe's grandson, Jeremy Sher writes: My grandpa Abe is absolutely fine. My parents recently moved to Sydney as my father is taking on a new role

there. As a result, my grandfather (Abe) decided to move with my parents so he could be closer to his great-grandchildren living in Sydney. It's astonishing that he decided to move.

On the flight to Sydney, and wearing his RSL badge, he said to the flight attendant, "I'm an old soldier. I fought in the war. A short plane ride doesn't faze me!"

Suffice to say, he's been completely re-energised by all the little ones visiting him constantly, the change of scenery, and 20 years seems to have come off him. Highgate is still his RSL Sub-Branch and Perth will always be his home, so I will make sure he receives hard copies of your correspondence.

Arnold Potts Oration 2019

Dr Peter Brune is coming from Adelaide to present 16 Battalion Foundation's 2019 Brigadier Potts Oration in Kojonup on Sat 26 Oct. A memorial service at 1130 in Apex Park leads into lunch in the memorial hall at 1230 with the Oration at 1400.

Tickets are \$55 each and available from the Kojonup Visitors Centre (9831 0500) or Mary (0409 085 987) by Fri 19 Oct for catering purposes. Accommodation may be available at Cornwall House (promotion code Potts) if booked on line or at 0407 290 579.

Dr Brune is a renowned Australian military author, historian; and an entertaining public speaker who has written nine military history books selling over 225,000 copies.

KARRAKATTA CLUB PROGRAM

Highgate Highlights readers are welcome to attend other special events at our luncheon venue, the Karrakatta Club

RSVP essential to
reception@karrakattaclub.com.au
or 9325 8111

1130 Morning tea | 1200 Presentation
1300 À la carte lunch (*own cost*)
Lyceum: Members/guests \$10
Non-members \$17

Traditional Chinese Culture and Shen Yun Performing Arts
Tue 22 Oct | Presenter Michele Webster

Threads of Gold | Tue 12 Nov
Presenter Prudence Ford
President Embroiderers' Guild of WA
and Convenor *Threads of Gold* Convention

Infinite Threads | Tue 19 Nov
Presenter Eveline Kotai

Welcome: Lindsay Morrison

We welcome Lindsay Morrison who transferred from Karratha Sub-Branch to Highgate last month and is well known to many Highgate members.

Lindsay was called up as a National Serviceman in 1972 and posted to 2 Signals Regiment, before being discharged that Dec, following the end of National Service.

He enlisted in the Army Reserve in 1977, and served with 28 Independent Rifle Company before discharge in 1982.

He re-enlisted following the establishment of 5th Independent Rifle Company (which became the Pilbara Regiment) in 1983. and was posted as Sergeant Patrol Commander with C Troop.

Lindsay was commissioned as Lieutenant in Dec 1992 before posting as Regimental Signals Officer, Intelligence Officer and then Officer Commanding Civil Affairs and Local Observer Element.

He retired from the Pilbara Regiment in 1997 and discharged from the Army Reserve in 2001.

Lindsay retired in 2018 from his final civilian role as General Manager Operations for the Mid West Ports Authority in Geraldton.

He and his wife, Liz, are farming at Dongara but visit Perth regularly.

Sub Warden Duties | 2019

Wreath Laying Services | State War Memorial Kings Park

POC: Geoff Simpson OAM RFD
Deputy Warden State War Memorial



Sun 27 Oct	TBA	Ochi Day - Greek Community
Sun 10 Nov	1100 for 1130	Highgate RSL Sub-Branch Remembrance Service
Mon 11 Nov	1030 for 1100	RSL WA Remembrance Service

State War Memorial etiquette

By Bill Munro

There is an increasing trend for people laying wreaths at the State War Memorial to place their right hand over their left breast after laying the wreath. However, this is mostly a USA form of honour that is not appropriate in Australia.

The following is an extract from the RSLWA Wearing of Medals and Dress Policy:

SALUTING & PAYING RESPECTS

29. The practice of placing the right arm over the heart when laying wreaths or when the National Anthem, the Ode and/or the Last Post are presented is not an Australian tradition. The correct paying of respects after laying a wreath is to step back two paces, stand fast with hands by the side and head bowed for 3-5 seconds, before moving off.

