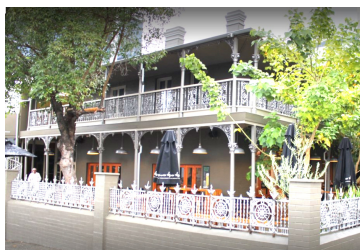




# Highgate Highlights

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

**IMPORTANT September lunch is at the GROSVENOR HOTEL,  
corner Hay and Hill Streets, just down from Perth Mint**



Our next lunch will be on **Monday 21 September** at 1200 for 1230 at the Grosvenor Hotel, corner Hay and Hill Streets. Luncheon is \$40 plus \$5 if you wish to purchase a raffle ticket. Due to the closure of the Karrakatta Club and non-availability of the ANZAC Club, **our new venue is the Grosvenor Hotel**, a stately Victorian building with a stylish dining

room which can cater for up to 70 members. It opens at 1100, so **plan to arrive after 1100**. (Committee has earlier access for its meeting.)

The Grosvenor has been a supporter of Highgate Sub-Branch, providing dining vouchers for our raffles. It is also home to several Royal Australian Regiment and Battalion Associations.

The Grosvenor can be reached on the free Red CAT bus which runs past the door, or free on any bus heading east on St Georges Terrace from William St, alighting before Hill Street. There is a Council car park nearby on Goderich Street.

## 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/Turf9jQYW3wSqUyQ8>**

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.

## From our President

**A**t our annual general meeting this month, I provided members with details of the extraordinary year we have had, especially with the COVID19 lockdown which caused the Sub-Branch to go into hibernation for four months until our luncheon meeting in July. However, while the number of our luncheon meetings reduced, the work that Highgate does quietly in the background continued, including successfully holding our monthly committee meetings using video-conferencing.

Because of the pandemic, the **Honour Avenues Group** held just one dedication ceremony this year in February, although interest remains strong, with three more ceremonies already planned for 2020-21.

*Continued Page 2*

## Important events | please diarise now

- 1100 | **Mon 21 Sep** | Committee Meeting - **Grosvenor Hotel**
- 1200 for 1230 | **Mon 21 Sep** | Monthly Luncheon - **Grosvenor Hotel**
- 1045 | **Sun 08 Nov** | Remembrance Day Service and Fraser's Luncheon
- **Mon 14 Dec** | Christmas Lunch - Guest speaker Craig Challen, Thai Rescue

**See page 5 for Wreath-Laying Services at the State War Memorial**

## Last Post | Lest We Forget

We remember with deep sadness and affection our departed Members  
**John Edward Hollingshead OAM and Talbot Bashall ISO**

and convey our sincere condolences and sympathy to their families and friends

**Issue 611 | August 2020**

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## VALE | LAST POST

**It is with deep regret and sadness  
we advise the passing of two  
Highgate Members and convey our  
deepest sympathy to their families**

### John Edward Hollingshead OAM



passed away on 02 September, aged 92 years. In 1948, John was commissioned from Sandhurst Royal Military Academy to the Devonshire Regiment, before seeing active service 1949-50 during the

Malayan Emergency. He was posted in 1958 to the Devonshire & Dorset Regiments, and saw service on the Rhine, Libya and Malta; with additional service at the UK School of Infantry Staff College Camberley, CO Sandhurst and Training Officer Territorial Army. Having moved to Perth, in 1968 John was elected Rotary International Governor and involved in medical research administration 1971-96. John was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in 2000 for service to community health, particularly through his leadership of the Rotary Sight Restoration Project in Bali.

**Talbot Bashall ISO** passed away on 06 September, aged 94.

Talbot spent his childhood in Ripley, England and recalled having to run for cover when German bombers flew overhead.

Later, as a 20 year old British Army Lieutenant he had the considerable responsibility of guarding legendary German Field Marshal Albert Kesselring in Venice. Kesselring was awaiting trial for war crimes committed in Italy in 1944 when Commander-in-Chief of German forces in the whole Mediterranean region.

Kesselring's death sentence was later commuted by Winston Churchill, and he and Talbot corresponded until Kesselring's death. In 1953, Talbot moved to Hong Kong as an officer at Stanley Prison, rising to become a senior officer in the Hong Kong prison system. He later became commander of a force to control the colony's many street hawkers. As a senior public servant, he was appointed Controller of the Refugee Control Centre from 1979-82, managing the influx of Vietnamese boat people refugees into Hong Kong, after the end of the Vietnam War. He took special pride in knowing that "not a single boat was turned away". Talbot arranged successful third-country resettlement of tens of thousands of refugees.

He was awarded an Imperial Service Order (ISO) for his public service in Hong Kong. He and wife Cynthia retired to Perth in 1982. His autobiography, *I Was There*, was published in 2019 by Planwest in WA.



## From our President *Continued*

May and Lovekin Drives and Marri Walk in Kings Park, Perth are home to 1,830 plaques dedicated to the men and women who enlisted in the armed forces in WA, died in service overseas and whose remains were not repatriated.



Bill Munro

The Honour Avenues **database** can be viewed and searched on the Kings Park website, providing the community with an excellent resource to locate specific plaques. More than 600 moving stories have been added to the database and I encourage you to read about the lives of our lost heroes. The database features the life stories and photographs of hundreds of Service men and women, from childhood stories and tales of enlistment and defence training, to saying goodbye to Australian shores for the last time aboard one of the many troop ships travelling to Africa, Europe, the Middle East, Asia and beyond. The Botanic Gardens website at <https://www.bgpa.wa.gov.au/kings-park/visit/history/honour-avenues> acknowledges Highgate's ongoing commitment since 1922.

The **State War Memorial** is of special significance to all ex-Service men and women, but none more so than the members of Highgate. We were delighted when Hon Kerry Sanderson AC CVO was appointed the 2020 Warden of the SWM, especially as the Sub Wardens had come to know Mrs Sanderson during her term as WA Governor. Highgate provides the Deputy Warden, Geoff Simpson, and all but one of the Sub Wardens, although the opportunity exists for other RSL members to contribute, should they wish to do so. There was a smaller number of services this year due to the pandemic, but the number of Sub Wardens was more than sufficient to make each commemorative service memorable. A special thanks goes to Highgate member, Dave Scott, the 2020 ANZAC of the Year, who attends every ceremony with an emotional tribute of playing *The Last Post*.

Highgate continues to sponsor **The Listening Post**, presented by Highgate member, Tony Howes, on

Capital Community Radio at 6.00 pm every Monday. The program features engaging and enlightening interviews with a wide range of people having military backgrounds, remembers snippets of wartime history, and broadcasts the best of military music for all to enjoy.

The **Korean War Memorial** project is now a little over 12 months old and major milestones have been achieved. The Board of BGPA (Kings Park) has given formal endorsement of the project and the Committee is now entering the design and construct phase before proceeding to fundraising. Highgate members make up the majority of the Committee, supported by Defence representatives and members of the Korean community.

