

THE HIGHGATE R.S.L. NEWS

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MONTHLY LUNCHEON
MONDAY 18 SEPTEMBER 1989

VENUE: Gallipoli Room, Anzac House, Perth

TIME: Fellowship 1200 hours
 Luncheon 1250 hours

SPEAKER: Dr Douglas Sutherland-Bruce PhD. BA

SUBJECT: "HERALDRY"

THE SPEAKER

Our speaker this month spoke to us in May of this year on the subject of Sherlock Holmes. He was very well received and returns at the request of a considerable number of our members; this time with a completely different subject. Dr Douglas Sutherland-Bruce was born in Wick, Scotland and moved as a child to South Africa. He read Medieval History at the University of Natal. He came to Australia in 1974 and works as a University Lecturer in the Extension Service of W.A.; is a writer and broadcaster; has written on crime (fact and fiction) heraldry and genealogy. He is a member of MENSAs and various writer and historical societies and became a member of the Sherlock Holmes Society in London in 1976. He founded the Sherlock Holmes Society here in Perth following a visit by Charles Schofield QC Chairman of the London Branch.

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SPEAKER AUGUST

Colonel James Teo, a member of Highgate Sub Branch, gave us a most interesting talk that described not simply the evolution of Singapore as an independent nation, but drew our attention to some of the social difficulties that accompany such an historical event. He took us through the depressed 1930's to the Japanese occupied 40's; then on to the communist bid for power in the 50's, which was followed again by initial independence with Malaya, leading to complete independence after separation from Malaysia. His observations on patriotism, on nation building and the need for national service in a multi-racial society were of considerable interest. The creation of a defence force, a trained reserve army and their overall costs as percentage of the Gross National Product gave those present food for thought. We are grateful to James for his enlightening address and extend the sincere thanks of all present.

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In last month's News it was announced that in the next edition full details of the Ladies' Night Dinner would be given. Unfortunately this is not to be. This Journal is sent to the Publishers immediately after the committee meeting normally held on the 1st Monday of the month. Because September's meeting would have clashed with the RSL National Congress being held in Perth over the same week, our meeting was postponed. So that you receive the Highgate News before the monthly luncheon, it has been published at the normal time. As it turns out it was all unnecessary, as the National

Congress has been cancelled due to the Airline dispute. However, the date of the Ladies' Night Dinner remains the same - Friday, 24th Nov, and full details will be announced later.

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A young officer in the British Army was promoted from 2/Lt to Lt, but in error the date was published as 1066 instead of 1966. After many glasses of the amber fluid, he was persuaded to write to the War Office claiming arrears of pay from 1066 to 1966. This he calculated totalled 4,686,972 Pounds. In due course he received a reply acknowledging his request for arrears of pay, and, stating his account had been credited with the amount he claimed, the letter continued to say "however, it appears you are the last surviving officer of the Battle of Hastings, and, in accordance with regulations, you automatically become the Commander in Chief of the Saxon Army, and as such responsible for the losses incurred during the Battle. The total value of all losses in men, horses, armour, spears, bows, arrows, etc has been calculated at 4,686,972 Pounds, 14 Shillings & 6 Pence. Your account has now accordingly been debited with the sum of 14 Shillings & 6 Pence".

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I understand it is a tradition in Highgate to present our more senior members (in age that is) with a star on their name tag after reaching the age of 80, and a further star on reaching 90. Has any member been awarded 3 stars? At the last luncheon President Sam had the pleasant duty of presenting Rolph Allom with his second star, rather belatedly as he has now reached 91. After James Teo finished his speech, John Chappell made a short speech in reply. I understand John is also aged 91, but the clarity and thoughtfulness of John's speech would have been a credit to someone half his age. To both these gentlemen, Rolph and John, congratulations. You both make me feel very ashamed when I complain of my own aches and pains.

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Member Tom Welsh phoned recently to a) apologise for non attendance and b) to express his condolences on hearing of the passing of Hector Biggs. Tom said he first met Hector, or Colonel Biggs, as he knew him then, when he was 1st Engineer on the M.V. Charon, which, in 1945 was trooping between New Guinea and Australia. Hector was one of the passengers. They struck up an acquaintanceship but went their separate ways until accidentally meeting again whilst enjoying a few Friday lunchtime glasses in the Victoria Hotel, Jolimont, in 1954. They met regularly after that businesswise, and became good friends. Thanks for the story Tom.

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