Strong voice for Veterans a must

RSLWA is ensuring it is at the forefront of protecting Veteran rights and hard-won support in the wake of the Productivity Commission Report on Compensation and Rehabilitation for Veterans.

Ahead of the Morrison Government's response, RSLWA has joined forces with other State branches for a combined submission on the report's recommendations, some of which would have a considerable negative impact on Veterans and their families.

RSLWA CEO John McCourt said Federal Treasurer Josh Frydenberg observed the report would require careful consideration by the Government, as well as the Veteran community and other stakeholders.

"I and the Advocacy staff here at State Branch have carefully read the entire report and its recommendations. We have raised, on behalf of the whole Veteran community in WA, a number of significant concerns – not least the proposed changes to Gold Card eligibility and the future of the Veterans' Review Board.

John said other Ex-Service Organisations had already expressed a desire to work with RSLWA, to not only protect hard-won benefits for Veterans, but also work in a collaborative way to improve services and support.

From our President

Continued

We also need to be a bastion of support, of course, for those who currently serve.

In terms of ourselves paying tribute to courage, we were fortunate to have Doug Arrowsmith DFC OAM as a guest for lunch in September. Doug served in Bomber Command; one of the most courageous organisations of World War II.

What a memorable moment it was, for those on his table, to hear Doug vividly tell us how he landed Lancaster bombers. His recollection of the call signs and detail was extraordinary and it was such a privilege to hear him tell us of wartime exploits.

Doug was the President for many years (and is currently Treasurer) of the Nedlands Sub-Branch. We were also pleased to have Barry Nunn AO, Secretary of Nedlands, as a lunch guest.

Marty Kavanagh, the Irish Consul in Western Australia, was our guest speaker in September. Marty had just returned from Dublin, where the Irish Minister for Foreign Affairs briefed him on Brexit. It is a complex topic and it was fascinating to learn about the effects of Brexit on Ireland.

As I explained to Barry Nunn during the lunch, we always have the very best speakers at Highgate and any RSL member, and their guests, can attend Highgate lunches. Everyone is welcome to do so without any specific invitation. It is just a matter of booking.

Highgate is the best lunch club in Australia! We meet in the historic and very welcoming Karrakatta Club and don't conduct any business during our lunches. We are always served a beautifully presented two-course meal and have fascinating speakers.

A quick glance at www.highgate-rsl.org.au will show our list of speakers for the past few years.

If you don't bring a friend and are looking for someone to sit with,

please sit with me. I am moving to the backbenches after our next meeting, as my term as President draws to a close.

It has been a great pleasure and honour to lead Highgate for the past two years.

Regards - Geoff Hourn

Korean War Memorial

After approaches by interested parties and stakeholders, RSLWA's Board of Directors has moved to support the establishment of a dedicated memorial to commemorate those who fought and those who died during the Korean War. The Board also supports any bipartisan agreement between the State Government and the State Opposition for such a memorial being erected within Kings Park.

ANZAC House Veteran Central

Progress continues on construction of ANZAC House, home of the groundbreaking new Veteran Central facility. The project is on time and on budget, with an estimated completion by end of Aug 2020. RSLWA CEO John McCourt recently met with the Federal Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Darren Chester, as well as senior DVA officers, on the rollout of the \$5 million commitment by the Morrison Government towards the building of our new home.

Tony Abbott appointed to Australian War Memorial Council

Former Prime Minister Tony Abbott has been appointed a member of the Council of the Australian War Memorial for three years from 01 Oct. The Council is responsible for the conduct and control of the affairs and policy of the Australian War Memorial.

Mr Abbott has a long history and interest in supporting Veterans and their families.

As Prime Minister, he led the case to build the Sir John Monash Centre in Villers-Bretonneux to tell the stories and honour the thousands of fallen Australians who served in the First World War.



At the going down of the sun...

I crouched in a shallow trench on that hell of exposed beaches... steeply rising foothills bare of cover... a landscape pockmarked with war's inevitable litter... piles of stores... equipment... ammunition... and the weird contortions of death sculptured in Australian flesh... I saw the going down of the sun on that first ANZAC Day... the chaotic maelstrom of Australia's bleeding.