Highgate is unique with its luncheon and guest speaker format, and membership remains strong. We held all lunches at the Karrakatta Club this year, despite the property being sold. August was our last lunch at the Club and while we had planned to move to the new ANZAC Club, they are not yet ready for us, so our September lunch is at the Grosvenor Hotel in Hay Street, Perth.

Membership is the life-blood of any organisation and none more so than an RSL Sub-Branch. Sadly, we lost six members during the year: Norm Manners, Don Newman, Sunnly Kim, Dr Patricia Kailis, Michael Munjak and Dr Ian Sutherland; and more recently, John Hollingshead and Talbot Bashall. We deeply regret the passing of these members, but can report that 11 new Service, Affiliate and Associate members joined us this year, bringing our total number to 215.

I extend my grateful thanks to the Highgate Committee, each of whom does an outstanding job, but there are many deserving individual thanks:

Senior Vice President and Deputy Warden of the State War Memorial, Geoff Simpson; Vice President and Editor of Highgate Highlights, Roger Buddrige; our very efficient Secretary, Greg Wilson, and Treasurer Ray Ward. Mike Harness who, with the assistance of Margot, has a full-time job looking after the Honour Avenues Group, Poppy Day organisation, and members' birthdays at our lunches.

Allan Downs has been responsible for seeking luncheon guest speakers during the year, while extending that role to locating interviewees for member Tony Howes' Capital Radio program, *The Listening Post*. Highgate has one of the best websites of all Sub-Branches, thanks to Ian Petkoff; Howard Montagu has been responsible for increasing our membership numbers, David MacLean sorts out DVA and pension issues; Bruce Taylor visits hospitalised members; and Leon Griffiths organises our traditional Remembrance Day Luncheons in Kings Park. Following his tremendous contribution that established the mobile phone Kings Park Remembrance Walk App, Highgate Warden and former President, Steve Chamarette, continues to provide sound counsel to the committee, and Greg Smith's contributions are also greatly appreciated. We continue to be grateful to Bob Campbell, Helen Birch and Peter Garside who welcome members to our luncheons.

Thank you to all members for your support and friendship during my first term, and I join with you in looking forward to an interesting next year for Highgate RSL.

- Bill Munro | President

## New members

We welcome **Ross Cable** as a 'virtual member' pending his move to Slovakia for a new business venture. Formerly from South Perth Sub-Branch, Ross is rejoining the RSL at Highgate. His Army Reserve posting is with the Army Knowledge Centre at Leeuwin Barracks, and he served as a peacekeeper in the Middle East.

We also welcome **Douglas Melville** as a new Affiliate Member.



**Highgate Members celebrating their August birthday**  
**Members celebrating birthdays this month include** Mike Radwell,

James Lee,  
John Dowson,

Otto Pelczar, Chris Adams,  
Ross Lightfoot, Phillip Clover,  
Peter Harries, Michael Page,  
Deann Raphael, Louis Byrnes,  
Joan Gravell, John Thornton,  
Jeremy Buxton and Barry DeBruyn



## VP DAY 1945 | 75 years since the end of World War II

*Victory in the Pacific signified the end of WWII for Australia and was met with scenes of celebration and relief. The 75th anniversary was commemorated on 15 August, with a special service at the Australian War Memorial to remember the service and sacrifice of the almost one million Australians who served our nation, and the support and fortitude of millions on the home front. The end of WWII is a moment our nation will forever remember. It is part of our history, and a time to remember and reflect on the service and sacrifice of the almost one million Australians who served, the 39,000 who died, and the 30,000 who were prisoners of war.*

### Honouring the million who served

The Second World War had a significant and enduring impact on all Australians. Only 21 years had passed since the end of the First World War, and during those two decades, our country endured major challenges, from losing 60,000 men in the war, caring for the many thousands who came back, the Great Depression and at points, skyrocketing unemployment.

And while all these events had a profound effect on Australia, the Second World War changed and shaped our nation forever - redefining aspects of the economic, domestic and international relations landscape, and influencing social issues such as female employment and Indigenous service.

From a total population of just seven million, almost one million Australians served during WWII, fighting across the globe, from Europe to the Middle East, and through South East Asia to the Pacific.

Over 39,000 died and about 30,000 Australian Service men and women were made prisoners of war. Most were captured by the Japanese during their advance and capture of Singapore in early 1942. While most Australians who were prisoners of war of Germany had a strong chance of returning home at the end of the war, more than one-third of prisoners of the Japanese died in captivity.

Australian women played vital roles, serving as nurses overseas, in auxiliary services in Australia and overseas, and as workers throughout the war, maintaining our agricultural and manufacturing interests at home.

### Commemorative WWII medallion and certificate for Veterans

Living Australian Second World War Veterans, or family members on their behalf, are encouraged to apply for a commemorative medallion and certificate that the Department of Veterans' Affairs has developed to honour this significant anniversary.

To date, about 4,000 Veterans have applied for the commemorative medallion, which means there are more Veterans out there still eligible. You can apply online for the Commemorative Medallion or, for those without internet access, by phone on 1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372) in business hours.

### The war came here

We should never forget that World War II was fought not only overseas but also on the Australian mainland. From air raids on Darwin, Broome and across Northern Australia, to midget submarine attacks in Sydney Harbour, hundreds of Australians were killed here.

The fear of an all-out attack on Australia by Japanese forces was very real.

The understanding and connection to country held by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people proved to be of great benefit in defending Australia and islands to the north. Australia's armed forces employed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in de facto units to carry out reconnaissance of the northern Australian coastline, where they assisted in locating Japanese and Allied aircraft crash sites.

And we should never forget the powerful bonds created with our neighbours in the Pacific, particularly on the Kokoda Track where Australians were supported by the locals of Papua New Guinea, who carried supplies forward and transported seriously wounded and sick Australian soldiers to safety. Their compassion and care earned them admiration and respect from the Australians, who dubbed these men their 'fuzzy wuzzy angels'.

This year, on 15 August, we marked the 75th anniversary of the end of WWII, also known as Victory in the Pacific Day and allowed Australians to publicly acknowledge the service and sacrifice of Veterans of WWII, and also recognise the contribution made by all Australians.

### First Perth VP Day celebrations

#### *Our thanks to WA Army Museum*

About 100,000 people (one quarter of the population) were in Perth for the first *Victory in the Pacific Parade* which was formed of 7,000 personnel representing the Australian armed services, as well as servicemen from Britain, the US and the Netherlands.



Perth VP Day Parade and Celebration

Wounded and repatriated soldiers in Red Cross buses participated in the Victory Parade in Perth.

However, public address system problems limited attendance to 70,000 at the thanksgiving service on the Esplanade.

A 101-gun salute was fired at Kings Park and one of its 25-pounder casings is on display at the WA Army Museum.



## Honouring their Service to Australia and the world

### Merchant Mariners' vital wartime service remembered

On 03 September, Australia remembered the invaluable role our Merchant Navy has played in more than 100 years of serving the nation, especially in both world wars.

Comprised of mostly civilian crews, the Merchant Navy was responsible for ensuring valuable cargo reached the personnel who needed it most.

These ships and their merchant mariner crews often served in not only challenging but dangerous circumstances, with many doing so while completely unarmed.

Merchant vessels weren't only attacked in distant waters, but also within sight of the Australian coastline. While traversing common trade routes, they worked with the constant threat of attack from enemy submarines, surface raiders, aircraft, and sea mines.

Merchant Navy Day is commemorated on the day the first British merchant vessel, SS *Athenia*, was torpedoed and sunk without warning by the German submarine U-30, only 10 hours after Britain's declaration of war on 03 September 1939.



One of the best-known battles involving merchant mariners is the Battle of the Atlantic, which lasted almost all of the Second World War and saw over 3,000 Allied merchant ships sunk and about 30,000 Allied sailors and merchant mariners lost at sea.

We continue to remember, honour and thank the 800 Australian merchant mariners who tragically died serving the Allied cause during the First and Second World Wars.

*Learn more about Merchant Navy Day and the crucial role that merchant mariners played in wars and conflicts by visiting the ANZAC Portal.*

### Remembering our Malaya and Borneo Veterans

On Malaya and Borneo Veterans' Day, 31 August, Australia recognised our personnel who served in the Malayan Emergency (1948-1960), and the Indonesian Confrontation (1962-1966).

Although sensitivities surrounding the conflicts prevented widespread media coverage at the time, ADF personnel played an important role in bringing the conflicts to an end.

The Malayan Emergency was declared three years after WWII when the Malayan Communist Party launched an insurgency against British colonial rule.

It is important we recognise and appreciate our Defence personnel who served over the 13 years of Australia's involvement, in what was one of Australia's longest military commitments. It began with the RAAF in 1950, followed by the Australian Navy and Army in 1955. While the Malayan government declared the Emergency over on 31 July 1960, some Australian units remained in Malaya until 1963.

The Indonesian Confrontation, a small undeclared war, began in 1962 after Indonesian forces launched attacks on the newly federated state of Malaysia. Australia's commitment began in 1964 and in 1965, assisting in small-scale operations in Borneo. Although the situation had stabilised by the end of 1965, events in Indonesia led to an official end to the conflict the following year with a treaty signed by Indonesia and Malaysia.

We pay tribute to the 39 Australians who died while serving in the Malayan Emergency, and to the more than 20 Australians who lost their lives serving in the Indonesian Confrontation. To these Veterans, Australia says thank you for your service and sacrifice.

*Visit the ANZAC Portal website .to find out more about the Malayan Emergency and the Indonesian Confrontation.*



### Music afternoon to mark Remembrance Sunday

Enjoy an afternoon concert evoking the spirit of Remembrance Day on Sunday 08 November at St Mary's Church in South Perth

The not-for-profit, award-winning City of Perth Brass Band will play music ranging from classic songs of the Great War, to appropriate contemporary melodies.

**REMEMBRANCE**  
**City of Perth Brass Band**  
2:30pm Sunday 08 November  
St Mary's Church  
9 Ridge Street, South Perth

Tickets are \$20 and must be purchased in advance due to venue capacity limitations.

Book online at <https://remembrance-2020.eventbrite.com.au> or email [marketing@cityofperthband.org](mailto:marketing@cityofperthband.org) or call Jen on 0405 579 413

The brass band's recent concert in Kalamunda sold out, and tickets for this event are limited to 100 due to current stage four health restrictions.

However, there will be a waiting list should restrictions be eased on 24 October as planned, and the venue can be opened to full capacity.

The band also has an emailing list you can join to receive updates and ticket information for upcoming concerts. Join at: <http://eepurl.com/hby7Un>





## Honour Avenues Group Annual Report

Two major issues have had significant effects on the obligations and various work programs of the Honour Avenues Group.

Firstly, the completion of alterations and upgrading to May Circle in Kings Park which culminated in a special ceremony on 03 August 2019 commemorating the dedication and opening of the first Honour Avenue in Kings Park 100 years ago.

Attended by the Governor and other distinguished guests, it was a highly successful event, largely due to the significant and efficient efforts of the Botanical Gardens and Parks Authority (BGPA) staff charged with its organisation.

Secondly, the COVID19 pandemic shut down volunteer activities and suspended our work programs and undertakings for three months, resulting in postponement of dedication services.

As a result, we were only able to conduct 1,144 hours of work; and there were only two dedication services of 20 new plaques, bringing to 1,830 the total number of plaques commemorating the service of Service personnel who enlisted in WA, served and died overseas, are listed on the State War Memorial, and whose remains have not been repatriated.

With the lifting of COVID19 restrictions, activities of the Group and maintenance of the Honour Avenues will return to normal levels, with three dedication services already scheduled for the coming months. At present, the November dedication ceremony will go ahead, covering the plaques originally scheduled for May. The next two ceremonies will be in February and May 2021.

We have 12 active members, although not all attend every Tuesday, perhaps in part at least, due to the average age being 77.75 years.

Member Ken Jones will retire shortly, after 18 years as Secretary with the Honour Avenues Group, and it is with great pleasure I acknowledge his contribution to our work and recognise his service in all aspects of what we do. Helen Birch is also retiring at the end of the year and her valuable work in reorganising records, filing and typing have been very much appreciated. And it is my pleasure to welcome Ian Petkoff as our newest member. Thank you all for your service.

Again, I record our sincere thanks to BGPA staff for their continuing support and help in meeting our obligations in the Honour Avenues.

- Robin Slater | Chairman

## Veteran Signaller Les Cook talks with Princess Anne



Princess Anne and Veteran Les Cook on video call

In the lead up to the 75th anniversary of the end of WWII, Her Royal Highness, Princess Anne, The Princess Royal, held a video call with Australian Veteran, Les Cook, who regaled her with his experiences as an Australian Army Corporal from 1940-47.

Princess Anne is Colonel-in-Chief of the Royal Australian Corps of Signals and was therefore keen to hear Les tell of his experiences as a Signaller during the war.

Princess Anne, born 15 August 1950, is second child and only daughter of Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh; and is 14th in line to the throne.

Born in England, Les enlisted in the 2nd AIF in May 1940 soon after his 17th birthday.

Having learnt telegraphy at night-school as a civilian, he was posted to the 1st Australian Corps as a Signaller and sent to the Middle East.

Les served in the Western Desert, Greece, Crete and Syria before returning to the Pacific to defend Australia as part of the Owen Stanley Campaign in Papua New Guinea.

He described walking the Kokoda Track as a process of climbing never-ending hills with a multitude of heart-breaking false crests. "When we got to the top of each one, too tired to take off our equipment, we just collapsed on the ground as we were."