I fought in the frozen mud of the Somme... in a blazing destroyer exploding on the North Sea... I fought on the perimeter at Tobruk... crashed in the flaming wreckage of a fighter in New Guinea... lived with the damned in the place cursed with the name Changi.

I was your mate... the kid across the street... the med. student at graduation... the mechanic in the corner garage... the baker who brought you bread... the gardener who cut your lawn... the clerk who sent your phone bill.

I was an Army private... a Naval commander... an Air Force bombardier. No man knows me... No name marks my tomb, for I am every Australian serviceman... I am the Unknown Soldier.

I died for a cause I held just in the service of my land... that you and yours may say in freedom... "I am proud to be an Australian".

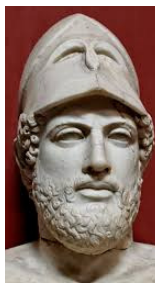
And engraved forever at ANZAC Cove are these words from Kemal Ataturk, Commander of the Turkish 19th Division during the Gallipoli Campaign, and first President of the Turkish Republic, from 1924-1938:

Those heroes that shed their blood and lost their lives. You are now living in the soil of a friendly country therefore rest in peace. There is no difference between the Johnnies and the Mehments to us where they lie side by side here in this country of ours. You, the mothers, who sent their sons from faraway countries wipe away your tears; your sons are now lying in our bosom and are in peace. After having lost their lives on this land they have become our sons as well.

***They shall grow not old as we that are left grow old
Age shall not weary them nor the years condemn
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them
- Lest We Forget -***



Pericles was a prominent and influential Greek statesman, orator and general during that nation's golden age. Well over 2,000 years ago, long before the first ANZAC Day, but only a stone's throw from Gallipoli, he wrote:



Each has won a glorious grave - not that sepulchre of earth wherein they lie, but the living tomb of everlasting remembrance wherein their glory is enshrined. For the whole earth is the sepulchre of heroes.

Monuments may rise and tablets be set up to them in their own land, but on far-off shores there is an abiding memorial that no pen or chisel has traced; it is graven not on stone or brass, but on the living hearts of humanity.

Take these men for your example. Like them, remember that prosperity can be only for the free, that freedom is the sure possession of those alone who have the courage to defend it.

What you leave behind is not what is engraved in stone monuments, but what is woven into the lives of others. Freedom is the sure possession of those alone who have the courage to defend it.

At 1100 on 11 November each year...

...People from countries around the world pause to commemorate Remembrance Day, the anniversary of the day the fighting ended in the First World War.

Towards the conclusion of the ceremonies, after wreaths have been laid and before the sounding of the Last Post and the minute's silence, the Ode of Remembrance is read.

The Ode of Remembrance may be the most well-known part of Remembrance Day ceremonies, featuring the fourth stanza of the poem *For the Fallen* by Laurence Binyon, who before the war had been an assistant keeper of prints and drawings at the British Museum..

The Ode of Remembrance was selected in 1919 to accompany the unveiling of the London Cenotaph and soon passed into common use across the British Commonwealth.

In Australia it is recited on Anzac Day and Remembrance Day.

Written just a few weeks after the war began, *For the Fallen* anticipated much about the war on the Western Front – not least the vast numbers of dead and the symbolism that came to be associated with the red poppies which grew in profusion in northern France and Flanders.

For soldiers who fought on the Western Front, the Ode of Remembrance also called to mind two of the most important moments of the day in the trenches – dawn and dusk, the time of the 'standto'.

This was the favoured time of attack by armies on both sides and all eyes at sunrise and sunset were focused on the enemy line.

Though it was written more than a century ago, in its remembrance of the dead and its sorrowful evocation of the future they were denied, the Ode of Remembrance remains relevant to the present day.





Assistance dogs to support Veterans with PTSD

Military Veterans experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) will be able to access specially trained assistance dogs under a new Department of Veterans' Affairs program.

Two suppliers of assistance dogs have been contracted to work with the Veteran community, following overwhelming feedback from Ex-Service Organisations.