After the war ended, Les served in Japan for a year in the Australian contingent of the British Commonwealth Occupation Force.

More than one million Australians served during the Second World War, and Australia owes them a great debt of gratitude for their service and sacrifice.

From that one million, we only have about 12,000 WWII Veterans with us today.

To watch the interview, download the video at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=londxK1C\\_4A](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=londxK1C_4A)

## Pensions & DVA Report | David MacLean - Pensions & DVA Liaison

Very little has happened in the last month. DVA is spooling up around the nation except for Melbourne head office which remains tightly COVID-bound. Up to 40% of Perth-based staff are now back at their desks.

DVA has introduced specialised assistance for complex cases in both wellbeing and compensation areas. A triage person attempts to facilitate the handling of claims where the situation is dire and the Veteran's needs are urgent.

DVA is currently handling a surge in claims, and delays are inevitable. Some claims are taking up to a year and there are cases where claims

are registered but not assigned for processing, as there are no Delegates available.

A number of Highgate members await decisions while DVA splits hairs over Medicare numbers which cover a number of conditions. Any suggestion of 'beneficial interpretation' of Veterans' legislation should be taken with a bucket of salt.

The **ANZAC Portal** tells the history of Australians serving in our Defence Forces through our Veterans' experiences at <https://ANZACportal.dva.gov.au/>

## *Useful news from the Department of Veterans' Affairs*

### **Significant suicide prevention step for ADF and Veterans**

Legislation introduced on 27 August by the Federal Attorney-General is a significant step in establishing the National Commissioner for Defence and Veteran Suicide Prevention, a powerful, new, independent and enduring body focused on understanding and addressing risk factors of ADF and Veteran suicide.

This legislation will formally create the National Commissioner position and sets out their functions and powers enabling full inquiry into deaths by suicide among ADF members and Veterans.

Minister for Veterans' Affairs Darren Chester said suicide prevention was one of the Government's highest priorities, including when it came to the men and women who serve or have served in Defence.

"Each year, too many Australians take their own lives, and the Defence and Veteran community are not immune. The death of a current or former ADF member is tragic and is felt deeply by their family, friends, colleagues and the Ex-Service community," said Mr Chester.

"It is absolutely critical we try to understand all the factors connected to suicide and strive to build better support to ensure ADF personnel and Veterans have the help they need, when and where they need it.

"There is no single solution to this complex issue and suicide prevention deserves an enduring

focus. This announcement is about having a permanent, dedicated Commissioner focused on making inquiries and hearing from families, to prevent future suicides."

The legislation will provide the National Commissioner with powers broadly equivalent to a Royal Commission to undertake broad ranging inquiries relevant to their role, and hear from any relevant party including ADF members, Veterans and their families; conduct public and private hearings; and compel the production of evidence and summon witnesses.

A four-week public consultation period on the legislation is giving the general public the opportunity to review, and provide comment on the draft Bill.

Defence personnel, Veterans, their families, and anyone with an interest in how the National Commissioner will conduct inquiries, is encouraged to review the legislation and make a submission to the Attorney-General's Department.

Those who wish to remain anonymous can also contact Safe Zone Support on 1800 142 072. This is a free and anonymous counselling line established for Veterans and their families who may have concerns about anonymity.

### **Practical steps support Veterans' mental health**

Doctors across Australia now have access to a new 24/7 hotline to assist them in supporting the health and wellbeing of Veterans.

The Veteran Mental Health GP Assistance Hotline forms part of a \$1.4 million investment in practical steps to meet the needs of the Veteran community.

General Practitioners (GPs) play an important role in coordinating a patient's care, requesting additional tests, treatment or assessment by other health professionals, and making referrals to relevant Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) services or programs.

The new Veteran Mental Health GP Assistance Hotline will provide GPs with access to free expert advice on the unique mental health challenges that our Veterans can face from health practitioners who are clinically trained in Veteran mental health.

**The hotline is immediately available and GPs can access free expert advice on Veteran mental health issues by calling 1800 VET 777 (1800 838 777).**

In addition to the GP Assistance Hotline, a General Advice Hotline will be available to anyone in Australia who wants to access information and resources on Veteran mental health and treatments.

A Community of Practice (COP) for PTSD Trauma Recovery Program providers will also be established, creating a network of PTSD service providers who can provide evidence-informed mental health care for Veterans.

The funding will improve awareness of Veteran mental health issues in our health care system and has significant potential to have a real impact on the health and wellbeing of our Veteran community.

The new initiatives are aligned with the Veteran Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Action Plan, launched in May this year.

*Visit [www.ag.gov.au](http://www.ag.gov.au) for more information about the National Commissioner for Defence and Veteran Suicide Prevention, including how to make a submission on the legislation.*

### **Funding for Veterans' Health Week activities**

Veterans and their families are being encouraged to keep socially connected as part of Veterans' Health Week, with \$200,000 in funding available to community groups and Ex-Service Organisations (ESOs) to assist with activities.

Veterans Health Week will be held from Saturday 24 October to Sunday 01 November and communities are being encouraged to get creative to ensure events can still take place, with organisations able to apply for \$720 in funding support.

This could include a fitness challenge or session, community meditation or yoga, community catch-ups, or arts and crafts workshops, all either in person, or virtually. ESOs can also consider partnering with other community organisations to deliver their chosen activity.

Organisations can now apply to receive \$720 to support their Veterans' Health Week activity. To apply for funding or find out more, visit [www.dva.gov.au/vhw](http://www.dva.gov.au/vhw), call 1800 555 254 or email [vhw@dva.gov.au](mailto:vhw@dva.gov.au). Applications for funding close 02 October. Applicants must ensure their event is following all coronavirus guidelines.



## 54 years ago | **THE BATTLE OF LONG TAN** | *Details you may never have read before*

**T**he Battle of Long Tan was one of the largest battles fought by Australians in the Vietnam War. On 18 August 1966, Delta Company, Royal Australian Regiment (6RAR), fought a battle to defeat enemy forces in the Long Tan rubber plantation. The plantation was only a few kilometres from the 1st Australian Task Force base at Nui Dat.

D Company suffered 42 casualties, including 18 dead – more than one-third of its strength – and about 245 enemy troops were killed.

D Company's 105 men and three New Zealanders from 161 Battery, Royal New Zealand Artillery, fought for almost four hours against soldiers of the North Vietnamese Army, who outnumbered them by 10 to 1.

In May 1966, the first Australian soldiers of 6RAR, arrived in South Vietnam, with the rest following in June. Within two months, the battalion found itself in one of the largest battles fought by Australians in the Vietnam War.

By August 1966, the Australian task force base at Nui Dat was only three months old. Concerned by such a strong presence in their midst, the Viet Cong determined to inflict an early defeat on the Australians.

In the days before the battle, radio signals indicated the presence of strong Viet Cong forces within five kilometres of the base, but patrols found nothing.

On the night of 16 and 17 August, the Nui Dat base came under fire from mortars and recoilless rifles. The Australian defenders stood-to, expecting the barrage to be followed by an assault. None came. Searches of the area the next day located some of the sites from which mortars had been fired, but nothing else.

Patrols continued the following day, 18 August. D Company left the Nui Dat base at 1115, bound for the Long Tan rubber plantation. As they left, the sounds of a concert by Australian entertainers Little Pattie, Col Joye and the Joy Boys reached their ears.

They entered Long Tan plantation at 1515. Less than one hour later, the Viet Cong attacked in force, firing on the Australians with mortars, machine guns and small arms. D Company made desperate calls for support. Only the quick response of a New

Zealand artillery battery saved the Australians from annihilation.

Almost as soon as the battle began, a torrential downpour of rain added to the gloom in the rubber plantation. The Australians were surrounded, short of ammunition and fighting an enemy whose strength they did not know.

The Australians called for helicopters to drop ammunition to them. Flying at tree-top height, braving the terrible weather and heavy Viet Cong fire, two RAAF helicopters located the beleaguered Australians. The choppers accurately dropped boxes of ammunition, and blankets for the wounded men.

The survivors of D Company fought alongside New Zealand's 161 Field Battery, the Australian 103 and 105 Field batteries and a US battery, with their accurate artillery fire inflicting heavy losses on the Viet Cong.

As the fighting continued, Australian reinforcements committed to the battle. B Company was on the way. A Company was loaded into the vehicles of 3 Troop, 1 Armoured Personnel Carrier Squadron, which fought its way to D Company just before 1900, as daylight was fading.

The Viet Cong had been massing for another assault, but were forced to retreat into the plantation. They had suffered terrible casualties. However, the Australians did not realise the extent of their victory until they returned to the scene of battle the next morning. They counted 245 enemy dead still in the plantation and surrounding jungle, with evidence that others had already been removed from the battlefield.

Captured documents and information from prisoners suggested D Company had faced about 2,500 Viet Cong.

In the Battle of Long Tan, 18 Australians were killed and 24 wounded. All but one of the dead were from D Company.

To find out more about Vietnam Veterans' Day, the Vietnam War and the Battle of Long Tan, visit the ANZAC Portal website or via DVD, watch the Australian movie *Danger Close*, which has received many complimentary reviews from Australian Veterans in the Battle of Long Tan.

***"Looking back, if Harry Smith (Major Harry Smith, Officer Commanding Delta Company) hadn't been the commander he was, and if myself and other sergeants and corporals we had in Delta Company had not been of the calibre they were, I don't think we would have survived Long Tan. I think the whole 108 of us would have been killed."***

- Sergeant Bob Buick 6RAR in *Australians At War* Interview 2181

From prisoners and captured documents, it was learned the Australians defeated a force that dramatically outnumbered them.

The Viet Cong 5th Division, comprising 275 Viet Cong Main force battalion and D445, the local provincial mobile battalion, had been involved in the battle.

When the Australians returned the next morning for the gruesome task of battlefield clearance, they found 245 enemy corpses, each of which had to be searched for intelligence purposes before burial.

***"We had to search the packs, the equipment. We had to search their pockets. We had to retrieve wallets,"*** said Second Lieutenant Dave Sabben in *Australians at War* Interview No.2585.

***"There were photographs of families. They had Mum and Dad and the kids and there were photographs wrapped in plastic against the humidity. There were little letters, books, dried flowers pressed in the pages of a book. We had to retrieve all of this along with the documents and the equipment and the metal, and we had to take them into a central point so the Intelligence people could start piecing together what unit they were from, what rank they were, where they came from, where they had been operating..."***

The Australians also captured an array of ammunition and weapons. The enemy carried Soviet-designed automatic AK47 assault rifles or SKS rifles, both as effective as the Australian self-loading rifle.

However, each enemy soldier carried a greater quantity of ammunition than the men in D Company, enabling them to maintain a far greater rate of fire.

## THE BATTLE OF LONG TAN *(continued from previous page)*

### CHRONOLOGY

#### 0243 | 18 August 1966

A 22-minute barrage from 82mm mortars and 75mm recoilless rifles startles the occupants of the base at Nui Dat. There are 24 Australian casualties and some damage to tents and vehicles. The base is readied for an attack which does not eventuate.

**0631** B Company 6RAR despatched to search for the enemy and spent the day tracing enemy tracks. They are re-supplied with rations and remain away from Nui Dat overnight. Later that morning, the three D Company platoons, 10, 11 and 12, are sent out to relieve B Company and to continue the search for Viet Cong troops. The men leave the base at Nui Dat just as a group of visiting entertainers (including Little Pattie, Col Joye and the Joy Boys) are setting up equipment for a much-anticipated concert.

**1300** The two companies rendezvous and B Company returns to Nui Dat for the concert. D Company Commander, Major Harry Smith, his three platoons, a company HQ group and three New Zealand artillery observers set off into the rubber plantation.

**1500** 10 and 11 Platoons move forward and spread out. Suddenly, they make their first contact with a group of enemy soldiers who walk straight into the middle of the Australian patrol. Sergeant Bob Buick fires and wounds one who is picked up by his companions. They bolt into the surrounding vegetation. The Australians are surprised to see that, unlike the local Viet Cong, these men are dressed in camouflage clothing and carry AK47s, the Russian-made Kalashnikov.

**1608** 11 Platoon continues their advance in 'one big long line'. They come under heavy fire which kills four of the Australians. The survivors, now fighting for their lives, fire back.

**1612** Trapped by the enemy in torrential monsoon rain, 11 Platoon Commander Second Lieutenant Gordon Sharp calls in artillery support.

**1626** NZ artillery shells are fired from Nui Dat but miss the target. When Gordon Sharp stands to re-direct the artillery fire he is shot and killed. His Platoon Sergeant, Bob Buick, sends a desperate radio message requesting more ammunition, and then his radio antenna is shot off. Major Smith orders 10 Platoon Commander, Second Lieutenant Geoff Kendall, out to find 11 Platoon. With rain falling, Kendall's platoon intercepts a group of the enemy and overcomes them. But when they move on they are attacked from three sides. A number of his men are wounded and his radio is destroyed. Private William Arkell, a Radio Operator from Company HQ, braves the enemy fire to locate Kendall and hand over a replacement radio. (Arkell was later awarded a *Mention in Dispatches* for his actions). With radio contact restored, Smith orders 10 Platoon to retreat.

**1650** Completely isolated from the rest of the company, and with minimal ammunition, 11 Platoon fight on. Sergeant Bob Buick calls in artillery fire from Nui Dat and directs it over his men's heads onto the enemy.

**1715** 10 Platoon returns to the Company HQ position and Smith orders 12 Platoon Commander, Second Lieutenant Dave Sabben, to take two sections of his Platoon (20 men instead of 30) to search for 11 Platoon.