Matching a Veteran experiencing PTSD with a specially trained assistance dog will help reduce isolation and give them a chance to improve their mental wellbeing and overall lifestyle.

The dogs are highly trained to detect signs of distress in their handler and perform specific tasks to help ease those symptoms, including waking their handler experiencing a night terror, or nuzzling their handler to distract them from emotionally disabling symptoms.

Two companies, *Smart Pups Assistance Dogs* and *Centre for Service and Therapy Dogs Australia*, have been chosen as the first suppliers to provide assistance dogs to Veterans.

In related news, a research project is currently under way with La Trobe University to expand the evidence base for further use of assistance dogs for Veterans.

The early results from the trial have been very positive and will help to inform the work to support more Veterans with PTSD. This follows emerging evidence from around the world that supports the use of assistance dogs in addition to ongoing treatment for the management of PTSD.

"Assistance dogs are able to pick up on the Veteran's stress in a way that we as humans do not, and then respond to this by assisting them in the moment, with trained strategies to down-regulate the Veteran's distress," said Dr Pree Benton, Principal Psychologist with Centre for Service and Therapy Dogs Australia.

"The dogs can also be trained to wake Veterans up from nightmares, scan the environment for the Veteran to reduce hyper-vigilance, and provide a barrier between the

Veteran and members of the public to induce feelings of safety.

"Assistance dogs are trained to have a symbiotic relationship with the Veterans, whereby not only does the Veteran benefit from having their assistance dog perform its trained tasks, but the dog also benefits from having a daily job to do in supporting their Veteran partner," said Dr Benton.

"This also serves to boost self-worth and provide a sense of purpose to the Veterans, and we believe this relationship is what makes the Veteran-assistance dog partnership so effective."

Unlike pet or companion dogs, assistance dogs are specially trained to perform tasks that help their handler to achieve clinical recovery goals.

They are trained to meet the Veteran's needs and Veterans will be trained as their dog's handler.

Assistance dogs will support Veterans in need now, while La Trobe University continues to further develop evidence backing up that assistance dogs can support the treatment of PTSD.

A limited tender was undertaken to gain access to assistance dogs for Veterans in need as early as possible, and there will soon be an open tender to expand the panel of providers.

Veterans currently seeking treatment for PTSD are encouraged to speak to their mental health professional regarding gaining access to an assistance dog. For more information, visit www.dva.gov.au/health-and-wellbeing/rehabilitation/assistance-dogs

Government seeks input into mental health wellbeing strategy

Veterans, their families, and the broader Ex-Service community are being asked to help shape the Veteran Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy and National Action Plan following public consultation opening in late September.

The Government says it is committed to putting Veterans and their families first, and a crucial part of this is listening to their views, their experiences and considering their solutions to promote positive mental health and wellbeing outcomes. People will be able to have their say and contribute to this important topic through an online survey or by providing a written submission, with a view of ensuring collectively that the government is doing what it can to support Veterans and their families.

To help everyone provide informed feedback for the online survey, an environmental scan of mental health reform in Australia has also been published, highlighting developments in mental health policy across Australia over the past six years.

For those in need of immediate mental health support and counselling, Open Arms — Veterans and Family Counselling, can be contacted 24/7 on 1800 011 046.

The Department of Veterans' Affairs online wellbeing portal, AT-Ease.dva.gov.au, also provides Veterans and their families with information, resources and links to services for support with mental health and wellbeing.

To view the environmental scan, complete the online survey or provide a written submission, visit www.dva.gov.au/nap2019

Veteran pensions increase

Payments for pension recipients including Veterans, their partners, war widows and widowers increased from 20 September, in line with the biannual indexation process, and became fully effective from pension day on 10 Oct 2019.

Fortnightly Service pensions for a single person increases \$7.20; and \$5.40 each for couples, while war widows receive an additional \$7.50 and an income support supplement increase of \$2.30.

Pensions are indexed in March and September.

For a full list of pension rates, visit www.dva.gov.au or call 133 254 or 1800 555 254 from regional Australia.



**Our September Guest
Marty Kavanagh
briefed us on Brexit**

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Newsletter contributions are always welcome.

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