**1730** 12 Platoon runs into groups of the enemy attempting to outflank 11 Platoon and have to force their way through. Eight Australians are wounded.

**1745** At Nui Dat, Lieutenant Adrian Roberts, Alpha Company 6RAR musters seven Armoured Personnel Carriers (APCs) of 3 Troop and heads out to support Delta Company.

**1800** Two 9 Squadron RAAF helicopters negotiate torrential rain and almost zero visibility to drop cases of ammunition wrapped in blankets down to the embattled soldiers. Having made a desperate dash to escape the enemy, the remainder of 11 Platoon locate 12 Platoon.

Together, the survivors of the two platoons manage to fight their way back to Company HQ where Harry Smith deploys them into defensive positions to await enemy attacks.

**1835** The enemy start their 'human wave assault' charging towards the Australians who reply with machine gun and rifle fire. Smith calls in the artillery at Nui Dat but despite their mounting casualties, the enemy continues its attack.

**1845** 3 Troop's APCs arrive, dispersing the enemy and ending the battle.

**2245** The wounded and dead are transported to the landing zone at the edge of the rubber plantation and evacuated to Vung Tau in helicopters. Delta company's dead are left in the plantation to be collected the next morning.

#### 19 August

Private Jim Richmond was found 12 hours after the battle by members of his platoon. Shot twice through the chest, he lay face down all night at his section post. He was airlifted to Vung Tau and eventually medevaced to Australia.

Delta Company together with 6RAR's Alpha, Bravo and Charlie Companies and Delta Company 5RAR, with APCs, returned to the battleground to search for Australians killed in the battle. Two missing men from Delta Company were found wounded but alive and medevaced by helicopter. Thirteen Australian bodies are retrieved. Some wounded Viet Cong are taken prisoner and interrogated. That afternoon, the Australians dug shallow graves and buried more than 200 enemy dead where they fell.

#### 19-21 August

Australians scour the battlefield, extending their search area and finding traces of enemy camps, supplies, scattered groups of civilians and some graves. The enemy is not pursued and the battalion returns to Nui Dat, ending Operation Smithfield at 1700 on 21 August 1966.

D Company 6RAR withdraws to Vung Tau for two days rest and convalescence.



## THE BATTLE OF LONG TAN *(continued from previous page)*

### Awards for those in the Battle

*"I think the Battle of Long Tan has been promoted to its icon status by the public and by the Vietnam Vets themselves, rather than by the politicians or the senior military."*

*"It's sobering to realise that in fact, only four medals were awarded for the Battle of Long Tan. The politicians and the senior military didn't recognise it as a great event, possibly because there might have been more of them at the time. But it's sobering to realise that it's the public and the Vietnam Vets themselves that have made Long Tan the icon it is today, where 18 August is the nationally celebrated Vietnam Veterans Day,"* said Second Lieutenant Dave Sabben in *Australians at War* Interview No.2585.

In May 1968, Delta Company 6RAR

was awarded a US Presidential Citation 'for extraordinary heroism', one of only two Australian units to have received the decoration. (3RAR received the award for its role in the Battle of Kapyong during the Korean War.)

In September 1966, eight months earlier, the South Vietnamese Government had arranged to present the Australians with the South Vietnam Cross of Gallantry at a special parade near the Task Force headquarters. However, the Commander of the Vietnamese Armed Forces and Chief of State, General Van Thieu, was advised that Australian Government policy forbade the acceptance of foreign awards. The parade was delayed until his advisors returned with replacement gifts for the men: **wooden cigar boxes** for the officers, **cigarette boxes** for the

NCOs and **dolls dressed in national costume** for the other ranks. The Australians never received the South Vietnamese Government gallantry medals.

Australia awarded decorations to 15 of the soldiers for their roles during the action. However, in the end notes to Chapter 16 (p564) of his book, *To Long Tan*, Ian McNeill writes: *"The system of allocation of medals by quota resulted in the number and degree of awards being little short of insulting, in view of the heroism displayed."*

**In 1987, Prime Minister Bob Hawke designated 18 August as Australia's Vietnam Veterans' Day. The date commemorates the Battle of Long Tan and also honours the service and sacrifice of every Australian who served in the Vietnam War.**

**V**ietnam Veterans' Day on 18 August 2020 marked the 54th anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan, and is remembered annually as a special day when Australians are encouraged to reflect on the service and sacrifice of those who served during the Vietnam War, one of Australia's longest military engagements of the 20th Century.

The first Australian troops from the Australian Army Training Team Vietnam arrived in 1962 and over the course of the war about 60,000 Australians served there, with our involvement ending with the RAAF flying humanitarian missions and evacuating embassy staff in April 1975.

Tragically, 521 Australians died and more than 3,000 were wounded.

Each year on Vietnam Veterans' Day, Australia remembers all those who served in the Vietnam War.

Vietnam Veterans Day also acknowledges and honours the Vietnam Veterans who have lost their lives in the years since they returned, those who still carry the physical and emotional scars of their service, and we continue to thank the families who have supported them.

The legacy and contribution of Australia's Vietnam Veterans is still

felt by those in the Ex-Service community, especially as in 1982, Vietnam Veterans were vital in establishing the Vietnam Veterans' Counselling Service, now known as **Open Arms**, which provides specialised mental health and support services for all Veterans and their families.



Over the last year, **Open Arms** has helped more than 30,000 Veterans and their families - a great testament and legacy to the Vietnam Veterans who founded it.

Vietnam Veterans were also instrumental in setting up the Long Tan Bursary which provides education support to the children and grandchildren of Vietnam Veterans, helping them gain the skills and qualifications needed to pursue their chosen career. The Long Tan Bursary awards eligible descendants of Vietnam Veterans with up to \$12,000 over three years of continuous full-time study, assisting them to follow their dreams.

**Applications for the 2021 Long Tan Bursary opened on 18 August 2020, and to find out if you are eligible, and to apply, visit [dva.gov.au](http://dva.gov.au)**

**ADDITIONAL DECORATIONS** were awarded to members of D Coy 6RAR in 2016 after a campaign by Major Harry Smith (Retd). In April 2015, now Lieutenant Colonel Harry Smith SG MC (Retd) and former Officer Commanding D Company 6th Battalion, 6RAR at the Battle of Long Tan, applied to the Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal for review of a decision by Chief of Army to refuse to recommend 13 members who fought at the Battle for a range of gallantry awards, including a Victoria Cross for the late D Company 6RAR CSM, Warrant Officer John 'Jack' Kirby DCM.

Paying tribute to LTCOL Smith (Retd), then Minister for Veterans Affairs, Hon Dan Tehan MP on 10 August 2016 announced acceptance of Tribunal recommendations that 10 soldiers who fought in the Battle of Long Tan be awarded a military honour or have their existing honour upgraded; and he would recommend the Governor-General approve each Tribunal recommendation into the actions of 13 individual soldiers during the battle.

The Tribunal recommended Medals of Gallantry for Lieutenant Adrian Roberts, Sergeant Frank Alcorta and Lance Corporal Barry Magnussen (dec) and Commendations for Gallantry for 2nd Lieutenant Gordon Sharp (dec), and Privates Neil Bextrum, Ron Brett (dec), Ian Campbell, William Roche, Geoffrey Peters and Noel Grimes.

The Tribunal did not recommend a Victoria Cross for the late Warrant Officer Class 2 Jack Kirby (dec), finding the Distinguished Conduct Medal awarded in 1966 was appropriate.

For Corporal William Moore (dec) and Private Allen May, the Tribunal recommended Chief of Army's original decision to not award an honour be affirmed.

## Coffee-Spillers, Eye-Rollers and Warm Fuzzies

### Really bad analogies

written by high school students

Her vocabulary was as bad as, like, whatever.

**The lamp just sat there, like an inanimate object.**

The revelation that his marriage of 30 years had disintegrated because of his wife's infidelity came as a rude shock, like a surcharge at a formerly surcharge-free ATM.

**She grew on him like she was a colony of E. coli and he was room-temperature beef.**

She had a deep, throaty, genuine laugh, like that sound a dog makes just before it throws up.

**The ballerina rose gracefully en pointe and extended one slender leg behind her, like a dog at a fire hydrant.**

Her eyes were like brown circles with two big black dots in the centre.

**What is the difference between mechanical engineers and civil engineers?** Mechanical engineers build weapons. Civil engineers build targets.

**To the optimist, the glass is half-full. To the pessimist, the glass is half-empty.** To the engineer, the glass is twice as big as it needs to be.

The graduate with a **science** degree asks, 'Why does it work?'

The graduate with an **engineering** degree asks, 'How does it work?'

The graduate with an **accounting** degree asks, 'How much will it cost?'

The graduate with an **arts** degree asks, 'Do you want fries with that?'

**Normal people believe that if it ain't broke, don't fix it.** Engineers believe that if it ain't broke, it doesn't have enough features yet.

**Pandemic test** This is a virus test you can perform in your own home and get immediate results Step one: fill a shot glass with your favorite whiskey and lift it to your nose and inhale. This tests your sense of smell, the loss of which is a common virus symptom. Step two: now drink the shot glass and swish the whiskey around in your mouth. This tests your sense of taste, the loss of which is also a common virus symptom. I repeated this test at least seven times yesterday and found I was symptom free. *Anyone know if a headache is a symptom?*

Dan was a single guy, living at home with his father, and working in the family business. When he found out he was going to inherit everything when his sickly father died, he decided he needed to find a wife with whom to share his good fortune. One evening at an investment meeting he spotted the most beautiful woman he had ever seen. Her natural beauty took his breath away. 'I may look like an ordinary guy,' he said to her, 'but in a few years, when my father dies, I will inherit \$700 million.' Impressed, the woman asked for his business card, and three weeks later...she became his stepmother.

### Double entendres

The guy who invented the door knocker got a no-bell prize.

**My ex-wife still misses me, but her aim is starting to improve** How does a lawyer sleep? First he lies on one side, then he lies on the other.

**There was a kidnapping at school yesterday. Don't worry, though – he woke up.**

He wasn't originally going to get a brain transplant, but then he changed his mind.

**Which country's capital has the fastest-growing population? Ireland. It's Dublin every day.**

A supercilious crook going downstairs? Oh, you mean, a condescending con, descending. **Jill broke her finger today, but on the other hand she was completely fine.**

England doesn't have a kidney bank, but it does have a Liverpool.

**I tried to sue the airline for losing my luggage. I lost my case.**

I went to buy some camouflage trousers yesterday but couldn't find any.

**I can't believe I got fired from the calendar factory. All I did was take a day off.**

The man who survived pepper spray and mustard gas is now a seasoned Veteran

**Will glass coffins be a success? Remains to be seen.**

'I have a split personality' said Tom, being Frank.

**Kill one man and you're a murderer, kill a million and you're a conqueror**

### What 'love' means to small kids

**Rebecca (8)** When my grandmother got arthritis, she couldn't bend over and paint her toenails anymore. So my grandfather does it for her all the time, even when his hands got arthritis too. That's love.

**Billy (4)** When someone loves you, the way they say your name is different. You just know that your name is safe in their mouth.

**Karl (5)** Love is when a girl puts on perfume and a boy puts on shaving cologne and they go out and smell each other.

**Chrissy (6)** Love is when you go out to eat and give somebody most of your chips without making them give you any of theirs.

**Terri (4)** Love is what makes you smile when you're tired.

**Danny (8)** Love is when my mum makes coffee for my dad and she takes a sip before giving it to him, to make sure the taste is okay.

**Bobby (7)** Love is what's in the room with you at Christmas if you stop opening presents and just listen.

**Nikka (6)** If you want to learn to love better, you should start with a friend who you hate.

**Noelle (7)** Love is when you tell a guy you like his shirt, and then he wears it every day.

**Tommy (6)** Love is like a little old woman and a little old man who are still friends even after they know each other so well.

**Clare (6)** My mum loves me more than anybody. You don't see anyone else kissing me to sleep at night.

**Elaine (5)** Love is when Mum gives Dad the best piece of chicken.

Chris (7) Love is when Mum sees Dad smelly and sweaty and still says he is handsomer than Russell Crowe.

**Lauren (4)** I know my older sister loves me because she gives me all her old clothes and has to go out and buy new ones.

**Karen (7)** When you love somebody, your eyelashes go up and down and little stars come out of you.

**Jessica (8)** You really shouldn't say 'I love you' unless you mean it. But if you mean it, you should say it a lot. People forget.



*Highgate RSL is privileged to have senior members who continue to serve the nation and their community. Each year, we have a special celebration for those turning 80 and 90 years of age, and in true military style, we refer to them as:*

***Our OBEs (Over Bl\*\*dy Eighties) and OBNs (Over Bl\*\*dy Nineties)***

**Ken Barton** turned 90 on 22 April. Unfortunately, Ken lost his dear wife a few months ago after being in care for four years and visiting her every day. Ken served in the Royal Navy as a torpedo and anti-submarine warfare, specialist onboard HMS *Victorious*, *Duke of York*, *Theseus*, *Gambia*, *Cockatrice*, *Newfoundland* and *Ark Royal*. A keen sportsman, he played rugby, cricket, and tennis in Service teams.

**Ken Jones** turns 90 on 03 October. Born in Sydney, Ken was in the school Cadets for four years, advancing from Cadet to 2nd Lieutenant. From 1943-45, he served in the Air Observer Corps, before being apprenticed in the electrical trades at Garden Island Naval Dockyard in Sydney. Marrying Margaret, they travelled to WA aboard MV *Westralia* and Ken worked at Big Bell gold mine as an underground electrician and supervisor. When the mine closed he returned to NSW. He later returned to WA with his four children, working with Hamersley Iron in the Pilbara as tradesman, superintendent and manager. Ken was a JP for 23 years, West Pilbara Shire Council President and inaugural chairman of the Pilbara Shire Councils Association. In addition, Ken was a member of Lions for 42 years, and nominated for District Governor but withdrew on medical advice. Ken was also a founding member of the Borneo POW Relatives Association which designed and constructed Sandakan Memorial in Kings Park. He joined Highgate RSL as an Affiliate member and for the past 18 years, has been a member of the Honour Avenues Group, currently as secretary.

**Robert Mercer AM RFD ED** turned 90 on 06 July. Bob was born and educated in WA in North Perth, Sandstone and Wesley College, before joining his family owned company of Fruit and Vegetable Agents and Exporters in 1946 – first as a general hand and retiring as General Manager. He enlisted in the Citizen Military Forces (CMF) before it was officially reformed in 1948, joining 16/28th Battalion, Cameron Highlanders.

Bob rose through the ranks and commissioned in 1950. In 1960, he became the first Commander of B Company of the Royal Western Australian Regiment (1RWAR). He had a five-week exchange to Hawaii before being posted to No.5 Training Group as Chief Instructor and became part of the CMF Observer Group in Vietnam in 1967. Promoted Lieutenant Colonel, he was appointed commander of 11

Battalion, RWAR. While the unit was in camp in Northam in 1968, an earthquake struck nearby Meckering. Bob immediately despatched his Assault Pioneer and Medical Platoons to assist – resulting in a reprimand from HQ Western Command for using his initiative without permission! Promoted Colonel and posted as Deputy Comd 5MD and 5FFGP in 1976, as well as Aide-De-Camp to Governor-General Sir John Kerr. Awarded a Member of the Order of Australia in 1979, he retired in 1985 and was awarded the Queens Silver Jubilee Medal. Bob was appointed Hon Col of RWAR for two terms – 1985-91. He joined Highgate RSL in 1984, served on the State Executive 1990-2006, named ANZAC of the Year in 2010, and served as RSL Trustee, and Sub Warden of the State War Memorial for over 20 years. He became a Life Member of the RSL in 2011.

**Owen Page** turned 90 on 13 February, and we do not have his biodata other than his long service in the Pay Corps as a Captain. We acknowledge and thank him for his service on our luncheon welcome-desk each month over the past few years.

***And now our OBEs***

**Trevor Boag** turned 80 on 30 January. He joined Cadets at Fremantle Boys School in 1954 and four years later, enlisted in the CMF, serving for three years at the Medium Coastal/Anti-Aircraft Battery at Leighton. Trevor was also a member of the Honour Avenues Group for a few months.



John Lindsay and Ken Jones cut the cake with Brigadier Dosoo Gimi's ceremonial sword

**John Lindsay** will turn 80 on 07 October and was joined by wife, Anne at our luncheon. He joined the RAN in 1954 at age 13, attending the Royal Australian Naval College, then at HMAS *Cerberus* in Victoria. He served in HMAS *Swan* (Midshipman), Britannia Royal Naval College in Dartmouth, HMAS ANZAC, HMAS *Paluma*, HMAS *Watson*, HMAS *Derwent* (Navigating

Officer), HMS *Dryad* (sub-specialising in aircraft control and direction), HMS *Hermes* (on exchange with the Royal Navy), HMAS *Perth* (Vietnam), and HMAS *Stuart* (2IC and Command). After 25 years' service and three years working with the spooks in the Joint Intelligence Organisation in Canberra, he resigned from the Navy in 1978 as a Commander, going to Port Hedland as a marine pilot for 25 years and finishing up as managing director when that group became a private company.

**Royal anecdote** Having joined the Navy in 1954 aged 13, John was at the Naval College during a royal visit to Australia. The Duke of Edinburgh, resplendent in his Admiral of the Fleet uniform with gold everywhere, came to the College to inspect the Cadet Midshipmen on parade, asking John if he was enjoying the Navy. John lied when he told him he liked it very much. Umpteen years later as a Commander, he was posted to the Senior Officers Tactical Course at HMS *Dryad* in Portsmouth UK. After dinner, John was in the wardroom with two other Australian officers when he heard a very pompous voice say "My God! The place is full of Australians". John turned and realised it was the Duke and said, "I'm surprised you don't remember me, Sir," to which the Duke replied "Why? Have we met before?" John replied, "Yes, when I was 13 at Naval College." The Duke responded, "Since then, you've put on a bit of weight and grown a beard, so I can be forgiven for not recognising you this time - but I will never forget you again!"





## August Luncheon celebrating our OBEs and OBNs

(read their stories on previous page)



## 2020-21 COMMITTEE

### President

**Bill Munro** | 0411 750 775  
bill.munro@highgate-rsl.org.au

### Senior Vice President

**Deputy Warden State War Memorial**

**Geoff Simpson**

0408 925 432 | 6380 1014  
geoff.simpson@highgate-rsl.org.au

### Vice President

### Editor - Highgate Highlights

**Roger Buddrige** | 0408 900 126  
roger.buddrige@highgate-rsl.org.au  
editor@highgate-rsl.org.au

### Secretary

**Greg Wilson** | 0412 095 201  
Mail: Box 66 - Duncraig East 6023  
greg.wilson@highgate-rsl.org.au

### Treasurer

**Ray Ward** | 0409 426 677  
c42ward@bigpond.net.au

### Warden & Immediate Past President

**Geoff Hourn** | 0414 063 707  
geoff.hourn@highgate-rsl.org.au

### Warden

**Steve Chamarette**  
0490 257 469 | 9242 1865  
steve.chamarette@highgate-rsl.org.au

### Pensions & Veterans Affairs Advocate

**David MacLean** | 0418 917 982  
david.maclean@highgate-rsl.org.au

### Membership Officer

**Howard Montagu** | 0417 956 621  
howard.montagu@highgate-rsl.org.au

### Hospitals & Welfare Officer

**Bruce Taylor** | 0408 955 219  
bruce.taylor@highgate-rsl.org.au

### Honour Avenues Representative & Poppy Day Organiser

**Mike Harness** | 0419 091 708  
michaelharness1@bigpond.com

### Web Manager

**Ian Petkoff** | 0490 242 676  
ian.petkoff@highgate-rsl.org.au

### General Committee

**Margot Harness** | 9349 2847  
michaelharness1@bigpond.com

**Leon Griffiths** | 0439 033 399  
leon@leongriffiths.com

**Allan Downs** | 0427 932 166  
allan.downs@highgate-rsl.org.au

**Greg Smith** | 0458 204 538  
sm1th.gregory12@gmail.com

### Front Desk

**Bob Campbell** | 9279 3502  
**Peter Garside** | 0413 441 855  
artco@artco.net.au

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Federal Member for Perth**